

# Religious Education Policy

Swanbourne CE School

Mursley CE School

Drayton Parslow Village School

Kingfishers Pre-School (Mursley)

(In this policy known as the Three Schools)



This policy was adopted on – **November 2024**

The policy is to be reviewed by – **November 2026**

(Copies of this policy are available for staff, parents, visitors and volunteers on request from the school office).

## **Introduction**

We at The Three Schools believe that pupils should be provided with opportunities to encounter a philosophical and sometimes spiritual approach to life, by the study of religions and relationships. They should also be encouraged to acknowledge feelings as an important part of life and will encounter the ethos and atmosphere of a Church of England School.

## **The Place of R.E. in the School**

All children should receive Religious Education provision from Foundation to the end of KS2.

Christianity has a central role in the curriculum (at least 50% following the statement of entitlement; at The Three Schools this is approximately 2/3). Other faiths are covered as outlined in the Oxford Diocese R.E Scheme of Work and the locally agreed Buckinghamshire R.E syllabus. We use the Oxford Diocese Syllabus for planning and teaching of RE.

RE is taught as a curriculum subject for 36 hours a year in Key Stage 1, and 45 hours a year in Key Stages 2 (this is 5% of curriculum time). R.E is integrated with other subjects as part of an overall theme or as a discrete RE topic. Religious Education in its definition is separate from the daily act of collective worship.

## **INTENT**

“Religious education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness (*John 10:10*). It will help educate for dignity and respect, encouraging all to live well together.”

Church of England Statement of Entitlement

We live in a wonderfully diverse and multicultural world. It is our intention that every pupil at The Three Schools

- understands Christianity as the religion that shaped British culture and heritage and appreciates how it influences the lives of millions of people today;
- learns about the other major religions, their impact on culture and politics, art and history, and on the lives of believers;
- develops an understanding of religious faith as the search for and expression of truth;
- shows respect for different views, beliefs and opinions;
- challenges stereotypes;
- has an opportunity to develop their own spiritual / philosophical convictions, exploring and enriching their own faith and beliefs.

We aim to contribute to the development of pupils as individuals and members of society by fostering a reflective attitude to life, in the context of a growing understanding of the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, relationships and religious practices of the human race. We aim to help prepare them for life in the wider world, by broadening their experiences and encounters with others faiths and beliefs different to their own whilst at the same time embedding an understanding of our school's Christian vision and values. We aim for the children to have a broad knowledge and understanding of other faiths and to make links between different faiths and their own lives.

To reach these aims we encourage children to reflect and question what it means to be human through exploration of shared experiences, personal search of life's big questions (questions of origin, identity, purpose, morality, value, meaning) and relating these to insights into the world faiths.

Religious Education also aims to develop the skills to make sense of what has been learnt and apply this learning to ones' own life. Legally parents have the right to request their child is excused wholly from religious education.

## **Withdrawal from religious education**

Parents may withdraw their children from all or any part of religious education and teachers can exercise their right to withdraw from teaching the subject. However, we hope that all parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the type of religious education being taught at the Three Schools. Parents who wish to withdraw their children are asked to provide written notification to this effect.

We aim to foster spiritual development in RE by encouraging the whole child to flourish within our Christian ethos. This includes developing the most distinctive and desirable capacities of the human person based on the Christian principles of faith, hope and love.

## **We aim to foster Community Cohesion by helping pupils to;**

- Understand what faith means today for the majority of people on this planet, their significant beliefs and practices, their histories and their stories;
- Develop understanding of the distinctive beliefs of different faiths and to debate areas of common interest;
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities and cultures;
- Develop an ability to make a reasoned and informed judgement about religious and moral issues with reference to religion;
- Develop a positive attitude towards people and respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of diverse religions;
- Explore and understand the faith-based roots of laws, traditions and teachings designed to bind a community together;
- Connect with some aspects of their own local community's faith heritage and how this has characterized these islands for centuries in order to make sense of how this country came to be the way it is today.
- Enhance their own spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:
- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life and how religious teachings relate to them;
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their own understanding and experience;
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Religious Education Curriculum and Organisation**

To ensure high standards of teaching and learning in Religious Education, we implement a curriculum that is progressive throughout the school. The Three Schools follow the Oxford Diocese Religious Education Scheme of Work, complemented by units and resources taken from Understanding Christianity. This scheme is based largely on the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus 2018-23, but covers the requirements of the Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Syllabi.

Each unit has a "Big Question" which has been created to allow children to experience AT1 and AT2 in every unit. The assumption is that Christianity will be the main religion taught (covering at least 50% of the curriculum), in accordance with the national guidelines and the statement of entitlement. In addition, Judaism will be taught in KS1, and Hinduism and Islam covered in KS2. Many of the questions are adapted to cover other faiths as required by the demands of the Buckinghamshire syllabus.

Each unit consists of an outline plan and an assessment sheet. These are used in conjunction by the class teacher in planning the unit of work. Neither is exhaustive or exclusive, but are used as a starting point. Throughout each unit there are opportunities to revisit prior learning through planned questions based on learning from the previous year, a previous unit and the previous lesson. This is to ensure that pupils know and remember more.

There are 5 or 6 units for each year. Teachers plan on termly and weekly basis, using standard school planning sheets. The Headteacher and RE subject leader have overall responsibility to ensure planning sheets are completed. Teachers plan units of work in line with the scheme of work, with guidance on key ideas from the Oxford Diocese Scheme of work supplemented by Understanding Christianity.

Discussions take place between staff as individuals, within key stages and as whole staff formally and informally at INSET and staff meetings.

### **Progression in the RE Scheme of Work**

#### **Foundation Stage**

RE can make contribution to all areas of learning within Foundation Stage, however it has particular importance towards '*People and Communities*' within Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

In Foundation Stage, RE is closely linked to the topics being studied where appropriate. There is also focus on religious festivals during the year, including Christmas, Easter, Rosh Hashanah and Diwali.

**Key Stage 1 – at the end of KS1 pupils should be able to:**

Enquiry about the Nature of religion & belief

- a) Talk about signs and symbols that are important to them and other people
- b) Talk about the importance of story and the questions that stories raise
- c) Ask their own questions about God, special people, places and occasions
- d) Show respect for different beliefs and opinions
- e) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

Knowledge and Understanding of Christianity

- a) Recall and recognise the important stories of Christianity – Creation, Christmas & Easter
- b) Recall key Christian beliefs about Jesus and some of the stories he told
- c) Say something about how and why Christians care for the world
- d) Say something about how Christians demonstrate their relationship with God e.g. through baptism and celebrations
- e) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

Knowledge and Understanding of Judaism

- a) Recall stories about key figures from Judaism – Moses & Abraham etc.
- b) Say how stories are an inspiration for Jews
- c) Recall the key features of the synagogue, Shabbat and one other festival (Sukkot or Rosh Hashanah)
- d) Say something about how and why Jewish people care for the world
- f) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

**Lower Key Stage 2 - At the end of Year 4 pupils should be able to:**

Enquiry about the Nature of religion & belief

- a) Compare simple Christian, Jewish and Hindu ideas about God
- b) Ask important questions about prayer, worship, miracles and pilgrimage
- c) Link their own ideas about how to live a good life to the teachings of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism
- d) Show how signs and symbols can communicate important beliefs
- e) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

Knowledge and Understanding of Christianity

- a) Describe some of the different ways that Christians express their beliefs by belonging to a church / congregation / community
- b) Describe some of the things that Christians learn about Jesus from the New Testament especially the Gospel stories of his birth & resurrection, his miracles and the stories he told
- c) Describe the importance to a Christian of prayer and commemoration (e.g. Communion and Lent)
- d) Describe the links a Christian might make between Easter and the Passover story
- e) Make links between the Christmas & Easter stories and key beliefs about Jesus (Incarnation & resurrection / salvation)
- f) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

Knowledge and Understanding of Hinduism and other religions and worldviews

- a) Describe what Hindus might learn from Murtis and symbols
- b) Describe what believers might learn from Hindu stories about Rama & Sita, Krishna, Creation and the Trimurti
- c) Describe the importance of prayer and worship in Hindu life
- d) Describe some of the rules and guidance used by Hindus and Jews and how these might be applied to working with others
- e) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

**Upper Key Stage 2 - At the end of Year 6 pupils should be able to:**

Enquiry about the nature of religion and belief

- a) Describe and explain different ideas about human relationships with reference to 3 faiths explored
- b) Ask important questions about religious experience & revelations and moral choices referring to the faiths studied
- c) Ask and suggest answers about important questions about life after death with reference to the faiths studied
- d) Describe and explain the different views of sacred space, sacred text and sacred people with reference to two faiths
- e) Begin to reflect on different perspectives including non-religious and Humanist ideas
- f) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

### Knowledge and Understanding about Christianity

- a) Make links between Jesus life and teaching and different form of Christian action e.g. ritual, protest, charity
- b) Describe and compare different Christian beliefs about how God might communicate with humans exploring concepts of sacred texts, revelation and the Holy Spirit
- c) Describe and compare different ideas Christians may have about salvation and life after death
- d) Describe how Christians express beliefs of Jesus as “God made man” and Saviour in art and worship
- e) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

### Knowledge and understanding about Muslim/Sikh faith

- a) Make links between Muslim/Sikh teachings about God and guidance for life
- b) Describe and compare how important aspects of Muslim/Sikh beliefs are reflected in the buildings and practices of a community
- c) Describe and compare different ways of demonstrating commitment to a tradition of religion and belief
- d) Describe and compare different ideas about life after death within Islam/Sikhism
- e) Use appropriate examples to support their ideas and opinions

### **Spiritual Development Opportunities**

Although Spiritual development is promoted throughout the work and life of our school, RE is the lead curriculum subject where spiritual development and education should be a central aim. RE provides opportunities for pupils to:

- Develop an awareness of the human quest to make sense of the world and human predicament and seek an ultimate meaning and purpose
- Become aware of ultimate questions and learn about and be challenged by the different answers offered by Christianity and other major religions
- Learn about the beliefs and values and different understandings of the spiritual life, spiritual development and spiritual practices in religious and other traditions
- Encourage an understanding and respect for those who hold views different from their own
- Develop their own belief and values
- Respond to religious stories, artefacts and places of worship

### **IMPACT**

The successful and effective approach at The Three Schools results in an engaging, reflective and high-quality Religious Education, providing the pupils with the foundations for understanding the wonderfully diverse and multicultural world in which we live.

Our approach enables children to think reflectively about the world around them and their engagement with the local and wider communities; consider their own beliefs and how they influence the way they choose to live; challenge stereotypes; and learn to listen to and treat others with respect so that we can all live well together. This is achieved through a variety of events throughout the year which include various workshops, trips and interactions with visitors, as well as first-hand experiences from believers, including a strong link to the local church.

**Cultural Development and Community Cohesion** in RE provides opportunities for children to:

- Develop their understanding of cultural and other diversity within our society and how the lives of others can enrich our own by studying and experiencing first hand religious beliefs and practices.
- Explore the roles of religion within communities
- Investigating the similarities as well as the differences between religions and cultures
- Develop respect for people and things e.g. studying special places, festivals, sacred texts and investigating sites of pilgrimage.
- Develop sensitivity to the feelings, needs and lives of others in the world, special things and special people, what makes our world special, developing understanding of fasting during Ramadan.

## **Teaching and Learning Strategies**

A wide range of teaching and learning strategies are employed to bring RE learning to life and stimulate learning from religion such as discussion, group work, circle time, drama and role play, games and activities, research, artefacts, visitors and visits. These teaching methods may include the use cross curricular links such as dance, drama, music, art, DT, and ICT. Teachers ensure activities are varied, effective and enable progression and appropriate challenge for each year group and meet the Age-Related Expectation (ARE) for pupils working at ARE, in line with ARE or below ARE as clearly defined in the assessment table at the end of each unit of work from the ODBE RE Scheme of work.

## **Differentiation**

Each class teacher is responsible for differentiating the RE work in their class. This can be done by task or outcome based on a common theme. The RE syllabus sets the themes and class teachers have the flexibility to fit the theme into the most appropriate term. Teachers must be aware of the variety of experience children bring to the classroom that is relevant to this subject area and work to extend each child from its individual starting point.

## **Assessment**

Children are assessed against the suggested age-related outcomes by the ODBE in line with the agreed Bucks Syllabus. These cover the following enquiry focus:

### **Knowing it...**

Core knowledge and understanding of texts, stories and key beliefs.

### **Living it...**

The practice and participation in faith communities; diversity of beliefs in action personally, locally and globally

### **Linking it...**

Comparing and contrasting, evaluating and appraising and making links to their own and others' lives.

Assessment takes place through tasks and quizzes planned into the learning itself as well as an end of unit assessment. Each activity is linked to specific Age-Related Expectations for each year group. Children are able to demonstrate their K+U and application of RE skills in a specific unit through their performance against the ARE criteria at the end of each 'Big question' unit of work.

It is recognised that there are aspects of RE that cannot, and should not, be assessed.

Assessments against the learning objectives and the 'Big Questions' are made at the end of each unit. All RE assessments are passed on to the RE subject leader at the end of each half term for monitoring and evaluation of progression and the effectiveness of the activities used to deliver the Oxford Diocese RE scheme of work for our pupils to identify the percentage of pupils who are meeting the ARE, are below the ARE or are working above the ARE.

## **Recording and Reporting**

Pupils work may be recorded in a variety of ways and may be cross curricular (i.e. a piece of art work). Parents will receive their child's end of year assessment as part of their general report, at the end of the academic year. The teachers will have records of the themes covered and approaches taken, in their planning documents. Where possible, teachers should also try to include ICT to develop learning. Each class has a scrap book to record the pupils' reflections, contributions to discussions and photos of drama activities. Each pupil in KS2 also has an exercise book to record independent work to inform teacher assessments.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is the responsibility of each teacher to monitor and evaluate the lessons and units based on the 'Big questions' delivered to the children in their class. The RE co-ordinator and the Headteacher are jointly responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of RE teaching throughout the school. The co-ordinator will keep the staff informed of current RE matters and monitor continuity and progression as well as quality. This monitoring will consist of RE lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutiny and pupil voice interviews to evaluate the impact of RE teaching and learning across the Three Schools.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Opportunities to take part in RE must be open and available to all pupils. All children should be allowed access to and given confidence in the different activities offered, regardless of their ability, gender, religion or cultural/ethnic background. The content of lessons and resources available should ensure that all pupils are valued equally, are able to participate with enjoyment and are able to achieve qualities and standards appropriate to their age, experience and abilities.

When planning any programme to include those with special educational needs, the following principles should be taken into account:

- Entitlement – all children are entitled to take part in any programme.
- Accessibility – the programme should be open and accessible to all pupils in a variety of ways, such as modified rules and equipment
- Integration – modifications should facilitate the full integration of all pupils as far as possible
- Integrity – where modifications are needed, the activity undertaken should remain relevant and meaningful.
- Locations

## **Resources**

- R.E. resources are kept in religion boxes in the RE co-ordinator's cupboard in the Hall and in the store room in new classroom.
- Some useful books can be found in the school library. A wide range of websites and resource links are available to support the teaching and learning of RE and to stretch the more able and gifted. An edited list of resource links is below, although many more can be located through a search engine.
- A copy of the Oxford Diocese Scheme of Work for KS1 and KS2 is on the Teacher's shared drive and a paper copy is kept in the RE Subject Leadership folder.
- Overviews for each unit, as well as possible assessment tasks and links to Understanding Christianity are saved on the Teacher's shared drive and a paper copy is kept in the RE Subject Leadership folder.
- Books for Worship are found in the Hall and Store Room

## **RE Resource Links**

- The links below are to sources of support which you may find useful. They are suggestions for you to use at your discretion
- RE Today
- NATRE: National Association of Teachers of RE
- RE Quest
- RE Online
- BBC Bitesize has a large range of RE resources for all levels
- REQM: The RE Quality Mark website
- Heart of Hinduism:
- Sikhiwiki: The Encyclomedia of the Sikhs
- Board of Jewish Education: Judaism pages for kids
- Jewish Heritage Centre for children:
- Islamkids: Islam resources for Primary Schools
- Stories about the Buddha: the Buddhanet site includes a wide range of background material

**Reviewed: November 2024**

**Alison Featherston and Sarah Carter (RE Subject Leaders)**

**Date of next review: November 2026**