

Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship in Academies

Area	Question and Answer	Here at Malmesbury Park Primary Academy
The law	<p>Do Academies have to provide RE? Yes, under the terms of their Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State, all Academies have to provide RE for all their pupils, except for those whose parents exercise the right of withdrawal</p>	<p>RE is taught at Malmesbury Park Primary Academy as discrete lessons but also comes into other subjects in a general way.</p>
Content	<p>Does the academy have to adopt an agreed syllabus? There is no requirement for an Academy to adopt a locally agreed syllabus. It may choose to adopt a different syllabus or develop its own, as long as it meets the requirements for such a syllabus as above. Academies are accountable for the quality of their curricular provision including RE.</p> <p>What type of RE will an Academy that is not designated with a religious character provide?</p> <p>The Funding Agreement for an Academy without a religious designation states that it must arrange for RE to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses i.e. a syllabus that reflects that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It also means that an Academy without a religious designation must not provide an RE syllabus to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination. This gives an Academy without a religious designation the freedom to design its own RE syllabus (within those constraints) and not be bound by the specific locally agreed syllabus that maintained schools are required to follow. However, Academies are free to follow the locally agreed syllabus if they choose or they can choose another from a different Local Authority area.</p>	<p>At Malmesbury Park Primary Academy we follow the agreed syllabus for Dorset through the 'Discovery' Scheme of Work which adopts an enquiry-based approach to the teaching and learning of Religious Education. Christianity is taught in every year group alongside one other religion with the exception of FS2 where each religion is introduced to the children. As well as Christianity, Year 1 focuses on Judaism; Year 2 - Islam; Year 3 - Sikhism; Year 4 - Judaism; Year 5 - Hinduism and Year 6 - Islam. The Scheme of Work covers the teaching of festivals and practices of the above religions and is relevant to our diverse student population. <i>The agreed syllabus (RE overview?)</i> is available through the school website at Malmesbury Park Primary Academy. We do not in any way teach children what they must believe and always preface teaching both in assembly and RE with, for example, 'Christians believe'.</p>
Collective worship	<p>Do all Academies have to offer a daily act of collective worship? An Academy's Funding Agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for acts of collective worship in maintained schools. Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents. This applies to Academies with and without a religious designation.</p>	<p>At Malmesbury Park Primary Academy our assemblies follow this pattern;</p> <p>Monday: A whole school theme linked to our ethos values of respect, harmony, responsibility, trust, excellence and support</p>

	<p>In an Academy without a religious designation, does the act of collective worship have to be broadly Christian in nature? Such an Academy must provide collective worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian.</p>	<p>Tuesday: Class assembly linked to ethos values Wednesday: Singing together Thursday: Year group assembly linked to the ethos values Friday: Class assemblies or whole school linked to the ethos values</p>
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Right to withdraw:

At Malmesbury Park Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education or collective worship on the grounds of conscience. Parents wishing to exercise that right are asked to write to the head teacher who will then invite the parents into school to discuss their concerns, clarify the nature of the RE and worship provided by the school and set out the options for parents as set out in education law. However the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum, when as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or when issues related to religion occur in other subjects.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE or collective worship, they will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff whilst doing other curriculum work - this will include working in a parallel class whilst the RE lesson is taking place.