**Religious Education Intent**

At Bedford Drive Primary School, we follow the 2019 Wirral Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and follow an enquiry based ‘Discovery’ RE curriculum. This is a whole school approach and covers the EYFS statutory framework and the National Curriculum.

The RE curriculum focuses on developing critical thinking skills, on personal reflection into the child’s own thoughts and feelings, on growing subject knowledge and nurturing spiritual development. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religious or otherwise, will be enhanced. Pupils are free to make their own choices and decisions concerning religion and belief. RE does not try to persuade but rather to inform and develop the skills with which evaluation can take place.

Enquiries begin with ‘*engagement’* where pupils think how their experience fits with an enquiry, religious or not. ‘*Investigate’* follows, where staff help to guide pupils to gain subject knowledge. ‘*Evaluation’* is next, where pupils draw conclusions about their enquiry and finally ‘*Expression’* where pupils return to their initial thoughts and experience and reflect on how the enquiry influences them. This follows our school curriculum focus firstly on ‘Self’, the ‘Society’, and then ‘Global’. Our knowledge-engaged curriculum means that our pupils learn skills alongside knowledge, ensuring that both are explicitly developed. It builds on pupils’ prior knowledge, development and understanding.

Values are also a crucial element of our curriculum and are woven into RE, along with our UNICEF Rights Respecting School status. Pupils have rich opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. We aim for pupils who understand their own beliefs and have a strong respect and appreciation for the beliefs of others. British Values are also embedded throughout. There are many opportunities to promote tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs and mutual respect.

We have planned a range of experiences for pupils, particularly the disadvantaged, to enhance the curriculum. We have an good relationship with our local church and provide opportunities for members of the Church community to visit school for assemblies. These provide many opportunities that our pupils would not usually have, or which families would not normally be able to afford.

The range of experiences and learning opportunities we offer ensures that our pupils benefit from a variety of academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural activities.

We provide an inclusive curriculum, ensuring those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged can all receive the same opportunities as their peers in RE. Expectations are high for every pupil with appropriate levels of challenge and support. The scheme of work, which we utilise at Bedford Drive is ambitious; helping the children, many of whom start at Bedford Drive below age related expectations, to quickly gain knowledge and skills. We want our pupils to *remember more, know more and understand more* about RE.

Discovery RE is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all pupils. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will tailor each enquiry to meet the needs of the pupils in their classes. To support this differentiation, many enquiries suggest creative learning activities that allow pupils to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. We want our pupils to enjoy RE and thrive from safe enquiry spaces which encourage them to think critically.

Our RE scheme of work is progressive and sequential. There are opportunities for repetition and practise of essential knowledge, skills and understanding. This ensures that pupils are able to revisit previous learning and help them to transfer this learning into the long term memory. Christianity is taught in every year group, with Christmas and Easter given new treatment each year, developing learning in a progressive way. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism are also taught. We aim to build schemas to help our pupils make meaningful connections, develop higher thinking orders and deeper understanding

Within the RE curriculum, we have identified clear end points for each Key Stage and ‘sticky knowledge’ for each year group. We are ambitious for all of our pupils and expect them to work towards and achieve these end points in RE.

**EYFS End Point:**

Our youngest pupils are intrinsically curious, questioning and spiritual, and can through learning opportunities, gain knowledge, skills and experience that supports and prepares them for a challenging KS1 RE curriculum. By the end of Foundation 2, pupils will have been introduced to RE through PSED, specifically ‘Self-confidence and self-awareness’ and Understanding the World, specifically ‘People & Communities’ and ‘The World’.

During the Foundation Stage, Discovery RE covers aspects of RE through big questions which focus on areas like special people, places, times and stories. The EYFS big questions in Discovery RE are: What makes people special? What can we learn from stories? What makes places special? What is Christmas? What is Easter? How do people celebrate?

**KS1 End Point:**

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion through enquiry questions. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other pupils and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

**KS2 End Point:**

After an excellent start to RE in Key Stage 1 and Early years, Pupils will build on their learning of Christianity and now at least two of the other principal religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints. They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education. All relevant and necessary skills which will prepare our pupils for Key Stage 3 RE.

We have carefully analysed and discussed our pupils’ backgrounds, life experiences and cultures which has helped us to design a RE curriculum that is ambitious. It will ensure our pupils can successfully meet the challenges in the next stage of their education and lives. It will, crucially, empower them to feel that their education has purpose and value. They will develop experiences in which they can be of service to the community and wider world.

Oracy is a key element of the curriculum and the development of vocabulary is paramount. Each subject has clearly identified vocabulary that builds up progressively.

Through RE, we intend that the pupils should become:

**Self - Successful learners** – we want our pupils to be knowledgeable, articulate, curious, critical thinkers and have a sense of achievement in RE. We provide opportunities and experiences for our pupils to see possibilities available for their future and for their world.

**Self - Confident individuals** – we want our pupils to enjoy coming into school. We have constructed an enquiry led curriculum designed to entice and to promote a love of learning and encourage curiosity; whilst ensuring they live safe, happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. We want them to show tolerance of other faiths and beliefs and show mutual respect.

**Society - Responsible citizens** – we aim to offer experiences which help them become resourceful learners who use their initiative, and make a positive contribution to society. We want them to develop spiritually and have their own thoughts and feelings about the world around them.

**Global -** Cultural capital is a key feature within our schemes of work. Pupils are exposed to a range of people who reflect diversity in modern Britain but also to some of the greatest achievements of mankind. We believe that Religious Education can be a major contributor to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as supporting their understanding of British Values.

Reading is a vital skill and a key to the world to future success and this is prioritised within our curriculum.

Within our RE schemes of work, we have identified engaging texts and vocabulary to ensure that pupils’ confidence and enjoyment of reading is enhanced throughout the curriculum and their vocabulary is rich.

Each Key stage has recommended resource lists including high quality texts linked to each enquiry question or to further enhance understanding. These could be stories, books or online clips to a story. For example, Our Early Years pupils have an enquiry based solely on ‘What can we learn from stories?’ which shares stories from Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Many enquiries have Religious stories used, for example using a story from China to teach young children about Chinese New Year celebrations.

**Implementation**

At Bedford Drive Primary, we have a strong approach to supporting and training our staff. To help staff to continually improve their subject knowledge in RE, since September 2020 we deliver our lessons through Discovery RE scheme. The subject lead is part of a local RE support network called ‘Lead Teach RE’, who meet regularly and we also have an ongoing hub of support through the Discovery RE website. The Community Area of the Discovery RE website provides downloadable “Background Knowledge” information sheets which enhance each enquiry. These support teachers to feel more confident in their own subject knowledge, which in turn allows them to extend the learning of the children. There is also a designated regional school mentor available to offer support and guidance.

We are determined that our pupils are taught by knowledgeable experts in the different subjects. Every member of staff is trained and those who are not experts are helped through planning meetings, shared teaching, courses and coaching to improve their subject knowledge.

We support and advise staff in how to demonstrate and explain RE to pupils. The enquiry based model develops pupil’s critical thinking skills and their knowledge and understanding of, and empathy with people and their beliefs, religions or otherwise. Our approach takes very seriously, the belief that children are free to make their own choices and decisions regarding religions and beliefs. RE does not try to persuade but rather inform and develop the skills where evaluation can take place. So, with this in mind, teachers use a range of resources to promote these discussions such as stories, video clips, images, music & songs, artefacts, visits, visitors & trips. This range helps to develop pupils’ discussion and oracy.

We use the ‘Discovery Owl Crew’ in our RE lessons. Each owl has a name meaning wisdom/intelligence in a range of languages. The owls are used as a source of wisdom and are used in a variety of ways, including promoting and encouraging the pupils to ask questions. They can also be used as a ‘talking object’ within the lesson. This is another way we help to develop oracy in RE lessons.

Teachers demonstrate and explain key vocabulary and terminology which pupils need to access the lesson. Each year group has a Glossary for their enquiry and essential, key questions are built into each lesson.

There are many opportunities for discussion during the RE enquiry’s, which allow teachers to address any misconceptions that pupils may have. Through the use of The Owl Crew, pupils also have opportunities to ask questions and address misconceptions through the use of envelopes which they can add their questions on and then post to their teacher. This gives the teacher opportunities to discuss misunderstandings or questions on a one to ne basis, as well as assessing during lessons or through written feedback.

We implement RE through the Discovery RE scheme. As the scheme is progressive, pupils have the opportunity to recap and revisit prior learning. For example, Christianity is taught in every year, with Christmas and Easter given new treatment each year. The scheme is consistent; skills are embedded through a consistent approach of engagement, investigation, evaluation and expression. Pupils have opportunities to practise and improve key skills in RE as each enquiry is developed in the same way, from EYFS to Year 6.

RE knowledge is further embedded through whole school and class weekly assemblies, plus specific celebrations throughout the year, visitors to school and trips outside the classroom.

The Discovery RE model for Key Stages 1 and 2, of studying Christianity plus one other religion in each year group, means both religions have multiple enquiries (or 6 week units) per year. This ensures that the children revisit prior learning for both religions throughout the year to build on the previous enquiries, and Christmas and Easter enquiries are built on year-on-year.

The children start from their own experience to ensure understanding of the concept being studied then move into investigating that concept in depth from the point of view of the chosen religion. This continues over three lessons of investigation and discussion throughout Step 2, which embeds subject knowledge. These lessons not only support the children with embedding their RE knowledge, but also contribute to their oracy and critical thinking skills.

Teachers use assessment well; we use our school tracking system, ‘Insight’ to track the progress and attainment within RE. Assessment for learning opportunities are offered throughout each step of the enquiry. Each RE enquiry links clearly to the end of key stage age related expectations. There are also 3 age related expectation descriptors for each enquiry in each group. Teachers have exemplification documents to support accurate assessment for each enquiry.

Key vocabulary is identified and used and as oracy is an important part of our curriculum, we ensure that pupils have opportunities in RE to discuss, debate and present their work, thoughts and opinions. The enquiries are designed for lots of discussions through circle time, using The Owl Crew and many questions are provided for deeper understanding. Our lessons not only support the children with embedding their RE knowledge, but also contribute to their oracy and critical thinking skills. Exposure to and analysis of religious texts can also enhance their reading, comprehension and inference skills.

Reading and developing a love of books is an important part of our curriculum. Quality texts are used to support and enrich the teaching of RE throughout the school. Many enquiry’s, particularly in the early Years, are based on stories and provide rich opportunities to further learning experiences. Stories from different faiths and countries help to bring the learning to life.

**Self - Successful learners** – we teach lessons that have chances for pupils to be creative, curious and to articulate their thinking and ideas. The enquiries are designed to enable children to do this by starting in their own experience, travelling into the world of religion and belief, critically applying the knowledge gained to the key enquiry question, and then returning to their own world to consider the impact of the study for them.

**Confident individuals** –The enquiries contain real life scenarios which encourage children to pose their own ideas and questions. They are encouraged to listen carefully to their peers and believers through the use of speakers and film clips. This allows them to consider a multitude of views and beliefs, whilst receiving respect for their own. Each enquiry concludes by giving pupils the chance to speak confidently about how the enquiry has affected them personally.

**Society - Responsible citizens** – we teach pupils to be resourceful learners who use their initiative, and make a positive contribution to society. Opportunities are given to maximise learning through local community resources such as speakers from different faiths and visits to places of worship.

**Global -** Cultural capital is a key feature in our lessons. Pupils learn about many different religions from around the world and encourage pupils to evaluate and critically think, which in turn leads to tolerance and respect for others. Such a focus, helps to equip our pupils to be global citizens.

**Impact**

At Bedford Drive, we want our children to know more and remember more. Therefore, we use formative and summative assessment information to inform planning and short-term interventions.

Our tracking system, Insight, allows staff to assess systematically what they children know as the unit of work progresses, which is then used to inform future planning. Staff can quickly see, which child or group of children need further support in an area of RE and incorporate this into planning. These formative assessments, then inform our summative assessment judgements, in each subject.

As part of our monitoring cycle, SLT and Subject Leaders monitor all subjects over the academic year. Monitoring includes: books looks, learning walks/ observations, pupil voice and/or staff voice. Our Governors are also part of this process. Through this rigorous monitoring cycle, we have the opportunity to see the impact of our curriculum upon the children.

Teachers update Insight throughout the year and reports are generated. Staff can use this information to inform future planning and gaps or anomalies can be identified and addressed. Discovery RE contains clear over-arching learning objectives and key coloured assessment that shows:

The three colour-coded aspects are:

Green: personal resonance with or reflection on the subject content in relation to the enquiry question.

Blue: knowledge and understanding of the subject content in relation to the enquiry question

Red: evaluation/critical thinking in relation to the enquiry question.

There are also opportunities for pupils to self-assess and think about their ways to improve next time.

We will see:

**Successful learners** – as children confidently and passionately talk to us about their learning in RE. Children who have a wide vocabulary and contribute their thoughts and ideas about a range of religious topics and big ideas. Basic skills taught will enable children to move to the next stage of their learning and knowledge will equip our children to be good citizens in a multi-cultural Britain.

**Confident individuals** – who enjoy coming into school and are invested with their learning, showing a resilient, can do attitude. Through enquiry led learning, children are able to articulate solutions to dilemmas.

**Responsible citizens** – who confidently talk about a difference they can make for **themselves**; through learning about how to be a good learner and a kind friend; our **society** through projects such as ‘Adrift’ where all children learn about social justice and they also think about the development of respect and tolerance, supporting our School values; and **globally**, where all children learn about conservation through a project with Chester Zoo and develop opinions and ideas to inspire curiosity about others cultures and religions across our world.