***Religious Education in Cheshire East***

**The Legal Framework**

Since 1944, all maintained schools have been required to teach RE to all registered pupils (with the exception that parents have the right to withdraw their children from the subject and pupils of 18 years of age can withdraw themselves.) Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum states the legal requirement that:

* every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which: promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils,

and

* prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The National Curriculum (2013) reiterates that all state schools must teach Religious Education and publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.

*(National Curriculum Frameworks Sept 2013 Pg. 4)*

Religious Education must ‘reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principle religions represented in Great Britain’ (1)

*Education Act (1996 Section 375 (3) ) & School Standards Framework Act (1998, Schedule 19, para 5).*

Local Authorities (LA) must ensure that the agreed syllabus for their area is consistent with the Education Act of 1996 in order to produce a syllabus. The statutory document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the LA concerned.

1. *The major world religions referred to are Buddhism; Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism and Sikhism. Some study of secular worldviews and a religious community with a significant local presence may be appropriate, depending on the individual school.*

**RE and the Right of Withdrawal**

**Pupils**

Parents may withdraw their children from RE lessons and the school has a duty to supervise them, however schools do not have to provide additional teaching which may incur extra cost. Where the pupils have been withdrawn, the law does say alternative arrangements can be made for RE based on the kind of Religious Education the parents want the pupils to receive. If practical, RE should be provided at the pupil’s own school; a cluster school or in another nearby school in the same area. If neither option is available a pupil may receive external RE teaching as long as the withdrawal does not significantly impact on the child’s attendance. All schools should have a policy and approach to provision and withdrawal which may be laid out in the school’s RE policy.

**Teachers**

Teachers may withdraw from the teaching of RE unless they have been specifically employed to teach or lead and manage RE. An application to withdraw must be given in writing to the head and chair of governors. Pupils must not miss out on RE teaching because a teacher has withdrawn from teaching RE. The school must make alternative provision for the pupils to be taught RE.

**Access and Entitlement**

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able and gifted and talented, have an entitlement of full access to the Religious Education curriculum.

This entitlement will need to take account of the physical, sensory, academic, emotional and learning needs of the individual pupils in ways which acknowledge the value of their responses, contributions and achievements.

A wide range of approaches to the ‘’Engaging Encounter with Religion’’ and ‘’Reasoned Response to Religion’’ should be encouraged through any medium suited to the experience and ability of individual pupils.

Evidence of pupil responses to the work provided may take a variety of forms including aural, oral, visual and written.

Teachers must take account of the requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to realise their full potential and participate effectively in Religious Education and assessment activities.