



RE Policy

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Approved by Chair _____

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Statement of Intent

RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It can develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these. RE also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society.'

At Busill Jones Primary, we believe that Religious Education (RE) contributes to the general ethos and values of the school and helps to equip children for life in a multi-cultural society. Our Religious Education programme is to help pupils develop knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practice and understand the influence and impact of religion on people's lives. We aim to develop the children's ability to discuss and consider some of the issues arising from the study of religion. Pupils who follow the RE programme in our school gain a deep knowledge and understanding of the teachings, practices and life stories expressed in a variety of ways within Christianity and other principal religions and world views. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, they grow in respect for themselves and others. RE is an important curriculum subject. It is important in its own right and also makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and supports wider community cohesion.

The Legal Position

The Government is keen to ensure all pupils receive high-quality RE.

The Legal Position By law, (Education Act 1996), Religious Education:

- Must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools and school sixth forms, except to those withdrawn by their parents.
- All pupils in England and Wales must participate in a daily act of worship, which is to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" except to those withdrawn by their parents/guardians.
- Is a component of the basic curriculum to be taught alongside the national curriculum in all maintained schools. In all such schools, other than aided schools, it must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus.
- Section 375(3) requires 'the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'
- All academies are required, through their funding agreements, to teach RE:

For academies without a religious character, this will be the locally agreed syllabus.

At Busill Jones Primary, RE provides opportunities for children to:

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain;

- Explore issues within and between faiths to help them understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stories), and understand the influence of these on individuals, societies, communities and cultures;
- Consider questions of meaning and purpose in life;
- Learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues;
- Develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society;
- Develop enquiry and response skills through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy;
- Reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses.

The above aims can be achieved if we:

- Foster children's feelings of awe, wonder, delight, joy and mystery; extend their natural curiosity and help them to use their imagination in order to extend their spiritual development;
- Encourage children to recognise their own value and importance as individuals; promote their social development so that they can give as well as receive, and develop their understanding that life is a series of significant stages;
- Help children to understand the religious beliefs, attitudes and activities of other people and develop and express their own beliefs and values;
- Help children to consider their personal response to moral issues, assist them in their early exploration of the meaning of life, and help them face and learn from painful experiences which they encounter such as fear, suffering and death;
- Consider some basic religious concepts and ways in which they have been expressed in sacred books, language and writings, symbols and the arts, daily living and rituals;
- Introduce children to the lives of key figures in various religions and to people who have responded to their teaching and example;
- Familiarise children with stories, which are an authentic part of religious traditions;
- Provide opportunities for children to share in memorable and festive experiences from various cultures and traditions, thus stimulating questions about the meaning of such occasions.

Equal opportunity

We are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability.

Approaches to Teaching

Religious Education Religious Education is included in topics that lend themselves to cross-curricular themes: where this is not appropriate, Religious Education is taught as a separate subject. The

Agreed Syllabus lists the Programmes of Study for the Key Stages in Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism and Judaism as follows:

Foundation Stage:

Although RE is not explicitly mentioned as part of the Goals in the Foundation Stage, it still has to be delivered. Opportunities for Religious Education can be identified in all areas of learning and should include:

- Religious festivals and ceremonies
- Creation Stories
- Food in different religions
- Visiting special religious places
- Listening to explicitly religious stories
- Responding to pictures/photographs, songs, music and religious artefacts.

Key Stage 1:

- Special Occasions including Christmas and Easter
- Artefacts and Symbols
- Forms of Religious Expression
- Special People
- Special Places

Key Stage 2 :

- The main features and underlying themes of customs and festivals
- The main features of places of worship
- Forms of religious expression
- Main beliefs and stories associated with the religions
- Key religious figures and leaders
- Roles of Religious leaders in Religious activities
- Codes of Conduct/Lifestyle/Appearance associated with religion

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that: 'All pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct

knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

Busill Jones Primary recognise that there are many elements to learning within the RE curriculum, and for this reason, children are able to achieve targets within these four key areas:

- **Spiritual:** Pupils who follow the RE programme are challenged to gain a deeper awareness of their own and others' identities, and to wrestle with the mysteries of life and the answers given by a wide variety of religions and beliefs; and they are encouraged to develop and apply a vision of the values and virtues that promote the well-being of all.
- **Moral and Social:** pupils who follow the RE programme gain a deep knowledge and understanding of the teachings, practices and life stories expressed in a variety of ways within Christianity and other principal religions and worldviews. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, they grow in respect for themselves and others.
- **Cultural:** Pupils who follow the RE programme encounter the transformative power of religions and beliefs in people's lives – in the local area, in Britain and in the wider world. They demonstrate curiosity about men and woman of faith and commitment who have changed individual lives, societies and cultures.

Through RE, they are enabled to explore different visions of a better world, and challenged to consider how they might imagine and contribute to the creation of that 'better world' for the well-being of all.

British Values

The DfE and Ofsted expect schools to teach the fundamental British values of: democracy; the rule of the law; individual liberty; mutual respect; and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. They must also promote principles that support equality of opportunity for all. The main way schools are encouraged to uphold these fundamental British values is through delivering a broad and balanced curriculum including religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school's ethos is also a key component, along with the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understandings.

- **Mutual tolerance:** Schools do not accept intolerant attitudes to members of the community: attitudes that reject other people on the basis of race, faith, gender, sexual orientation or age are, rightly, challenged. A baseline for a fair community is that each person's right to 'be themselves' is to be accepted by all. Tolerance may not be enough: RE can challenge children and young people to be increasingly respectful and to celebrate diversity, but tolerance is a starting point. It is much better than intolerance.
- **Respectful attitudes:** In the RE curriculum attention is focused on developing mutual respect between those of different faiths and beliefs, promoting an understanding of what a society gains from diversity. Pupils will learn about diversity in religions and worldviews, and will be encouraged to respect other persons who see the world differently from themselves. Recognition and

celebration of human diversity in many forms can flourish where pupils understand different faiths and beliefs, and are challenged to be broad-minded and open-hearted.

- **Democracy:** In RE, pupils realise the significance of each person's ideas and experiences through methods of discussion. In debating the fundamental questions of life, pupils learn to respect a range of perspectives. This contributes to learning about democracy, examining the idea that we all share a responsibility to use our voice and influence for the well-being of others. The rule of law: In RE, pupils examine different examples of codes for human communities. They find out about how individuals and communities define and choose between good and evil, right and wrong, and they learn to apply these ideas to their own communities. They learn to consider the idea that fairness requires that the laws should apply equally to all, irrespective – for example – of a person's status or wealth. They may also explore some inspirational life stories of those who broke the law, to establish something better.

- **Individual liberty:** In RE, pupils consider questions about identity, belonging and diversity, learning what it means to live a life free from constraints. They study examples of pioneers of human freedom, including those from different religions, so that they can examine tensions between the value of a stable society and the value of change for human development.

Teaching of RE

RE will be taught in half termly topics. However, in order to deliver the full requirements of knowledge, skills and understanding in RE, cross curricular activities will be developed. Children are given the opportunity to work as a class, as part of a group or as individuals. The choice of class organisation will be determined by the learning task or activity, the nature of the topic being studied and the resources being used. This applies to class based work and visit based activities.

At Busill Jones Primary, RE has a one hour timetabled weekly slot. Recommended time: KS1 - 36 hours per year, KS2 - 45 hours per year.

Daily Acts of Collective Worship

Daily acts of collective worship include whole school assemblies, hymn practice, assemblies within key stages/phases and, where there is no assembly taking place, within the classroom. For non-faith schools with secular or multi-faith demographics such as ours, collective worship can involve reflection on the things, or principles, that give pupils' lives meaning. These include:

- enhancing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through self-reflection, which necessitates serious thought about one's character, actions and beliefs;
- engaging them through relevant cross-curricular links;
- providing an opportunity to use a range of activities that support collective worship while fulfilling our legal obligations.

Special Educational Needs

In order to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve at their highest levels, differentiation in religious education will include:

- the delivery of carefully structured teaching approaches
- the provision of imaginative learning experiences which arouse and sustain children's interest
- supporting the learning which takes place in RE by what is taught in other curriculum areas.

How we cater for pupils who are more able

Where possible more able pupils will be taught with their own class and stretched through differentiated group work and extra challenges. When working with the whole class, teachers will direct some questions towards the more able to maintain their involvement. Very occasionally, special arrangements will be made for an exceptionally gifted pupil e.g. they may follow an individualised programme with more challenging problems to tackle.

Religious Clothing and the Law

The current position is that schools/academies are allowed to decide what pupils must and must not wear to school. However, they are restricted by human rights issues, such as Article 9 and Article 10 the Freedom of Expression. There also exists domestic legislation (The Equality Act 2010) which provides protection in the sense that it outlaws direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of religion. Some religions and beliefs require their adherents to conform to a particular dress code, or to otherwise outwardly manifest their belief. This could include wearing or carrying specific religious artefacts, not cutting their hair, dressing modestly, or covering their head. Pupils have the right to manifest a religion or belief, but not necessarily at all times, places or in a particular manner. At Busill Jones Primary, we aim to meet and accommodate most religious requirements and will balance the rights of individual pupils against the best interests of the school community as a whole.

Teaching Methods

As well as traditional class-based teaching, we visit a variety of places of worship such as Churches of different denominations, Synagogues, Mosques, Gurdwaras and Hindu Temples. We welcome visitors into school to talk about their faith and beliefs. We teach through stories, appropriate interactive programmes and by studying artefacts. The children will have the opportunity to respond to material in a variety of ways. This may be through: poems, stories, reports on visits, art work, design and technology, music, drama, speaking and listening, displays and the personal behaviour of the children themselves. In addition, RE can be taught using a cross-curricular approach.

Cross Curricular Links

RE naturally lends itself to a range of cross curricular activities. In History, people have always had their own belief systems which played a major part in the events and attitudes that shaped their society. Geographically, religion plays a major part in life in different parts of the world. Creative arts are an important part of many faiths and the ways in which they express their faith and have been inspired by their spirituality. Literacy provides the medium to demonstrate learning about - and from - religions and is obviously a valuable tool. Cross-curricular dimensions such as identity, cultural diversity and community cohesion provide important unifying themes that help young people make

sense of the world and give education relevance. They reflect the major ideas and challenges that face individuals and society and can provide a focus for work within and between subjects and across the curriculum as a whole.

Community Cohesion

RE makes an important contribution to our duty to promote community cohesion. It provides key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. At Busill Jones, we use RE to promote community cohesion:

- Within the school, through the exploration, promotion and celebration of diversity, beliefs and values;
- At the local level, investigating patterns of diversity of religion and belief, and forging links with different groups;
- At the national level, through the study of the diversity of religion and belief across the UK and how this influences national life;
- At the global level, through the discussion and acknowledgment of current matters of international significance, recognising the impact of the diversity of religion.

Resources

Religious artefacts and other resources are stored in the RE cupboard. It is the role of the subject coordinator to ensure resources are purchased and available to the school. Each year, a request list will be sent out to staff in order to target these resources effectively.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Not everything that is taught in RE can be assessed; but opportunities should be provided at regular intervals for pupils to demonstrate what they have learned about religions (Attainment Target 1) and what they have learned from religion (Attainment Target 2).

In the Foundation Stage, assessment in RE will be particularly linked to the following three Early Learning Goals - Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Creative Development.

The Walsall agreed syllabus for RE gives clear guidelines for assessing pupil achievement in RE. Assessment can take place at three connected levels: short-term, medium term and long-term. These assessments can be used to inform teaching in a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessment. Short-term assessments will be an informal part of every lesson to check pupils' understanding and give information, which will help teachers to adjust day-to-day lesson plans. Medium-term assessments will take place after each unit has been completed. Long-term assessments will take place towards the end of the school year to assess and review pupils' progress and attainment. Accurate information will then be reported in the end of year reports.

Withdrawal

Parents may withdraw their child from Religious Education provided they give written notification to the school. 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 there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship. We hope that parents will contact our Head Teacher to discuss RE in school before making any decision. Teachers may exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject. However, we hope that all parents and teachers would feel comfortable with the type of Religious Education being taught at our school.

The Role of the Subject Leader

- Promote the profile of RE within the school and beyond.
- Provide leadership and direction for RE
- Ensure RE is managed and organised to meet school and subject aims and objectives.
- Ensure practice improves the quality of RE provided
- Support, guide and motivate teachers and other adults responsible for delivering RE
- Be involved in monitoring and moderation
- Contribute to the Improvement Plan of the school
- Ensure that there are adequate and appropriate resources to deliver the RE Curriculum, to maintain resources and acquire new resources as necessary.

This policy is to be reviewed annually unless there are any changes within the Trust.