



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY



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*"Small school, big hearts.  
Wise, responsible, kind like the Good Samaritan."*

### **Our Mission Statement**

**We are a caring, village school which promotes Christian values, where each child receives a high standard of education that is broad, challenging, exciting and encourages creative thinking. We encourage every learner to be the best they can be, to reflect and plan the next steps in their learning journey, demonstrating a respect towards others and contributing to the communities of which they are a part.**

### **Our Vision**

**Our vision is to nurture unique individuals who are outstanding learners, demonstrating wisdom, responsibility and kindness within their communities. Using the Good Samaritan as our role model, we know that loving others as we would want to be loved is upmost for happy, healthy lives.**

### **Values**

**Wise** - we think wisely and are committed to learning. We relish and retain knowledge and value high standards. We have high expectations, high aspirations and enjoy challenge. Like the wise man who built his house upon the rocks (Matthew 7), we think creatively and use learning to make good decisions. We have firm foundations for our lives.

**Responsible** – we are responsible for ourselves – our well-being, our behaviour and our learning. We strive to be the best people we can be and the best person for others. We have a responsibility to others inside and out of school and at times need to be patient, tolerant and courageous in demonstrating this. As Noah had to step up when God asked him to, so must we. We are a school family whose strength is in our ability to work together. We know that perseverance and hard work will bring reward and that resilience is about coping with challenges positively.

**Kind** - we are kind. Through support, nurture and understanding we all flourish. Each one of us is unique – on the outside and inside. We value diversity and respect difference. There are hundreds and thousands, millions of us but God knows everyone and God knows me!

### **Curriculum Intent**

Our curriculum is designed around our Christian values. Each term, we focus on 3 values across the school and develop a working understanding of them through our choice of texts and foundation subject learning, embedding reading and maths at the core. Our approach is to deliver knowledge rich, sequential learning which excites and inspires, provides opportunity for recap and challenge, raises questions for debate, develops learners' confidence and enables independent learning to flourish. High standards, collaboration and valuing individuals' well-being is at the heart of this process. We believe that how we teach is as important as what we teach and that enrichment experiences are an entitlement. We want our curriculum to enable our children to be wise, responsible and kind in line with our school core values.



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## Introduction

Religious Education (RE) is part of all pupils' entitlement under the Education Act 1996 to receive a broad and balanced curriculum which, "Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils at the school and of society and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities of life".

## Our Philosophy

As a staff we believe that children, whatever their background ability or religious persuasion will find themselves able to benefit from the experiences of Religious Education. RE must be relevant to the needs of our pupils as members of a multicultural, multi-faith society. This means providing opportunities for pupils to understand themselves and others. We believe that RE encourages a reflective approach to living; a knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices and a development of personal skills in forming reasoned opinions based on evidence and argument.

RE makes a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils. We believe RE forms a distinctive element in the curriculum whilst helping to foster the development of the whole pupil. RE is a preparation for life. The ethos of the school has a profound effect on the pupils and influences each aspect of the educational process. We provide an atmosphere where religion and a spiritual life is a genuine and important dimension of being human. We develop a tolerant understanding of the religious beliefs of others and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon and grow in understanding of their own faith.

We have close links with the parish church of St Mary the Virgin. Buckland Church of England Primary School holds Easter, Harvest, Christmas and other services in the parish church, in addition to our minister taking school assemblies. We have also developed class worship sessions with our classes. (See also Collective Worship policy).

## Implicit and Explicit dimensions

RE has two distinct dimensions, the implicit and the explicit, which are of equal importance. Implicit RE is concerned with such areas as personal feelings and experiences, relationships, questions and responses to life and the natural world and in understanding how religion contributes to these. Explicit RE deals with the aspects of specific religions for example writings, festivals, buildings, beliefs, and symbols. **These can be seen simply as - Learning from religion and Learning about religion.**

It is essential that both these dimensions are identified and incorporated into schemes of work to ensure a balanced RE programme. At Buckland Church of England Primary School we follow the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus alongside Understanding Christianity. Whilst Christianity forms the main component in our programme of study,



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the Oxfordshire Syllabus also requires the study of Judaism in Key Stage 1, with the addition of Sikhism and / or Islam in Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage, the exploration of religion is conducted through careful planning in the areas of Personal, Social and Emotional and Developing and Understanding the World.

## **Curriculum intent**

RE makes a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils. RE is a preparation for life. We aim for pupils to build knowledge progressively in RE as they move through the school and we recognise that much of what they learn will help enrich their wider subject knowledge in other areas. RE helps us consider examples of wisdom, kindness and responsibility and encourages us to apply these values through our life together. We provide an atmosphere where religion and a spiritual life is an important dimension of being human. We develop knowledge and understanding of different religious beliefs and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon and grow in understanding of their own faith. We provide opportunities for pupils to understand themselves and others. We believe that RE encourages a wise and reflective approach to living alongside a knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices.

## **Aims and objectives**

The aims of RE are:

- To be aware of and respond to life experiences and the questions they raise;
- To know and understand religious beliefs and practices;
- To evaluate the significance of religious concepts, beliefs and practices by being able to express personal opinions based on the use of appropriate evidence and argument.

At Buckland Church of England Primary School we aim to encourage children to develop a reflective and caring approach to life through developing the children's knowledge and understanding of the life of Jesus. In our worship together as a Christian community and through our "Values" themes, we strive to stimulate a recognition and enthusiasm for the spiritual dimension in our lives.

We aim to:

- Develop an understanding of the world wide Christian Church
- Provide an education based on the principles of the established Church;
- Promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Provide knowledge with which understanding and awareness can be fostered;
- Reflect on the impact of religion on the way people live;
- Learn about the major religions as specified in the Oxfordshire syllabus;
- Produce children who have an understanding, care and concern for people of all faiths and of no faith;
- Encourage children to respect Christianity and other principle religions showing respect to those holding different beliefs.



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## Curriculum

Our Long term plan details which units of work will be taught during which term, over a two year cycle for each class. RE work is linked where possible to the topic theme for the term, so that pupils can see their learning in a meaningful context.

Understanding Christianity and the Agreed Syllabus for R.E. (Oxfordshire) outline a scheme of work which ensure progression and continuity through Key Stages.

The themes from Understanding Christianity are revisited across the school in a spiral curriculum so that children build a deep understanding of the central elements of Christianity. The themes are:

**Creation**

**God**

**People of God**

**Incarnation**

**Gospel**

**Salvation**

**Kingdom of God**

The agreed Oxfordshire Syllabus units have been selected across the school to provide a broader knowledge base for Judaism (KS1), Sikhism and Islam (KS2). Knowledge organisers for KS2 are used to provide a structure of what key knowledge the children need to know. The big question approach to these units allows children to engage with thinking about their perspectives. Children are well prepared for secondary school and work towards the key milestones which have been identified by cross phase subject leaders across the Trust.

Our RE curriculum is supported by key knowledge identified in our History, Geography, English, Art and PSHE curriculum in particular and references are made across subjects to provide a deep understanding and conceptual framework. Learning does not sit alone and connections are constantly being made to support children's developing mind-maps.

## Teaching and Learning

RE work may be taught weekly or blocked into units, allowing for a more in depth focus to be developed.

RE days are planned helping children to really engage in the subject matter and be reflective for a longer period of time.

Teachers plan activities which will inspire and engage pupils and awaken their curiosity. Children are asked to think creatively and raise / ponder questions.



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In addition, we also use Godly Play as a strategy to develop children's understanding and connection with Bible stories as well as annual prayer weeks. Open the Book and values based assemblies contribute further to children's knowledge and understanding of religion and Bible stories.

## **Resources**

We are pleased to welcome visitors to our school to talk about their faith and beliefs. We have resources to support the scheme of work, books, artefacts, posters and videos are stored in labelled boxes in the hall.

## **Inclusion**

All children have an entitlement to RE. Careful planning, scaffolding and challenge, resources and a variety of teaching methods and learning styles are all considered to ensure every child can benefit.

## **Equal Opportunities**

All children regardless of gender, race, culture or religious persuasion are given the opportunity to participate in RE lessons. As members of a multicultural, multi-religious society, children need to be given opportunity to understand the beliefs and motivations of themselves and others.

## **Marking and Feedback**

Teachers give detailed assessment feedback to pupils once a term (6x a year). This details children's strengths and next steps. On a regular basis feedback will be verbal and books will be marked, but not with detailed comments

## **Assessment and Recording**

Not everything taught in RE can be assessed but opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate what they have learnt about religions and what they have learnt from their work at the end of each unit. This assessment can take place through questioning, observation, discussion or written work. Pupils' written work provides useful evidence of attainment and progress. Attainment is recorded on FFT curriculum tracker. Pupils in KS1 and 2 have a dedicated RE / Reflection book in which they record and reflect on their work.

## **Right of Withdrawal**

RE at Buckland Church of England School is inclusive but we respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from religious education. We also respect the right of teachers to withdraw from teaching RE, although recruitment procedures will ensure appointed staff are sympathetic with the aims of a Church school.



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### **Monitoring and review**

The RE co-ordinator monitors RE by collecting samples of work, observing lessons, talking to children, scrutinising pupil's work books and analysing medium term plans to support and evaluate the planning.

We are aware of the need to review the school Religious Education policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will review our policy every two years.