



# Religious Education Policy

*Maximum Effort for Maximum Achievement*

Religious Education (RE) enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the fundamental questions asked by people. At Buttsbury Junior School we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths, and we address some of the fundamental questions in life. Children reflect on what it means to have faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. This is delivered through three core themes of Theology, Philosophy and Human/Social Sciences.

The teaching of RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied to the RE curriculum. The RE curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Lesson content is based upon the Essex Agreed Syllabus. Lesson content may be adapted to meet the needs of individual classes or to make links with other subject areas.

RE is established as a valuable and worthwhile subject in the school's overall curriculum.

1. It helps children to be aware of and to understand their own and other people's cultures and beliefs. It can help to teach tolerance and respect for those whose ideas differ from their own.
2. RE helps children to make sense of religion, to appreciate its influence and to understand the part it plays in other people's lives.
3. RE helps children to reflect on their inner feelings, questions, thoughts and experiences, and helps them to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives.
4. It helps children to mature in their beliefs, values and attitudes; it encourages them to appreciate those of other peoples in the world and helps them to arrive at the decisions that life calls for in a responsible way.

### **Intent**

The intentions for teaching RE at Key Stage 2 are contained in "Essex Agreed Syllabus 2022" and are summarised below:

- To know about and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews by learning to see these through theological, philosophical and human/social science lenses.
- To express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and non-religious worldviews through a multi-disciplinary approach.
- To gain and deploy skills rooted in theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences engaging critically with religious and non-religious worldviews.

### **Implementation**

Each class is taught RE on a weekly basis, with a dedicated lesson on the subject. Further teaching in R.E is delivered through special occasions and assemblies.

### **Cross Curricular Opportunities**

#### **Literacy**

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of Literacy in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in Literacy Lessons have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion and dramatic presentation.

#### **Computing**

We use ICT where appropriate in RE. The children find, select and analyse information, using the internet, ipads and the laptops. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and Citizenship**

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Through teaching RE in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We believe that it is important for all children to experience a rich and varied RE Curriculum. We will use opportunities within RE to challenge stereotypes. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and that the children have different experiences of religion. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child, and by providing a wide range of activities to address all learning styles. We use teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children where relevant and available.

### **Special Educational Needs**

At our school we teach to all children, whatever their ability. RE forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs

### **Progression in Religious Education**

We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with Essex Agreed Syllabus. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

### **Resources**

Most resources will be held centrally in year groups. The use of artefacts is an important part of teaching children about different faiths, allowing them to see, touch and study items of special importance to others, and to treat them with the respect, which befits such artefacts. The school has links with local churches and members of other denominational groups who visit the school. Opportunities to widen these links are constantly being sought i.e. inviting in speakers to deal with a particular aspect of topic work. Care will be taken to ensure that all visitors are reminded of the importance of speaking to the children objectively about their own beliefs. The school library will be equipped with a number of books on different faiths and festivals, and these will be freely available for use by the children.

### **Planning and Assessment and Monitoring of Standards in RE**

It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that RE is adequately covered, and that plans such as records of the work done are available to other teachers, in order that progression can be made. The RE Leader will monitor the standards of work in RE and will monitor the quality of planning.

### **Assessment in RE**

RE is assessed in the same way as our other Foundation subjects. Based on RE objectives the children are assessed as either exceeding national curriculum expectations, working at national expectations or working below expectations.

### **Reporting To Parents**

At the end of each academic year, the child's progress and response to RE will be reported to parents in the child's annual report.

### **Withdrawal Of Children**

Provision will be made for those children whose parents wish to withdraw them from RE. Such children will be given other activities and will be adequately supervised. This may involve the child staying in the classroom.

### **Health and Safety & Handling of Artefacts**

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that equipment is handled safely and that pupils are taught to handle and treat religious artefacts with care and respect.

### **Impact**

Throughout the teaching of RE, teachers follow a Mastery curriculum, whereby all pupils are given the opportunity to learn about religion, and from religion in depth. The impact is that all pupils have a secure understanding of the knowledge taught throughout the curriculum, can remember key facts relating to each religion and can apply their learning to discuss and express their views on some fundamental questions of identity, meaning, purpose and morality.

### **Mastery**

Effective mastery in RE encourages all pupils to think deeply about their own personal values and beliefs, as well as those of others. Higher order questioning during lessons ensures that pupils can reflect on spiritual and ethical issues.

Greater time is spent exploring key ideas, themes and beliefs. Children are encouraged to ask their own deep thinking questions and are given time to contribute to peer discussions and debates. Pupils are encouraged to compare and contrast customs and beliefs from one religion to another.

The use of high quality resources such as artefacts, texts and pictures are used to stimulate curiosity and deep thinking ideas

As a result of this, pupils have a deep understanding of the actions, views and beliefs of others from a range of cultures who may have different viewpoints and beliefs to their own.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Policy Date: Autumn Term 2023

Review Date: Autumn Term 2026