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## Great Gaddesden C of E (VA) Primary School



*'Treat others exactly as you would want to be treated yourself'. (Luke 6:31)*

# Religious Education Policy

Review date: 25.09.25

Review cycle: Every three years

Signature:

Date:25.09.24

Headteacher

Date approved by governing body: 30th September 2024

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## Our Theologically Rooted Vision

At the heart of our vision is The Golden Rule: “Treat others exactly as you would wish to be treated yourself” Luke 6:31 (World English Bible).

This provides a beacon of light in navigating our interactions with kindness and understanding. At its core, the Golden Rule is a call to empathy. It encourages us to step into the shoes of others and consider our actions from their perspective. By treating each other with the same level of respect and kindness we wish for ourselves, we create a culture of mutual respect, where productivity and collaboration soar. We aim to grow a school community that values learning and humanity towards others which is underpinned and guided by the life and teachings of Jesus, our Christian values and inspired by the Ubuntu philosophy.

Our vision provides the foundation of our curriculum by:

- Recognising that we are all individuals made in the image of God and we aim to be supportive, inclusive and accepting to all
- Ensuring a culture of high-expectations for all
- Developing leadership, responsibility and care towards all of God’s creation
- Providing a diverse range of enriching learning experiences that prepare our children for life as global citizens

It is through our vision that we aim to support all members of our community to feel valued, included and become flourishing individuals, with a heart for others and the world.

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### **RE Policy Statement**

Religious education is unique in the 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’.

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## Aims

The broad aims of religious education are set out within the Church of England Education Office Statement of Entitlement (2019) and the agreed syllabus followed by the school, the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

The primary purpose of religious education is to promote religious literacy. By this we mean that pupils are able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief.

The aims of RE are to enable pupils to:

- Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text;
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews studied;
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human experience and existence;
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places; and
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

In achieving these aims, religious education contributes in a significant way to the flourishing of all children, allowing them to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10). As a VA school, RE is taught in accordance with our Trust Deed.

## RE Curriculum Intent

As referenced in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement (2019), Religious Education in a Church school should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). In line with our theologically rooted vision, it is that this will help educate for dignity and respect, encouraging all to live well together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person.

We believe high-quality sequential religious education (RE) ensures we are able to fully meet the statutory requirement and to teach a full curriculum that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.

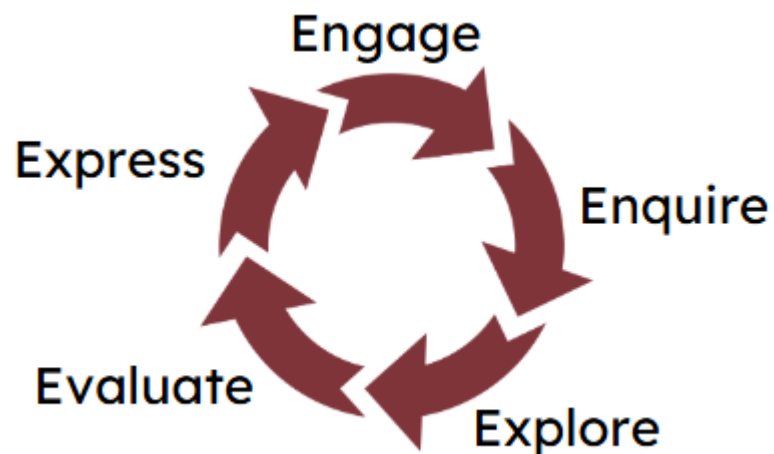
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Central to our Religious Education offer is the study of Christianity as a living and diverse faith, focused on the teaching of Jesus and the Church.

In line with the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement and our theologically rooted vision, our RE curriculum is a priority within the school, integral to our mission of enabling all pupils to flourish academically, socially, and spiritually. It enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, balanced with a range of other religions and worldviews.

Through our RE curriculum, we aim to provide a high quality, sequential framework that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to navigate and contribute positively to our diverse world.

Our enquiry approach (as shown below), through the Emmanuel Project curriculum, encourages critical thinking, empathy, and respect for different perspectives, allowing students to reflect and develop spiritually through the 'big questions'. This provides opportunities for our children to carefully consider the profound questions of life, belief and morality.



## Curriculum

Religious education is an academic subject, delivered in an academic, objective and pluralistic manner.

The curriculum for religious education is designed to ensure religious literacy lies at the heart. A multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design provides a balance between theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences.

**Theology:** This examines where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied differently in different contexts and how they relate to each other.

**Philosophy:** This is about finding out how and whether things make sense. It deals with questions of morality and ethics. It takes seriously questions about reality, knowledge and existence.

**Human/Social Sciences:** This explores the diverse ways in which people practice their beliefs, both now and in the past. It engages with the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies.

The Emmanuel Project allows the delivery of this multidisciplinary approach, through the three explore lessons, which look through the 'lenses' of:

- (i) Text or Narrative
- (ii) Community Practice
- (iii) Living

A sequential curriculum map has been designed in order to allow pupils to become religiously literate through developing, year on year, their knowledge and skills. The three disciplines detailed above provide lenses through which each enquiry question is approached. (See Appendix A)

- In EYFS, pupils study three key Christianity concepts: Creation, Incarnation & Salvation. These are sequenced according to the liturgical year. Their curriculum also includes an 'encounter' with Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism.
- At Key Stage One, pupils study Christianity and Judaism, together with a unit on Islam. The choice of Islam as the religion encountered in KS1 was made to reflect the population of Hertfordshire and also the need today to understand a principal religion which can be misunderstood in society due to political difficulties in some parts of the world and extremism.

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- At Key Stage Two pupils study Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism. In Upper Key Stage 2, pupils study a unit on humanism, a secular world view. This is philosophical and helps prepare UKS2 learners for KS3.

In accordance with the Statement of Entitlement (2019), at least 50% of curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of Christianity. This entitlement is met both through the weekly or blocked teaching of religious education, and through additional 'RE' days which focus on an aspect of the Christian Faith. In addition to this, our collective worship programme focuses on biblical teaching, school values and events throughout the liturgical year.

### **Teaching RE**

Through the Emanuel Project, Religious Education at Great Gaddesden School uses an enquiry-based approach to learning. This approach enables pupils to focus on an enquiry question which explores aspects of the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure learning is challenging and relevant including the use of art, music, thinking skills, artefacts and stories. The enquiry approach also provides opportunities for spiritual, moral and cultural development and meaningful reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

### **Assessment**

Pupils are assessed in terms of how they are making progress in relation to the theological, philosophical and human/social sciences disciplines within religious education. In broad terms, the following principles have been applied to each aspect in terms of what it means to become more religiously literate:

- Extending knowledge and understanding from the concrete and familiar to the abstract and complex;
- Moving from simple ideas and beliefs/concepts to making connections between them and placing these within a bigger picture or meta-narrative;
- Demonstrating increasing layers of interpretation of religion, religions, beliefs and worldviews through engagement with a broadening and increasingly complex range of information;
- Showing an increasing ability to critically question and form coherent, logical arguments, including increasing recognition of divergences of opinion about and the controversial nature of religion and belief; and

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- Expressing a broadening understanding of diversity in terms of the nature of religion, religions and worldviews.

Pupils are assessed using age-related expectations from the Suffolk Expectations. This is done in a variety of ways e.g. through end of unit assessment activities, written activities, role play, art work, discussion. Progress is tracked using our internal cohort tracking system and is monitored by the RE leader.

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject and to plan future work.

Teachers may also provide opportunities for the children to self-assess, as appropriate. Their progress in RE is included in the annual report to parents.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RE co-ordinator will monitor provision and standards within the school through observation, looking at work, talking to children and reviewing the curriculum with staff.

The co-ordinator is responsible for contributing to the school's self-evaluation process. In addition, the governing body monitors the role of religious education in upholding the Trust Deed of the school and its contribution to the Christian vision of the school.

### **Responsibilities for RE within each school (Headteachers and Governors)**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the local governing body and headteacher should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the aims of the RE curriculum;
- the subject is well-led and effectively managed;
- standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD;
- where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject;

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- clear information is provided on the school website about the RE curriculum;
  - RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress;
  - where there are insufficient teachers in a school who are prepared to teach RE, the headteacher ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to religious education. In these circumstances, headteachers might wish to seek advice from the Diocese.

### **The Right of Withdrawal From RE**

Our school is an inclusive community but recognises that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher of their academy to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education.

### **Managing the right of withdrawal**

- Our school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from religious education are aware of the syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs;
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the religious education curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish;
- The school may review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents;
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given;
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from religious education without influence from the school, although the school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision;
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where religious education is integrated in the curriculum, the



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school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated;

- If pupils are withdrawn from religious education, the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on the premises;
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for religious education of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This religious education could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable religious education is provided if this is reasonably convenient;
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of religious education that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from the school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external religious education;
- Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the local authority is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at the school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.

### **Role of the RE Leader**

- To ensure that the RE policy is implemented and to keep up to date with reviews;
- To have oversight of the RE curriculum and keep up to date with local and national changes;
- To monitor, review and update resources;
- To monitor pupil progress and achievement;
- To maintain and build priorities set by the school;
- To develop links with the Church and Diocese;
- To coach, mentor and support teachers in developing their strengths in teaching RE, including planning, arranging and delivering CPD as appropriate; and
- To liaise with parents to ensure all children receive their entitlement.

### **Entitlement and Inclusion - EAL, SEN, More Able**

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum at an appropriate level. Every child should be given the opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem. Teachers ensure to meet the needs of individual learners and break down barriers by providing a range of adaptive teaching strategies.

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## **Parental and Community Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in RE within each school. Parents are invited into the school to look at their children's work, and a report on their child's standard and progress in religious education is given out annually. The community is encouraged to support the teaching of the subject through visits and visitors, e.g. the children visit the church to learn about concepts such as salvation, UKS2 visit the local Buddhist Monastery.

## **Professional Development**

Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal. Where appropriate, training and advice will also be provided by the Diocese.

## **The contribution RE makes to other curriculum aims**

### *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Examining and exploring religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in religious education, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

### *Personal development and well-being*

Religious education plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

### *Community cohesion*

Religious education makes an important contribution promoting community cohesion. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and

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appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. Effective religious education will promote community cohesion at each of these four levels.

### **The school community**

Religious education provides a positive context within which the diversity of cultures, beliefs and values can be celebrated and explored.

### **The community within which the school is located**

Religious education provides opportunities to investigate patterns of diversity of religion and belief and forge links with different groups in the local area.

### **The UK community**

A major focus of religious education is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life.

### **The global community**

Religious education involves the study of matters of global significance recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues. This prepares the children for life as global citizens.

Religious education subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding and acceptance of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The implementation and impact of the policy will be evaluated through the school's self-evaluation processes. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

## Appendix A

Where possible, units are sequences according to the liturgical year: Christmas, Easter & Pentecost

Units are grouped according to the same learning theme, to allow comparisons to take place.

**UKS2**

Year	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Beliefs and Questions What key beliefs people hold about God, the world and humans			Worship, Pilgrimage and Sacred Places Where, how & why people worship, inc. importance of particular religious sites		Buddhism - Symbolism and Religious Expression
Year A (21-22)	Islam How does tawhid create a sense of belonging to the Muslim community?	Christianity How do Christians show their belief that Jesus is God incarnate?	Hinduism How do questions about Brahman and atman influence the way a Hindu lives?	Christianity What is the great significance of the Eucharist for Christians?	Christianity Why do Christians think being a pilgrim is a good analogy for life itself?	Buddhism How did Buddha teach his followers to find enlightenment?
Year B (22-23)	Teachings and Authority What sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life			Journey of Life and Death Why some occasions are sacred to believers and what people think about life after death		
	Islam What does the Qur'an reveal about Allah and his guidance?	Christianity Why is the gospel such good news for Christians?	Humanism Why do Humanists say happiness is the goal of life?	Christianity Should believing in the resurrection change how Christians view life and death?	Buddhism How does the Triple Refuge help Buddhists in their journey through life?	Christianity How do the 'Heroes of Faith' encourage Christians today?

A secular world view - this unit is philosophical and is particularly suitable for UKS2 learners ready for KS3.

Buddhism is introduced in UKS2 and forms a sequence of learning about how religious and non-religious people understand death. This is particularly relevant as there is a Buddhist Monastery in Great Gaddesden.

**Great Gaddesden C of E School**

**Religious Education Long-Term Plan (Based on the Emmanuel Project)**

**Key:**  
Christianity Islam Sikhism Hinduism Judaism Buddhism Humanism

**EYFS**

Year	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year A (21-22)	CREATION 1 Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?	INCARNATION 1 Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas?	SALVATION 1 How can we help others when they need it?	SALVATION 2 Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden?	INCARNATION 2 What makes every single person unique and precious?	CREATION 2 How can we care for our wonderful world?
Year A (21-22) & Year B (22-23)	Including an encounter with: A Muslim whispering Allah in a baby's ear	Including an encounter with: A Muslim story: Muhammad and the Ants	Including an encounter with: A Sikh story: Har Gobind and the 52 Princes	Including an encounter with: A Buddhist story: The Monkey King	Including an encounter with: Hindus celebrating at Raksha Bandhan	Including an encounter with: Tu be Shevat: The Jewish Birthday of Trees



Where possible, units are sequences according to the liturgical year:  
Christmas, Easter & Pentecost

**Year 1/2**

Year	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Believing What some families believe about God, the natural world, human beings, a significant figure			Symbols & Artefacts How symbols and artefacts are used to express religious meaning and why	Leaders & Teachers Figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion and why.	
Year A (21-22)	Judaism Teshuvah / G-D Why do Jewish families talk about repentance at New Year?	Christianity Saviour / Jesus Why was Jesus given the name 'saviour'?	Islam Allah / mercy How do some Muslims show Allah is compassionate and merciful?	Christianity Resurrection / Joy What are the best symbols of Jesus' death & resurrection at Easter?	Christianity Disciple / faith Why do Christians trust Jesus and follow him?	Judaism Torah / rabbi Why is the Torah such a joy for the Jewish community?
Year B (22-23)	Belonging Where and how people belong and why belonging is important			Stories & Books How and why some stories and books are sacred and important	Prayer & Worship How and why some people pray and what happens in a place of worship	Prayer & Worship How and why some people pray and what happens in a place of worship
	Christianity Baptism / church Why is belonging to God and the church family important to Christians?	Judaism Mitzvot / Tzedakah Why is learning to do good deeds so important to Jewish people?	Christianity Parables / gospel What did Jesus teach about God in his parables?	Christianity Prayer / worship Why do Christians pray to God and worship him?	Christianity Emmanuel / Holy Spirit How does celebrating Pentecost remind Christians that God is with them always?	Judaism Tefillah / blessings Why do Jewish families say so many prayers and blessings?

Jewish New Year is celebrated in September

The choice of Islam as the religion encountered in KS1 was made to reflect the population of Hertfordshire and also the need today to understand a principal religion which can be misunderstood in society due to political difficulties in some parts of the world and extremism.

The Judaism and Islam units are grouped with the Christianity unit on the same learning theme. This is to allow comparisons to take place.



Where possible, units are sequences according to the liturgical year.

**LKS2**

Year	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Religion and the Individual What is expected of a believer following a religion and the impact of belief on peoples' lives			Symbols and Religious Expression How religious and spiritual ideas are expressed	Inspirational People Why some figures, e.g. founders, leaders and teachers, inspire religious believers	Symbols and Religious Expression How religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
Year A (21-22)	Islam How does a Muslim show their submission and obedience to Allah?	Christianity How do Christians show their reconciliation with God and others is important?	Hinduism Why do Hindus want to collect good karma?	Christianity Is the cross a symbol of love, sacrifice or commitment for Christians?	Christianity What difference did Paul's conversion on the Damascus road make to Christians?	Judaism What symbols and stories help Jewish people remember their covenant with God?
Year B (22-23)	Inspirational People Why some figures, e.g. founders, leaders and teachers, inspire religious believers			Religion and the Individual What is expected of a believer following a religion and the impact of belief on peoples' lives	Religion, Family & Community How religious families & communities practise their faith & the contribution this makes to local life	Encountering Sikhism - Religion, Family and Community
	Christianity How does believing Jesus is their saviour inspire Christians to save and serve others?	Islam Why do Muslims call Muhammad the 'seal of the prophets'?	Hinduism How does the story of Rama and Sita inspire Hindus to follow their dharma?	Christianity Why are good stewardship and generous giving important for every Christian?	Christianity Why do Christians believe they are people on a mission?	Sikhism How do Sikhs put their beliefs about equality into practice?

Religion and the Individual includes topics relevant for the start of KS2. This includes looking at rules, getting on with others, and taking responsibility for our actions. These are themes often relevant for social development when children begin KS2.

The Hinduism and Islam units are grouped with the Christianity unit on the same learning theme. This is to allow comparisons to take place.

One unit revisiting Judaism unit is included in LKS2 and one unit encountering Sikhism - placed at the end of the year as a stand alone unit.