



NET Academies Trust Religious Education Policy

September 2019

Waltham Holy Cross Primary Academy has joined NET Academies Trust and adopted all NET Academies Policies.

1.0 - Introduction

1.1 - Section 80 of the Education Act 2002 and Schedule 19 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, entitles all pupils to receive a religious education (RE) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum at school which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

1.2 - This policy sets out the framework in which NET Academies Trust Harlow will ensure that this duty is met.

1.3 - While meeting this duty, our academy will also ensure that RE is:

- Of a high standard, where expectations are clear to pupils, parents, teachers, governors, employers and the public;
- Coherent and shows progression, particularly across the transition of the key stages and post 16;
- Contributing to the academy's responsibility to promote community cohesion and high standards of achievement;
- Well understood by the school community, who have confidence in the academy's provision and achievement.

2.0 - Legal Framework

2.1 - This policy will have consideration for and be in compliance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 2002
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Religious Education in Schools – February 2010

3.0 - Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 - Governors and the Head of School will fulfil their duty to:

- Ensure that RE is provided as part of the academy's basic curriculum;
- Provide an annual report to parents or carers, giving brief particulars of progress and achievements in all subjects including RE.

3.2 - The Governors and Head of School must also ensure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the academy's RE curriculum-based on Essex SACRE;

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- The teaching of RE is well led and effectively managed, and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- Those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD);
- Teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact in promoting community cohesion;
- Where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses which lead to an accredited qualification in the subject;
- Teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives and promote community cohesion;
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw;
- Teachers are aware that they do not have to teach RE unless specifically appointed to do so;
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the academy can fulfil its legal obligations regarding RE and pupils can make good progress;
- Where there are insufficient teachers in the academy who are prepared to teach RE, the Head of School will ensure that pupils receive their entitlement to RE, seeking advice from the Local Authority (LA) and/or the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), if necessary.

4.0 - Teaching

4.1 - Christianity will be the majority study in RE at NET Academies Harlow. This will draw upon the richness and diversity of Christian experience in the breadth of its Anglican and other denominational forms, and in the variety of worldwide forms.

4.2 - RE at NET Academies Harlow will also:

- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. As well as Christianity, it will also develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development;
- Encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives;
- Enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society;

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- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, thereby helping to challenge prejudice;
- Prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

5.0 - Community Cohesion

5.1 - RE makes an important contribution to an academy's duty to promote community cohesion. It provides key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

5.2 - NET Academies Harlow will use RE to promote community cohesion:

- Within the academy, through the exploration, promotion and celebration of diversity, beliefs and values;
- At the local level, investigating patterns of diversity of religion and belief, and forging links with different groups;
- At the national level, through the study of the diversity of religion and belief across the UK and how this influences national life;
- At the global level, through the study of matters of international significance, recognising the impact of the diversity of religion and belief on world issues.

5.3 - RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting an inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

6.0 - Staffing and Training

6.1 - A well trained and confident workforce is crucial in ensuring good quality RE. We will therefore ensure that:

- At least one member of staff has specialist RE qualifications;
- Other teachers can contribute to the teaching of RE, regardless of their personal beliefs;
- All teachers teaching RE are up-to-date with the latest regulations, guidance and best practice regarding RE;
- Our school action plans identify the CPD needs of staff in relation to RE.

7.0 - Right of Withdrawal

7.1 - NET Academies Harlow recognises the right of withdrawal of pupils from RE at the request of their parents. No reason needs to be given.

7.2 - Where alternative arrangements cannot be met through the provision at NET Academies Harlow, the pupil may receive their RE externally and may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend these classes.

7.3 - This policy was recommended to the Board of NET Academies Trust by the CEO and approved by the Board in September 2019.

8.0 - Approval and Review

8.1 - This policy was approved by the Pupil Achievement and Wellbeing Committee in October 2019

8.2 - This policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with the law and regulations.

8.3 - Next review date: September 2022