



## Religious Education Policy

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**Lead Person(s):** R. Dyer, Headteacher

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### The school vision

At Burdett-Coutts, we encourage our learners to be ambitious for themselves and for others. We challenge and support them in questioning the world and in finding solutions. Our Christian values of friendship, compassion and service underpin our ethos

***“I can do all things through Him who gives me strength”***

We want our learners to be ready to learn, to be respectful of each other and to feel safe.

This policy aims to highlight the importance of enabling and equipping children with the skills needed to achieve in Religious Education. It provides all staff with guidance to ensure that children are ready, respectful and safe within the areas of RE teaching. This policy outlines the skills, concepts and religious enquiry-based learning required by all staff and children to enable Religious Literacy.

### Introduction

This is an update of the RE policy. This document was based on the policy written in 2014 and the [Religious Education in Church of England Schools Statement of Entitlement](#).

It will be circulated to teaching staff, the Headteacher, the RE Governor and the Vicar of St Stephen’s Church for discussion and comment.

### Summary of the Governors’ Directive for RE

The school should provide:

- A framework for Christian teaching.
- Insights into the life and concerns of the worldwide Christian Church.
- Teaching about other world faiths; Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism & Buddhism.



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- Opportunities for children to develop their own awareness of life from a spiritual perspective, so that they might grow to their own beliefs and decisions.
- Agreement in the decision to teach through the New Diocesan RE Syllabus.

### Rationale/Definition

At Burdett-Coutts and Townshend Foundation CE Primary School we believe that children should come to a knowledge and understanding of religious experiences, insights, worship and traditions.

Children should both gain a knowledge and understanding of religion (learning about religion: the content – Attainment Target 1) as well as being taught to reflect on the meaning of religion (learning from religion: the skills - Attainment Target 2).

Through gaining an understanding of religion in this way, children will develop the skills, concepts and language through which they will be able to search for, question and develop their own religious beliefs as well as learning to respect and understand the worship and traditions of others.

It is our belief that giving children the opportunity to explore life from a spiritual perspective is integral to the education of the whole child and impacts upon all areas of the curriculum.

Through Religious Education a wide variety of skills, concepts and knowledge are developed, including:

- **Enquiry/ exploration:** the ability to ask questions and explore different opinions for example through interviewing people, discussions, observing religious festivals and artefacts.
- **Persuasion:** the ability to develop an argument.
- **Reasoning:** the ability to provide reasons for responses, making judgements and deductions.
- **Evaluation Skills:** the ability to develop criteria for judging and evaluating their own work.
- **Communication / expression:** the development of creative and artistic skills through expression of what they believe, what they have discovered or their responses to story, information or experience.
- **Sensitivity / empathy:** which should enable the children to enter imaginatively into the views and practices of other people and so come to understand and respect them.
- Knowledge: of the Christian faith and of other religions.
- **Moral understanding:** children should develop not just knowledge of right and wrong but an understanding and personal conviction about why things are right and wrong.
- **Self-understanding / reflection:** which should provide the opportunity for children to become aware of and develop their attitudes and beliefs.



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As a Church of England school, our religious education and moral framework is based on Christian beliefs and practices consistent with the Anglican tradition and Christianity is the main religion taught. Christian beliefs and values, of the Anglican Church and of other Christian denominations, underpin our educational framework and ethos (see 'On Being a Church of England School').

However, it is also important to gain an understanding and respect of other religions, and these will be taught both formally, through units on some of the major world faiths, and informally especially through learning from the religions of children within our school community. Currently, children come from a variety of religions, which include Christianity (Church of England, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal and others), Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and those of no religious affiliation.

### Objectives

Through Religious Education, children at Burdett-Coutts should be taught:

- To know about the life and teaching of Jesus.
- To know, understand and explore the worship and traditions of the Church.
- To know, understand and explore the beliefs and practices of other world faiths, including Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism.
- To be able to respect and show interest in their own and others' religious beliefs.
- To be able to question and explore spiritual and religious beliefs, practices and experiences.
- To understand and explore moral issues of right and wrong, enabling them to develop a responsible and caring attitude for the world in which we live, and the courage and conviction to stand up for their beliefs.
- To express and communicate their beliefs or responses to what they learn or experience in a variety of creative ways.
- To enjoy exploring, investigating and discussing religious questions.
- To understand the importance of religious traditions and worship in the world, in terms of its positive and negative effects and its influence, throughout history, on every aspect of life.
- To develop a personal understanding of fundamental questions in life and how religious thought can help them answer them.
- To know and experience some of the great religious buildings, art and culture in our locality.

### Our Practice

In order to achieve these objectives, staff at Burdett-Coutts should:

#### Plan carefully

- Using the New Diocesan RE syllabus teachers should plan RE lessons that should constitute a minimum of 5% of the teaching time (approximately 1 hour per week in KS1, 1 hour 20 minutes



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in KS2 per week. 1 hour and 20 minutes for KS2 can be achieved through use of activity/discussion book annotated by the class teacher for 20 minutes of thoughtful discussion.

- Teachers should use the New Diocesan RE syllabus planning with the recognition that each lesson must be adapted to suit the needs of pupils with reference to the 'I can' statements and AT1 & 2 Skills Ladder.
- Teacher's planning must differentiate appropriately so that all children are included, whatever their abilities, EAL or Special Needs. Teachers should work with the SENCo and any teaching assistants to ensure equality of opportunity for all children.
- Teachers should be challenging the more able pupils in lessons through extra tasks, given deep thinking response to marking opportunities and giving them a chance to express their religious opinions through debate and discussion.
- Teachers should use artefacts and first hand experiences (such as visits to the many religious sites in London or guest speakers) in their planning wherever possible to enrich the curriculum.

### Evaluate

- Teachers should evaluate each lesson by indicating what the 'Next Steps' for learning should be. This may be done either by annotating the lesson plan or writing notes on the weekly or other short-term plans.

### Assess

- Teachers should assess RE both formally and informally, using a variety of assessment techniques. Assessments should be in line with the school assessment policy.
- A whole class assessment sheet accompanies each unit of work, with objectives taken from Fiona Moss's Skills Ladder. This should be filled in at the end of each unit. The sheet will be analysed by the RE subject leader and a data summary will be created.
- AT1 & 2 objectives will be tracked termly to ensure appropriate coverage over year.

### Model an attitude of respect

Learning in Religious Education involves an attitude of respect towards one's own and other's cultures, beliefs, traditions and worship. Teachers should model this attitude in their conversation and attitude. They should ensure an atmosphere of respect and reflection is maintained in RE lessons and indeed in their class in general.

### Teach with interest and a questioning approach

- Children will be interested in their learning if teachers are interested!
- It is important for a child to know that in RE everyone is a searcher for truth and there are in that sense very few 'right answers'.



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- Teachers should ask open ended questions that encourage discussion.
- Teachers should not always set written activities. RE is a discursive and imaginative subject and a variety of different approaches should be planned including art, drama and discussion.

### **Develop subject knowledge**

Teachers should research any topic they teach so that they are confident of and familiar with the subject matter themselves. To do this they may use: the unit of work, the artefacts/resources in the RE room, refer to the subject knowledge information in RE folders or ask the subject leader for help.

### **Plan for visits related to RE work**

Teachers should make the most of being in the centre of a city with many religious places of interest. Visits to these places can greatly enhance the teaching and experience of RE.

At Burdett-Coutts it is the aim to try and build links with the religious organisations near to the school. We are developing a list of places of worship with a timetable to show where each year group is expected to visit during the year which will be available in the RE folders.

These visits will include both places of Christian worship and visits to the places of worship of other faiths. In particular, teachers are encouraged to use the Church of St Stephen and St John in a variety of ways for different topics as a rich visual aid.

### **Create displays**

Displays should be created in each classroom on a religious theme. There should be a religious display in every classroom, as well as a permanent 'Prayer table,' whose theme needs to be changed on a termly basis in accordance with the current school Christian value and include a photo of work from the Christian Value displayed in the First Floor Hall.

Tables and displays should be interesting, motivating, interactive and well cared for (please see the Display policy). There is also the opportunity to create central displays for RE. The RE displays within classrooms should reflect the key concepts of the Bible where appropriate.

- Creation
- God's People
- Incarnation
- Gospel
- Salvation
- Kingdom of God



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### **To focus on a particular Christian Value to promote the school's Christian ethos**

Each term the whole school will focus on a different Christian value. The chosen value will partially guide both the content of RE lessons and collective worship. Each classroom should reflect the particular Christian value via their prayer table by displaying a range of appropriate posters, books or artefacts.

### **Collect Evidence of Religious work**

It is understood that RE is a discursive subject that will often not involve written work. Teachers should therefore collect evidence in different forms such as labelled drawings, photographs, poems, and artwork.

Where there is no work in books for an RE lesson, evidence should be recorded in the class activity book (for example, through photographs, examples of artwork or displays, quotations from the children, notes about discussions). There must be weekly evidence of work.

### **Big questions and discussions books**

These are to be used to evidence children's learning for AT2 learning from religion. Teachers are to scribe children's big questions and discussion thoughts. This is a good opportunity for teachers to allow a full 1 hour and 20 minutes of RE teaching (required at KS2).

This is not an activity book but should only be written in by the teacher in gold and silver pen. These books should also be used by the children to reflect on their prior learning and discussion points mentioned within a unit of work.

### **The role of the subject leader**

The key responsibilities of the subject leader are as follows (see job description for further details):

- To support teachers in implementing the New Diocesan RE Syllabus.
- To support teachers adapting their planning and the teaching of RE through organising and leading INSET sessions and helping informally with planning and assessments.
- To organise, order and maintain resources.
- To monitor the teaching and assessing of RE.
- To plan for the development of RE teaching in the school so that standards may be raised.
- To ensure RE has a high profile in the school.
- To build and maintain links with St Stephen's Church and other religious organisations close to the school.



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- To have a good knowledge and understanding of RE in the context of the school, statutory curriculum requirements, assessment, the Code of Practise for SEN.
- To set expectations and targets for staff and pupils.
- To analyse and interpret assessment data and to ensure this data is used effectively.
- To develop and implement policies and practices.

### How We Monitor & Evaluate

- Monitoring and evaluation in RE follows the whole school cycle.
- Monitoring and evaluation will involve: collecting in assessments at the end of each unit termly, doing regular work scrutiny, curriculum walks, lesson observations, monitoring adapted planning.
- Monitoring will result in an assessment of what should be done to raise standards in RE, both individually and as a whole school.
- Across the school in 2017-18 most disadvantaged pupils were working at the expected standard.

### Resources

- RE resources are kept in the resources cupboard on the top floor of the building. They are clearly labelled and an inventory is kept with them. There is a signing out book so that we know where the resources have been taken.
- There are many religious sites locally. The co-ordinator is developing a list of places of religious interest to visit and a timetable of visits.
- The clergy at St Stephen's Church are very willing to come and help with or lead parts of lessons in relation to particular topics. This can be arranged either directly or through the RE co-ordinator.
- The Church of St Stephen and St John is a rich visual aid that can be used for many topics (and many different subjects). The clergy are keen for us to use the church as much as possible and are always willing to come and support sessions in the church as well as in school.
- Websites (see websites in RE list)
- The RE co-ordinator is always happy to help with planning, assessing or teaching RE.
- The school's RE adviser is currently Helen Ridding, who can be contacted via the LDBS.