

Religious Education and Collective Worship in different types of schools

Religious Education (RE) is compulsory for all pupils in local authority maintained schools aged 5 to 16 years unless they are withdrawn from these lessons by their parents.

RE syllabus is a responsibility of the local council, but [faith schools](#) and [academies](#) can set their own.

Locally agreed RE syllabus is designed by a local authority which is overseen by the Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE). The syllabus, like the provision for RE in academies, must reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other religions represented in Great Britain.

Maintained schools		
Within the school systems of England and Wales, four types of school continue to be funded through their Local Authority. These are known, because of this type of funding, as 'maintained' schools.		
Required provision for religious education	Required provision for collective worship (CW)	Legislation
Community schools and foundation and voluntary schools <u>without</u> a religious character		
RE Provision must be in accordance with locally agreed syllabus (AS) which is overseen by the Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE).	CW 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. A school can apply for a determination to SACRE for exemption from providing broadly Christian CW for some or all of its pupils.	Requirements for RE are set out in Paragraph 5 of schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 . Requirements for CW Schedule 20 School Standards and Framework Act 1998 DfE Collective worship in schools page 13 for RE and page 21 for CW and 22 for determination.
Foundation and voluntary controlled schools that are designated <u>with</u> a religious character		
RE in these schools is determined by the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Parents have a right to have religious education for their children that reflects the religious foundation of the school.	CW must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the religion or religious denomination.	Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 Requirements for CW Schedule 20 School Standards and Framework Act 1998 DfE Collective worship in schools
Voluntary aided schools <u>with</u> a religious character		
RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed, unless parents request RE for their children as set by AS.	CW must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the religion or religious denomination.	

Academies and Free Schools		
Requirements for academies broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. The requirements including the type of RE that an academy provides is set out in the funding agreement between the individual academy trust and the Secretary of State.		
Required provision for religious education	Required provision for collective worship	Legislation
Academies and free schools without a designated religious character		
RE provision must be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses (in the main Christian whilst taking account of the other principal religions). An academy may choose to adopt a locally agreed syllabus but is not required to. It may adopt a different area's agreed syllabus or develop its own, as long as it meets the requirements for such a syllabus as above.	These schools must provide CW 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. Academies without a religious designation can apply via the ESFA to the Secretary of State for exemption from providing broadly Christian CW for some or all of its pupils.	Requirements for RE are set out in the funding agreement section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph 5 of schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 . Requirements for CW are set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Section 70 . Academies should follow paragraphs 50 to 88 of the Department for Education's guidance on collective worship in schools .
Required provision for religious education	Required provision for collective worship	Legislation
Former voluntary-controlled and foundation schools with a religious designation that have converted to academies		
Must arrange for RE in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses (in the main Christian whilst taking account of the other principal religions) unless any parents request that their children receive RE in accordance with the tenets of the school's faith. If any parents do request this, the academy must make arrangements for those children to receive such RE unless, because of special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so.	CW must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the academy's designated faith. These schools can also choose to reflect the other principal religions and those found in the local community.	Requirements for RE are set out in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph 5 of schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 . Requirements for CW are set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Section 70 . Academies should follow paragraphs 50 to 88 of the Department for Education's guidance on collective worship in schools. Religious education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools - GOV.UK

Variations to the general position as described

Some non-denominational academies with a religious designation (for example those designated as 'Christian') have funding agreements specifying that they will use the locally agreed syllabus. Academies that opened before around 2004 have a general requirement to provide RE and collective worship. However, the detailed requirements may differ.

[Religious education \(RE\) and collective worship in academies and free schools - GOV.UK](#)

Inspection of religious education (RE) and collective worship

Draft Ofsted inspection pack

Page 13

33. The Secretary of State designates certain schools as having a religious character.

In schools without a religious character, Ofsted inspects RE and collective worship as part of inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. This is different in schools with a religious character. In these schools, denominational education and collective worship are inspected by a body appointed by the maintained school's governing body under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 or as provided in the academy's funding agreement.

34. **If a school has been designated as having a religious character, Ofsted is not able to comment on the content of collective worship or on denominational RE.** Inspectors may, however, **gather evidence from anywhere** relevant (including RE lessons and assemblies) to evaluate pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, personal development and/or behaviour and attitudes. The fact that the school has been designated as having a religious character must be referenced in the 'Information about this school' section of the inspection report.

For more information, please visit the links provided in this document. Also, [Religious education | Ealing Grid for Learning](#) provides relevant resources and documents.

This document was compiled by Mirela Temo (Ealing Learning Partnership, Education Adviser/ELP adviser for RE). Email: mtemo@ealing.gov.uk.

December 2023