

RE in Church Schools in the Diocese of Guildford

A guide for parents
and carers



What is RE?

RE stands for Religious Education. It is an academic subject and is taught in lessons. It is not the same as collective worship (assembly). RE in Church schools is for all pupils, of any religion or belief, or none. RE is a vibrant and exciting part of the curriculum, where pupils enjoy finding out about how people live, believe, think and belong.

Pupils say...

I love RE because of all the stories.

RE helps me to respect and understand other people.

I love RE because you can ask extremely deep questions!

I love RE because of all the stories.

Teachers say...

It helps children to achieve across the curriculum.

RE contributes to children's social and emotional development.

RE allows children to be more creative in their thinking.



Why do children learn RE in schools?

RE gives pupils the opportunity to explore big questions about life, to find out about **people's worldviews**: what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live. It helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and in our global society.

- *It helps pupils to be curious as they explore stories, questions and issues that matter to them and to others.*
- *It helps pupils to make sense of the world that they see around them and in the news.*
- *It helps pupils to understand the experiences, views and opinions of people whose beliefs and values may be different to their own. It promotes respect between people and communities.*
- *It provides space for pupils to reflect on their own ideas and develop their thoughts about some of the big questions in life.*

By law, schools must teach RE along with the National Curriculum. At least 50% of RE learning focuses on learning about Christianity, alongside a range of other religious and non-religious worldviews, including Judaism, Islam, Hindu Dharma, Buddhism, Sikhi and Humanism.

RE is not

- ▶ *about converting pupils to any faith or belief.*
- ▶ *children taking part in festivals, or rituals, of a faith or belief in the way that a believer would.*
- ▶ *boring!*



This short film may help you to understand more <https://natre.org.uk/exploring-primary-re-films/>

Your child's school uses the **Surrey Agreed Syllabus**.
You can see what is in the syllabus here:
[surrey-agreed-syllabus-for-religious-education.pdf](#)

What will your child learn?

The content of RE is the same for church schools, academies, and community schools, who all follow the Surrey Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, or Hampshire's Agreed Syllabus, 'Living Difference IV'.

Teachers will use the content of the syllabus to shape a curriculum that suits the needs of their school. You will be able to find specific information on the school's website about what is planned for each year group. Schools are usually delighted to chat with parents about the wonderful things that are happening in RE.

Although lessons will focus on specific faiths and beliefs, teachers will also draw on the experiences and beliefs of pupils in the class and their families. Teachers will sensitively use questions which enable pupils of all faith and beliefs or none to reflect and contribute to the learning.



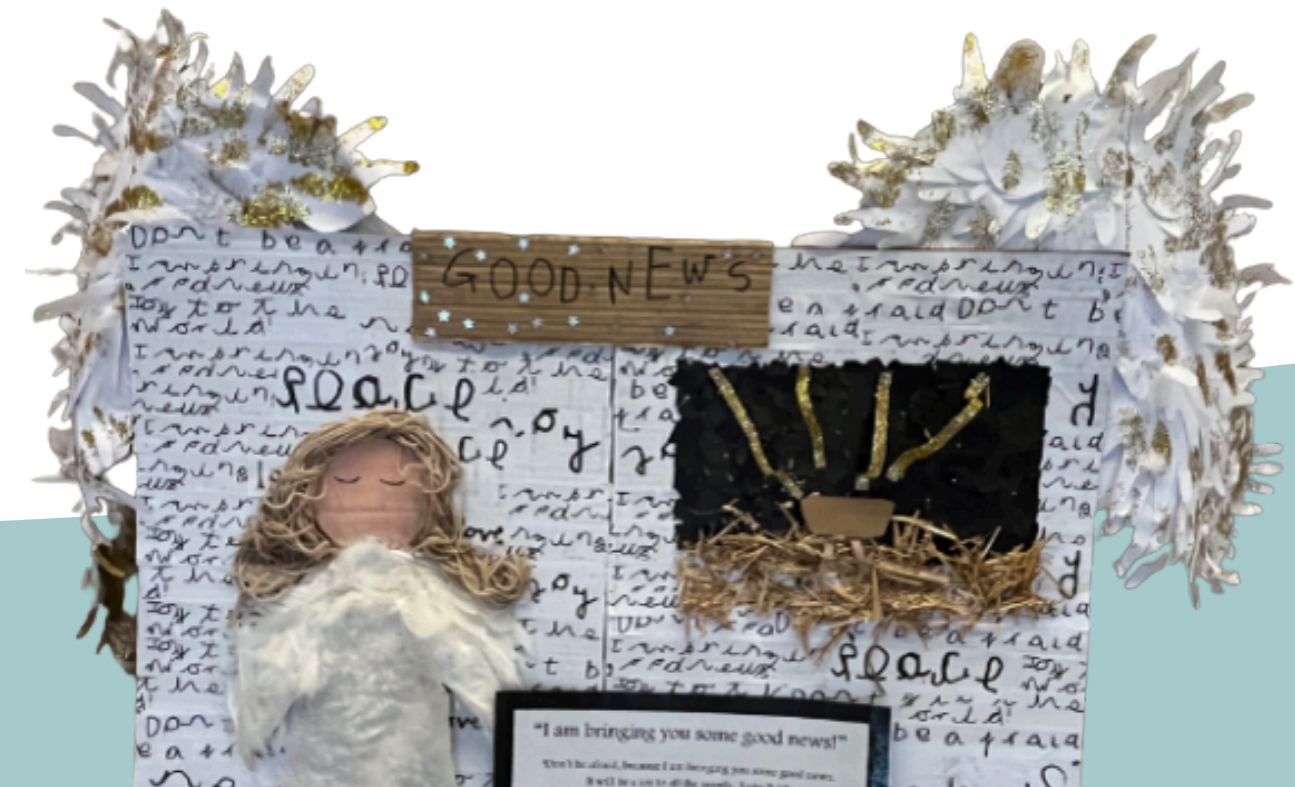
Your child's school's website will contain specific information about what they are learning in RE by year group, so do look there for more detail.





Is there anything different in a church school?

- *RE should be taught each week for the recommended amount of time.*
- *Each school should have an expert RE subject leader who attends regular training and updates.*
- *We encourage churches to be a positive support to schools in providing effective RE.*
- *RE is part of living out the school's vision and values.*
- *RE makes a contribution to pupils' spiritual development.*
- *RE is inspected as part of Church school inspections.*



What is the role of parents and carers?

- *Talk to your child about what they have been learning in RE.*
- *If your family has a faith or belief, your role, along with your faith community, is to teach that to your own children. It is not the role of the school to do this.*
- *If you have a personal faith or belief, the school may welcome you to support RE lessons. This might be by answering the pupils' questions, telling them about how you celebrate a festival or bringing in special objects to show them.*
- *If you do not wish your child to join in with any part of an RE lesson you have the right to ask the headteacher that they are withdrawn. You can change this decision at any time.*
- *When you are out and about with your child, look out together for signs of religion and belief all around, for example a special building like a church or a mosque, decorations at festival times or clothing worn by different people. The more you look, the more you see!*



