



**ASHTON KEYNES**  
Church of England VC Primary School

# Policy for Religious Education

## **Introduction and mission statement for Ashton Keynes C of E Primary School**

Ashton Keynes Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School. Our aim is to provide the best possible education and opportunities for all our pupils.

As a Church school we try to be distinctive in our approach, emphasising the sense of being part of a much larger Christian family. We also take a pride in the inclusive nature of our school. It has always served the local community, not just Christian families within it. The governors and staff therefore hope that everyone associated with the school will be able to feel a full member of our community.

Mindful of the values of its foundation, the school endeavours to develop an understanding of the spiritual and moral beliefs of the Christian tradition, and to create a community in which pupils, cared for as individuals, are helped to find fulfilment as they grow towards adulthood and in a relationship with God.

There are a number of ways in which the school, in the spirit of its Christian foundation, gives meaning to its controlled status:

It sets out to be a place where the study and practice of the Christian faith are taken seriously, always with sensitivity towards those of other major faiths or no religious beliefs. It seeks to use the extra dimension to school life which the Anglican foundation brings to create an atmosphere of trust and understanding within which moral and spiritual development can be nurtured.

The school tries to be a caring community where each individual is valued. Close links are maintained with Holy Cross Church and The Upper Thames Group of Churches, both in discussion of Religious Education and Worship matters. Representatives from our local church lead our worship regularly and the school joins the Church community for major Christian festivals.

The governors and staff of the school aim to foster the fullest all round development of every child in a happy learning and teaching environment within a Christian framework.

## **The position of Religious Education in Ashton Keynes C of E Primary school**

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that 'Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils'

Ashton Keynes School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School therefore the provision of RE must be in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. The Governors in consultation with the Head teacher have decided to use the Discovery RE scheme of work which follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus for the teaching of other faiths and the Understanding Christianity scheme of work created by the Church of England for the teaching of Christianity .

### **Our School aims for Religious Education.**

1. To understand the nature of religious beliefs and practices of many of major faiths and worldviews which are represented in modern Britain.
2. To develop children's knowledge about Christianity giving them a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice. Children will explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy.
3. To develop a reverence for life, appreciating its wonders and mysteries.

To grow in awareness of themselves and their own beliefs.

To learn how to respect the views of others, even when they are very different from their own.

To provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.

To explore the grand narrative of the Bible through 8 core Christian beliefs. They consider the nature of God and what it means for Christians to be in relationship with the Creator. They explore Christian understanding of the relationship between God and his people in the Old Testament, and make sense of messianic expectations and Christian belief in their fulfilment in Jesus.

Pupils explore the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, within this wider historical and theological context. They consider the present and future aspects of the Kingdom of God. Pupils examine the impact of these beliefs and their outworking in the lives of Christians, through (for example) celebrations, festivals, rituals, creative and spiritual expression, actions and activism, expressions of love and compassion, calls for justice and ethical responses.

## Skills

We want to develop a secure basis of skills which underpin the ability to think, reason and articulate ideas. These skills build upon one another as children progress through the school.

Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<p>I <b>know some similarities and differences</b> between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; -</p> <p>I can <b>explain some similarities and differences</b> between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and - when appropriate - maps.</p> <p>I can <b>explore</b> the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants; -</p> <p>I <b>know some similarities and differences between the natural world</b> around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; -</p> <p>I <b>understand</b> some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.</p>	<p>I can <b>share my own beliefs, ideas and values and talk about my feelings.</b></p> <p>I can <b>name and explore some</b> celebrations, worships or rituals.</p> <p>I <b>know</b> why it is important for some people to belong to a religion.</p> <p>I know <b>some religious symbols and can discuss</b> why they are important.</p> <p>I can <b>discuss how my beliefs</b> affect my behaviour.</p>	<p>I can use religious words and phrases to <b>identify</b> some features of religion and its importance for some people.</p> <p>I can <b>begin to show awareness of similarities</b> in religions.</p> <p>I can <b>retell religious stories and suggest meanings</b> for religious actions and symbols.</p> <p>I can <b>identify how religion is expressed</b> in different ways.</p> <p>I can <b>ask, and respond sensitively to, questions</b> about their own and others' experiences and feelings, in relation to religion and belief.</p> <p>I can <b>recognise that some questions</b> cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer.</p> <p>I can, in relation to matters of right and wrong, <b>recognise my own values and those of others</b></p> <p>I can <b>ask questions</b> to further my own understanding.</p>	<p>I can <b>describe the key aspects of religions</b>, especially the people, stories and traditions.</p> <p>I can begin to identify <b>the similarities and differences</b> between religions.</p> <p>I can use <b>specialist vocabulary</b> when communicating my knowledge.</p> <p>I can <b>discuss</b> my own religious views or opinions</p> <p>I can <b>ask questions</b> to further my own understanding.</p>
Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	

<p>I can use a developing religious vocabulary to <b>describe</b> some key features of religions.</p> <p>I can <b>recognise and share similarities and differences between religions</b>.</p> <p>I can make <b>links between beliefs and sources</b>, including religious stories and sacred texts.</p> <p>I can <b>begin to identify the impact religion has</b> on believers' lives.</p> <p>I can <b>describe some forms of religious expression</b></p> <p>I can <b>identify what influences</b> them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences, in relation to religion and belief.</p> <p>I can <b>ask important questions</b> about religion and beliefs, <b>making links between their own</b> and others' responses.</p> <p>I can <b>make links</b> between religious and non-religious values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.</p>	<p>I can <b>describe the variety</b> of practices and ways of life in religions.</p> <p>I can <b>identify and describe some similarities and differences</b> within and between religions.</p> <p>I can use <b>specialist vocabulary</b> when communicating their knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>I can <b>reflect</b> on what it means to belong to a certain faith and discuss own responses.</p> <p>I can <b>identify what influences</b> them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences, in relation to religion and belief.</p> <p>I can <b>ask important questions</b> about religion and beliefs, <b>making links between their own</b> and others' responses.</p> <p>I can <b>make links</b> between religious and non-religious values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.</p>	<p>I can use developing religious vocabulary to <b>describe and show understanding of</b> sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences.</p> <p>I can <b>make links between</b> religions, beliefs and practices, and <b>describe some similarities and differences</b> both within and between religions.</p> <p>I can <b>describe the impact</b> of religion on people's lives <b>suggest meanings</b> for a range of forms of religious expression</p> <p>I can <b>raise and suggest answers</b> to questions and issues raised by religion and belief.</p> <p>I can <b>apply their ideas</b> relating to their study of religion and belief to their own and other people's lives.</p> <p>I can <b>make links</b> between religious and non-religious values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.</p> <p>I can <b>describe what inspires and influences</b> themselves and others, in relation to religion and belief.</p>
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### Key concepts covered in Understanding Christianity

Understanding Christianity is spiral based learning looking at 8 core concepts over the course of the time the time children are in Primary school.

The concepts are:

- God
- Creation
- Fall
- People of God
- Incarnation
- Gospel
- Salvation
- Kingdom of God

The core concepts are explored in the Understanding Christianity approach, as part of the 'big story' of salvation, as understood within Christianity. This approach will be based around Biblical texts placed within a wider theological context. They consider the nature of God and what it means for Christians to be in relationship with the Creator. They explore Christian understanding of the relationship between God and his people in the Old Testament, and make sense of messianic expectations and Christian belief in their fulfilment in Jesus.

Pupils explore the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, within this wider historical and theological context. They consider the present and future aspects of the Kingdom of God. Pupils examine the impact of these beliefs and their outworking in the lives of Christians, through (for example) celebrations, festivals, rituals, creative and spiritual expression, actions and activism, expressions of love and compassion, calls for justice and ethical responses.

### **Teaching context**

1 hour a week will be allocated for the teaching of Religious Education from Years R to 6.

Religious Education will be taught as a discrete subject generally on a weekly basis. Sometimes work will be blocked and taught in blocks. The curriculum is planned using the Discovery RE (based on Wiltshire agreed syllabus) and the Understanding Christianity scheme of work in half termly blocks.

Religious Education is split into 50% Christianity and 50% other faiths/ worldviews. The faiths and worldviews studied at Ashton Keynes are:

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism
- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- Humanism

The major Christian festivals at appropriate times of the year are Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. These are celebrated in school and sometimes with a link event to the Church community.

We aim to make all children familiar with stories from the Old and New Testaments giving them an understanding of how Christians view these as part of larger narrative linked to the Kingdom of God. This is also supported by our Open the Book team.

### **Teaching Methods**

Our approach will be to use a range of teaching and learning styles to deliver the Religious Education curriculum. These will involve whole class and group teaching with differentiated activities to cater for different abilities within each class. Activities

for the children will include speaking and listening, stories, drama and role play, writing and artwork. Creative activities which allow the children to explore their own ideas and beliefs are important.

Each class should have the opportunity to visit Holy Cross church at least once a year. Reverend Danby has allocated time for each class to spend time with her over the course of the year. Representatives from the church community are also willing to come to school to work with the children in church.

Each child should have the opportunity to visit local places of worship for faiths other than Christianity several times over the course of their seven year journey through the school. This could include visits to synagogues, mosques, mandirs and gurdwaras.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

There are no statutory Key Stage assessments for Religious Education. Both Discovery RE and Understanding Christianity have assessment materials based around assessing children as below age related expectations, age related expectations and above age related expectations in line with the new curriculum standards. Teachers will use their professional judgement and these assessment standards to assess children by:

- Discussion and questioning with children.
- Looking at children's work and assessment tasks
- Evaluating displays
- Carrying out assessment tasks (at the end of each Discovery RE unit or Understanding Christianity unit). These results will be reported twice a year on the RE assessment sheet.
- Age related RE statements are part of the end of year reports to parents.

RE is to be assessed twice a year (term 2 and term 4 or term 3 and term 5). Levels are to be recorded on the RE assessment sheet. Moderation sessions will take place between teachers, RE governor and subject leader to maintain accurate levelling.

At the beginning of each whole term, parents are informed by letter of the curriculum for the term. The Religious Education content is included in this letter.

Recording of Religious Education work will take place in variety of forms depending on the activity and teaching style. This recording may be in the form of:

- Photographs
- Artwork
- Displays
- Written work in a book.

### **Monitoring**

The Religious Education subject leader will collect samples of children's work and compile a portfolio. There will also be book trawls to ensure progression of skills and standards. Learning walks and lesson observations will also be carried out. Children's will sometimes be shared at staff meetings-eg a piece of work connected with a particular festival or key concept.

### **Resources**

There is a good selection of resources for Religious Education and Collective Worship- books, artefacts and DVDs. These are stored:

- Discovery RE suggests many suitable resources for teachers to use as well as internet links.
- Understanding Christianity resources are part of the scheme of work.
- Upstairs in the stock room in boxes based on the World Faiths we study.
- Selection of books are upstairs in the cupboard.
- A good selection of Bibles in the library.
- RE resources on line.

### **Legal Status**

1. Religious Education should be taught to all children in full-time education except those who are withdrawn at the request of their parents. (DfEE Circular 1/94 Para 44) Any child withdrawn from Religious Education must be supervised.

*Parents have the right to request that their son or daughter be withdrawn from all or part of the RE provided at their school. Parents have the right to*



*do this without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus, and that much has changed in RE since the right of withdrawal was enshrined in law. The emphasis in RE is the open exploration of ultimate questions and the examination of a range of religious and non-religious responses to these questions, including the views of pupils. Parents should also recognise that pupils may encounter religion and belief in other parts of the curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal. For example, many schools recognise the importance of promoting social cohesion and this includes helping pupils understand ideas about identity and diversity, including within a religious context and a context of non-religious beliefs.*

2. In Voluntary Controlled schools, Religious Education must be taught in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.
3. Religious Education should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children.
4. An Agreed Syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. 50% of RE teaching each year is based on Christianity.
5. Religious Education is NOT designed to convert children or to urge a particular religion or religious beliefs.