Curriculum Policy

"Learning for life in all its fullness"

WISDOM • HOPE • COMMUNITY • DIGNITY

Bussage Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School and this policy is written within the context of the Christian faith, practice and values which underpin our ethos, and which are in keeping with our Trust Deed.

Our school's Christian ethos is that all pupils, whatever their ability or talents, are created in the image of God, and are loved equally by Him.

Our school's mission is to provide a learning and development environment in which all pupils and staff can make the most of their God given potential and aspire to "be the best that they can be."

Our school vision is built upon the four cornerstones of WISDOM, HOPE, COMMUNITY and DIGNITY.

Policy status	School policy	**Policy owner**	Headteacher
Website publication	Yes	**Principal author**	Headteacher
Committee	Learning and Development	**Review cycle**	Every 3 years
Policy period	September 2026	**Next scheduled review**	September 2029
Earlier review	If legislation, guidance or school circumstances change		

1. Purpose and statutory framework

This policy sets out the principles that shape the curriculum at Bussage C of E Primary School, how the curriculum is implemented and how its impact is evaluated. It should be read alongside the school's curriculum overviews, subject documentation and related policies.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the statutory National Curriculum in England. At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are taught the statutory programmes of study and attainment targets. A foreign language is taught at Key Stage 2. The school also provides Religious Education and meets the statutory requirements for Relationships Education and Health Education.

Reception provision follows the current statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework for group and school-based providers. The school has regard to the SEND Code of Practice and fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, Religious Education is provided in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and arrangements for its religious character, having regard to relevant Church of England and diocesan requirements. The Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025-2030 informs the school's RE curriculum where appropriate.

2. Christian vision and ethos

Our Christian ethos affirms that every pupil, whatever their ability or talents, is created in the image of God and is loved equally by God. Our mission is to provide a learning and development environment in which pupils and staff can make the most of their God-given potential and aspire to "be the best that they can be".

Our school vision is built upon four cornerstones:

WISDOM	HOPE	COMMUNITY	DIGNITY

3. Curriculum intent

Learning and teaching at Bussage are based on an ambitious and creative approach to the statutory curriculum. We believe that rich experiences create rich minds. We aim for every pupil to achieve well from their starting point and to acquire the knowledge, skills, understanding and learning behaviours needed for the next stage of education and for later life.

Our two core curriculum principles

***Learning is a change to long-term memory.** We identify important concepts and knowledge within each subject, sequence them carefully and revisit them so pupils can connect new learning with what they already know. Retrieval is used purposefully to strengthen recall and support pupils to know more and remember more.

***Language unlocks learning.** We prioritise early literacy, oracy, vocabulary, reading fluency and reading for pleasure because language enables pupils to access, understand and communicate learning across the curriculum.

The curriculum includes the formal statutory curriculum, planned enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities, educational visits and visitors, and the wider learning that comes from the school's culture, relationships and expectations. We want pupils to become knowledgeable, creative, responsible and increasingly independent learners who can cooperate successfully with others.

Learning is organised thematically where meaningful connections strengthen understanding. Subjects retain their disciplinary integrity, and content is taught discretely where this is the most effective approach. Experiential learning, including practical work and carefully chosen visits and visitors, is used to deepen understanding rather than as an end in itself.

Curriculum breadth

Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, the cultural capital we want pupils to acquire and the statutory content of each subject. Curriculum content is sequenced so that pupils build securely on prior learning. Recurring concepts help pupils organise knowledge and make links within and, where appropriate, across subjects. These are what the pupils are expected to develop over time and support the school's progression model.

- English and mathematics are planned on an annual cycle and taught regularly, with reading prioritised.
- Computing, PSHE, RE, PE and modern foreign languages are planned on a one-year cycle.
- Science, history, geography, art and design, design and technology and music are organised, where appropriate, through a two-year rolling programme in phases, with statutory content fully mapped across the relevant key stage.

Curriculum drivers

Our curriculum drivers arise from our school context, our beliefs about high-quality education and our Christian vision. They provide recurring priorities that shape curriculum choices and enrichment.

Wellbeing. Positive mental health and wellbeing are woven through school life and taught explicitly through PSHE and other appropriate curriculum areas. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a golden thread. Learning also develops collaboration, self-management, discipline, challenge and ambition.

Sustainability. Pupils learn to care for the world, understand human impact and take responsible action for the future. Curriculum opportunities help pupils become environmentally aware, hopeful and courageous advocates for positive change.

Diversity. Pupils develop knowledge of the diversity of people, cultures, faiths, worldviews and experiences in Britain and the wider world, including across history. The curriculum supports respectful understanding of modern Britain, fundamental British values and the protected characteristics within an age-appropriate context.

Curriculum aims

- Offer the best for every pupil and promote equality of opportunity and high expectations.
- Provide an ambitious, broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum that takes account of pupils' starting points and enables all pupils to progress well.
- Promote positive attitudes to learning and secure the knowledge and skills needed for later learning.
- Secure strong foundations in English and mathematics, including spoken language, early reading, reading fluency and vocabulary.
- Develop creativity, curiosity, critical thinking, problem solving, research skills and independence.
- Enable pupils to understand how people, places, environments and societies have changed over time.
- Help pupils understand Britain's cultural heritage and prepare them to participate positively in modern Britain and the wider world.
- Develop respect for diversity and the contribution of people from different backgrounds, cultures, faiths and worldviews.
- Meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, EYFS and the school's statutory responsibilities for RE, Relationships, Sex and Health Education.
- Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- Develop self-respect, dignity, fairness, truthfulness, cooperation and respect for others.

Bussage Learning Powers

We want pupils to develop the behaviours that help them become independent, lifelong learners. Teachers plan opportunities to practise, reflect on and strengthen the six Bussage Learning Powers across the curriculum:

Independent enquiry | Carlos Cat	**Reflective learning** | Oscar Owl
Effective participation | Polly Penguin	**Self-managing** | Sammy Squirrel
Resourceful thinking | Sonia Spider	**Team working** | Bella Bee

4. Curriculum implementation

At Bussage, curriculum implementation is designed to make learning memorable, purposeful and exciting while maintaining clear progression from Reception to Year 6. We want children to be curious about the world and eager to find out more. Teachers therefore bring carefully sequenced subject knowledge to life through rich experiences, stimulating contexts and opportunities to explore, question, create, discuss and apply what they know. Curriculum plans identify the essential learning pupils should secure, while allowing teachers to respond thoughtfully to pupils' interests and to the particular character of each class.

- Sets out the essential knowledge, skills and experiences we intend pupils to acquire.
- Is sequenced so that new learning builds meaningfully on prior knowledge.
- Prioritises language and communication as foundations for learning.
- Provides sufficient depth for pupils to develop secure understanding rather than superficial coverage.
- Uses pupils' interests appropriately to enrich learning without displacing essential curriculum content.

A distinctive Bussage curriculum journey

In Reception, learning is organised around engaging half-termly themes that provide a meaningful context for the seven areas of learning and development. Themes are chosen and developed to reflect the children, the season and the wider world, while also leaving space for children's interests, questions and fascinations to influence provision. High-quality texts, stories, rhymes, talk, play, first-hand experiences and carefully planned continuous provision help children make connections across their learning. Teachers remain clear about the knowledge, vocabulary and experiences children need to acquire, so that the theme enriches learning rather than determining or limiting it. A range of activities will continuously be provided within the EYFS setting, so that children are given constant opportunities to develop their independent learning across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. This will be achieved through Personal Education and Growth Time (PEG Time), where children will be able to select and apply their own learning within the classroom.

As children move into Key Stages 1 and 2, this sense of excitement and discovery continues through Bussage's mini-topic themes. These provide an engaging context through which carefully selected subjects and learning experiences can be connected where this strengthens understanding. A mini-topic might begin with a compelling question, high-quality text, object, image, visitor, visit, practical experience or other memorable stimulus that gives pupils a genuine reason to be curious and learn more. The themes are designed to inspire, motivate and give learning a sense of purpose, while each subject retains its own disciplinary knowledge, vocabulary, skills and progression.

Mini-topics are not used to create artificial links between subjects. Teachers make connections only when these help pupils understand, remember or apply important learning. Where a subject is best taught discretely, it is. This balance allows the Bussage curriculum to remain both rigorous and joyful: pupils experience the excitement of a connected curriculum while building a secure body of subject knowledge over time.

Across all phases, enrichment is an important part of how the curriculum is brought to life. Carefully chosen visits, visitors, outdoor learning, practical experiences, performances, creative opportunities and use of the local community give pupils experiences on which new knowledge can be built. These opportunities are planned because they deepen or extend curriculum learning, not simply as stand-alone activities. Through them, pupils are encouraged to use their Bussage Learning Powers and to live out the school's Christian values of Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity.

Big Questions, Target Memories and retrieval

In Key Stages 1 and 2, subjects are taught through carefully planned units, often framed by engaging "Big Questions". Each unit identifies "Target Memories": the important knowledge and, where appropriate, skills that pupils should retain and be able to use. These inform teaching, retrieval and assessment. Retrieval opportunities are built into lessons and sequences so that teachers can revisit prior learning and help pupils strengthen connections in long-term memory.

For science, geography, history, music, art and design, and design and technology, pupils are organised into phases: Phase 2 (Years 1 and 2), Phase 3 (Years 3 and 4) and Phase 4 (Years 5 and 6). These subjects may run on a two-year programme, with coverage and progression mapped so the relevant National Curriculum requirements are secured. PSHE, computing, RE, PE and modern foreign languages are planned annually. English and mathematics follow their own sequenced curriculum pathways.

Cross-curricular links are made where they genuinely deepen understanding or enable purposeful application of knowledge. Where links would weaken subject learning, subjects are taught discretely.

Online safety and personal development

Through computing, PSHE, Relationships Education and wider safeguarding education, pupils learn age-appropriate ways to stay safe online, evaluate information critically, understand healthy and respectful relationships, recognise boundaries and consent in an age-appropriate way, and behave responsibly in digital environments. The school's provision is aligned with current statutory guidance and safeguarding expectations (see Online Safety Policy).

Subject and curriculum resources

The school uses statutory frameworks and selected schemes or resources to support, rather than replace, professional curriculum planning. These include the National Curriculum, the EYFS framework, the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus where appropriate to the school's VA arrangements, SCARF and Facts4Life for elements of PSHE, and appropriate specialist provision. External specialists, including music and PE providers, may enhance provision where this adds subject expertise; the school remains responsible for curriculum quality, safeguarding and oversight.

5. Organisation and planning

Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception follows the statutory EYFS framework for group and school-based providers effective from 1 September 2026. The curriculum covers the seven areas of learning and development and is designed to develop the knowledge, skills and experiences pupils need for successful transition to Key Stage 1. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning, including playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically, inform practice.

Young children learn through a balance of purposeful play, direct teaching, adult-guided activity and well-planned continuous provision. Staff build on children's prior experiences and work in partnership with families and local early years providers to support transition into school.

Assessment in Reception is proportionate and primarily based on practitioners' knowledge of each child. Ongoing assessment is used to understand learning and development and inform teaching. Development Matters may be used as non-statutory guidance to support curriculum planning and professional judgement; it is not used as a statutory termly assessment checklist. Statutory assessment requirements, including the Reception Baseline Assessment and the EYFS Profile, are completed in accordance with current requirements.

Parents and carers are partners in children's learning. The school shares appropriate information about learning and progress and uses Tapestry to celebrate examples of learning and experiences. Transition arrangements include a home visit offer and liaison with pre-school settings. Transition from Reception to Year 1 is planned carefully, informed by children's learning and development, with continuous provision used in Year 1 where it is educationally appropriate.

Key Stages 1 and 2

In Key Stages 1 and 2, English and mathematics are taught through sequenced pathways, while foundation subjects are planned through subject-specific units and, where beneficial, brought together within exciting Bussage mini-topic themes. These themes give pupils an engaging context and a sense of purpose, but never override the progression or integrity of individual subjects. Visits, visitors, practical experiences and memorable starting points are selected to strengthen curriculum learning. Medium-term plans identify intended learning, Target Memories, appropriate teaching approaches, opportunities for retrieval and ways of checking what pupils know and can do.

We recognise that pupils develop at different rates. Teachers adapt teaching and provide targeted support so pupils can successfully access ambitious curriculum content. Where pupils need to revisit learning from an earlier stage, this is done purposefully while maintaining a clear focus on progression towards age-appropriate curriculum goals. Pupils who are ready for greater depth are given opportunities to apply, connect and extend their knowledge.

6. Inclusion, SEND and equality

Our curriculum is designed to be ambitious and accessible for all pupils, including pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with differing experiences or starting points. Teachers use adaptive teaching, appropriate reasonable adjustments and targeted support while maintaining high expectations. Barriers to participation and learning are identified and removed wherever reasonably possible.

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, the school follows the graduated approach set out in the SEND Code of Practice through cycles of assess, plan, do and review. Provision and agreed outcomes are recorded using the school's appropriate SEND planning arrangements, including My Plan or My Plan+ where appropriate. Parents and carers and, where appropriate, pupils are involved in planning and reviewing support.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the school works with the local authority, parents and carers, the pupil and relevant professionals to secure the educational provision specified in the plan and contribute to its statutory review. An EHC plan is a statutory plan maintained by the local authority; it is not a school-created support plan.

The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Curriculum materials, teaching approaches, the learning environment and assessment arrangements are adapted as appropriate so that pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The school also has due regard to its wider equality duties when planning and delivering the curriculum.

Regular attendance is essential if pupils are to benefit fully from the curriculum. The school promotes high attendance and works with pupils and families to address barriers to attendance in line with the school's attendance arrangements.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body and Learning and Development Committee

- Oversee the strategic implementation and review of this policy.
- Seek assurance that the curriculum is broad, balanced, ambitious, inclusive and compliant with statutory duties.
- Engage with leaders, including subject leaders, to understand curriculum quality and priorities for improvement.
- Maintain appropriate governor oversight of SEND and inclusion.

Headteacher and curriculum leadership

- Ensure that statutory curriculum requirements are met.
- Provide strategic leadership for curriculum quality, inclusion, professional development and improvement.
- Ensure appropriate time, expertise and resources are available for curriculum implementation and monitoring.
- Keep governors informed about curriculum strengths, priorities and statutory changes.

The deputy headteacher, as curriculum lead, supports the day-to-day organisation and development of the curriculum.

Subject leaders

- Provide strategic direction for their subject and keep abreast of relevant national and local developments.

- Maintain a clear progression model with appropriate breadth, sequencing and end points.
- Support colleagues with subject knowledge, planning, pedagogy and assessment.
- Monitor curriculum implementation and pupils' learning through proportionate activities such as planning review, work scrutiny, pupil discussion and lesson visits.
- Identify strengths and priorities for development and contribute to whole-school improvement planning.
- Monitor resources and promote inclusive access to the subject.

Subject leaders are provided with appropriate non-contact time to fulfil their responsibilities.

8. Assessment, monitoring and curriculum impact

Assessment is used to identify what pupils know and remember, inform teaching and identify where additional teaching or support is needed. Assessment approaches are proportionate to the subject and curriculum intent. They may include questioning, observation, discussion, review of pupils' work, retrieval activities and end-of-unit checks linked to intended learning and Target Memories.

Subject leaders and senior leaders evaluate curriculum implementation using a range of evidence, which may include curriculum plans, pupils' work, pupil voice, lesson visits, assessment information and discussions with staff. The purpose of monitoring is to understand how well the planned curriculum is being learned and to identify precise priorities for improvement.

The school also fulfils current statutory assessment requirements. In primary school these include:

- Reception Baseline Assessment within the statutory window for children entering Reception.
- The EYFS Profile at the end of Reception.
- The Year 1 phonics screening check, including the required Year 2 re-check where applicable.
- The Year 4 multiplication tables check.
- End of Key Stage 2 national curriculum tests and statutory teacher assessment, as applicable under current arrangements.

Internal assessment information is reviewed during the year alongside wider evidence about pupils' learning, wellbeing and barriers to success. Leaders use this information to support timely action and ensure pupils continue to access the curriculum successfully.

What successful impact looks like

- Pupils know more, remember more and can use important knowledge and skills with increasing independence.
- Pupils make secure progress through the planned curriculum from their individual starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of education.
- Pupils develop strong language, reading and communication foundations that support learning across subjects.
- Pupils can make meaningful connections within subjects and apply learning in appropriate new contexts.
- Pupils benefit from a broad range of experiences and understand the school's Learning Powers and Christian values in practice.
- Pupils develop confidence, resilience, kindness, curiosity and a positive disposition towards lifelong learning.

9. Related policies and curriculum documentation

Policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and SEND Information Report
- Relationships and Sex Education / Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Equality information and objectives / accessibility arrangements, as applicable

School curriculum documentation

- Whole-school and subject curriculum overviews
- Phonics scheme and early reading documentation
- Mathematics guidance
- Reading guidance
- Writing guidance
- Subject progression and medium-term planning documentation

10. Key statutory and external references

- **Education Act 2002, section 78**: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/78
- **National curriculum in England: primary curriculum**: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum
- **Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026**: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2
- **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance, effective 1 September 2026**: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education
- **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
- **Equality Act 2010**: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- **What maintained schools must or should publish online**: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online
- **Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2025-2030**: School/Local Authority/Diocesan resource
- **Ofsted: school inspection toolkit, operating guides and information**: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-toolkit-operating-guide-and-information

11. Website publication

This policy will be published on the school website as part of the school's curriculum information. It does not replace the school's duty to publish the curriculum information required of maintained schools. The school will therefore ensure that its website provides clear, current curriculum information, including the content taught in each academic year or year group and other information required by current publication guidance.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years. It may be reviewed earlier following changes to legislation, statutory guidance, national or local curriculum requirements, the school's context or priorities, or where monitoring indicates that amendment is required.

Next scheduled review: September 2029