

FOOTSTEPS TRUST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Footsteps Trust is committed to providing a high-quality Religious Education (RE) curriculum that promotes understanding, respect, tolerance and awareness of the diverse beliefs, values and traditions that shape modern British society.

As an Independent School and Alternative Provision, we recognise that Religious Education makes a significant contribution to students':

- Spiritual development
- Moral development
- Social development
- Cultural development
- Personal development
- Safeguarding awareness
- Community cohesion

Footsteps Trust believes that Religious Education should encourage curiosity, critical thinking, respectful dialogue and understanding of different worldviews, beliefs and cultures. It should also support students in developing their own beliefs, values and identity whilst promoting mutual respect and tolerance.

2. Purpose

The aims of Religious Education at Footsteps Trust are to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of major world religions and non-religious worldviews.
- Promote respect for diversity and individual beliefs.
- Encourage critical reflection on moral, ethical and philosophical issues.
- Support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).
- Promote Fundamental British Values.
- Prepare students for life in modern Britain.
- Develop understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Challenge prejudice, discrimination and intolerance.
- Promote community cohesion and positive relationships.

3. Legislative Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Education Act 1996.
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Independent School Standards Regulations.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- Alternative Provision statutory guidance.

Footsteps Trust recognises its duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes:

- Spiritual development.
- Moral development.
- Cultural development.
- Social development.
- Respect for others.
- Fundamental British Values.

4. Context

Students may arrive at different stages of their educational journey and often present with diverse academic, social, emotional and personal experiences.

The curriculum is therefore designed to be:

- Relevant.
- Inclusive.
- Accessible.
- Engaging.
- Responsive to individual needs.

Religious Education forms part of the Academy's wider commitment to personal development and preparation for adulthood.

5. Curriculum Intent

Our RE curriculum aims to help students:

Know

- The beliefs, teachings and practices of major world faiths.
- The diversity of religious and non-religious beliefs.
- How religion influences individuals and communities.

Understand

- Similarities and differences between beliefs.
- The impact of faith on identity and society.
- Ethical and moral issues in contemporary society.

Reflect

- On their own beliefs and values.
- On moral and philosophical questions.
- On issues affecting local, national and global communities.

Respect

- Different viewpoints.
- Religious diversity.
- Human rights and equality.

6. Curriculum Content

Learning may include:

Christianity

- Beliefs and teachings
- Worship and practices
- Festivals
- Christian ethics

Islam

- Beliefs and practices
- The Five Pillars
- Sources of authority
- Muslim life today

Hinduism

- Beliefs
- Worship
- Festivals
- Cultural influence

Sikhism

- Core beliefs
- Community and service
- Identity and equality

Judaism

- Beliefs and traditions
- Festivals
- Historical significance

Buddhism

- Key teachings
- The Eightfold Path
- Mindfulness and ethics

Non-Religious Worldviews

- Humanism
- Secular perspectives
- Ethical decision-making

The curriculum may also address contemporary themes such as:

- Human rights.
- Equality.
- Justice.
- War and peace.
- Prejudice and discrimination.
- Poverty.
- Relationships.
- Environmental responsibility.

7. Key Stage 3 Provision

Students in Key Stage 3 will study a broad programme that:

- Introduces major faiths and worldviews.
- Develops understanding of diversity.
- Promotes discussion and reflection.
- Supports literacy and communication skills.

Learning will be adapted to meet individual student needs and starting points.

8. Key Stage 4 Provision

Religious Studies may be offered as a GCSE qualification.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum will:

- Develop deeper understanding of religion and belief.

- Explore ethical and philosophical issues.
- Prepare students for examinations.
- Develop evaluation and analytical skills.

The curriculum will support progression into further education and wider adult life.

9. SMSC Development

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to students' SMSC development.

Spiritual Development

Students are encouraged to:

- Reflect on beliefs and values.
- Explore meaning and purpose.
- Consider life experiences and identity.

Moral Development

Students explore:

- Right and wrong.
- Ethical decision-making.
- Social responsibility.

Social Development

Students develop:

- Empathy.
- Respect.
- Communication skills.
- Understanding of different communities.

Cultural Development

Students learn about:

- Religious diversity.
- Cultural traditions.
- The role of religion in society.

10. British Values and Personal Development

Religious Education supports students' understanding of:

- Democracy.
- Rule of Law.

- Individual Liberty.
- Mutual Respect.
- Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs.

The curriculum helps students understand how these values contribute to life in modern Britain and supports safeguarding by promoting respect and reducing vulnerability to prejudice, discrimination and extremism.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Footsteps Trust serves a diverse community and is committed to ensuring that RE promotes:

- Equality.
- Inclusion.
- Respect.
- Understanding.
- Community cohesion.

Teaching will actively challenge:

- Racism.
- Religious intolerance.
- Discrimination.
- Stereotyping.
- Extremism.

Students will be encouraged to engage respectfully with views that may differ from their own.

12. Teaching and Learning

Teaching should be:

- Inclusive.
- Engaging.
- Age appropriate.
- Adapted to individual needs.

Approaches may include:

- Discussion and debate.
- Group work.
- Research activities.
- Case studies.
- Visits and visitors (where appropriate).
- Reflection activities.

- Multimedia resources.

Teachers will create a safe environment in which students can discuss sensitive issues respectfully.

13. Assessment

Assessment will be used to:

- Monitor progress.
- Inform planning.
- Identify support needs.
- Measure achievement.

Students may be assessed through:

- Classwork.
- Written work.
- Presentations.
- Discussions.
- Projects.
- Formal assessments.

Assessment information will contribute to reporting and curriculum review.

14. Right of Withdrawal

Parents/carers have the legal right to request that their child be wholly or partly withdrawn from Religious Education.

Students aged 18 or over may exercise this right themselves.

Parents/carers wishing to exercise this right should make a written request to the Principal.

The Academy hopes that the inclusive and educational nature of the curriculum will mean withdrawal is rarely necessary.

15. Monitoring and Review

The Principal and Curriculum Lead will monitor:

- Curriculum quality.
- Student engagement.
- Assessment outcomes.
- SMSC provision.
- Curriculum compliance.

Date of Issue: September 2026

Date of Review: September 2027



The RE curriculum will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant, balanced and aligned with statutory requirements and best practice.