

# **PROGRAMMES OF STUDY – BUDDHISM**

## **KEY STAGE 1**

### **BELIEF**

- Belief in Buddha as an enlightened teacher (not a God).
- Importance of the natural world.
- Values of compassion, respect for all living things.

### **AUTHORITY**

- Example of the historical Buddha's life – his birth, growing up as Prince Siddhartha, giving up palace life to search for truth and an answer to suffering; symbol of the Bodhi tree.
- Introduction to Buddhist teaching – compassion, respect for living things, no stealing or telling lies.
- Buddhist stories illustrating these values, e.g. Siddhartha and the Swan, The Monkey King.

### **EXPRESSIONS OF BELIEF**

- Worship in the home: Buddhist home shrine – statue of the Buddha or Mandala, incense, candles, water, food, bell – engaging all the senses.
- Introduction to meditation as a form of Buddhist worship.
- Symbols and aids to worship, e.g. prayer beads, prayer wheels and flags, lotus flower.

### **IMPACT OF BELIEF**

- How ordinary people who are Buddhists behave: demonstrating compassion, generosity, honesty and patience.
- Belonging and commitment demonstrated in ordained communities through special clothing, shaven head, alms bowl.
- The importance of the Buddhist community – lay people, monks, nuns, priests. How mutual support and responsibility is shown.

**NB** There are several names for the historical Buddha on whose teachings Buddhism is founded e.g. Gotama/Gautama Buddha (also known as Siddhartha Gautama Buddha in Sanskrit or Siddhartha Gotama in Pali), Shakyamuni Buddha or simply the Buddha.

## **KEY STAGE 2**

### **BELIEF**

- Characteristics of a Buddha: wisdom, courage, compassion.
- Dharma, or Law of Life, as a law of cause and effect: Karma (Kamma).
- Buddhists are people who 'take refuge' in three treasures (or jewels): Buddha, Dharma (or Law of Life), Sangha (Buddhist community); symbol of the three jewels.
- Purpose of Buddhist practice is to be free from suffering and experience happiness.

### **AUTHORITY**

- Background – Buddha's life: the four signs and the renunciation, years in the forest, enlightenment and teaching of the middle way, his death.
- Buddha as one who is looked to as an example.
- Buddha's first teachings: Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path and Five Moral Precepts.

### **EXPRESSIONS OF BELIEF**

- Meditation as worship, and different types of meditation (including chanting).

- Importance of Buddhist study – reading and reciting the Sutras.
- Engaging with the Buddhist community: monks and laity.
- In some Buddhist communities, particularly Theravadan, there is a celebration called Wesak – Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death.
- Ceremonies connected with becoming a monk or a nun.

### **IMPACT OF BELIEF**

- In some communities, observing strict rules of behaviour (precepts), such as being vegetarian.
- In some communities, people may choose to become ordained as monks or nuns
- Introduction to how Buddhist values will affect views on moral issues e.g. environment.
- How Buddhists follow and live by Buddhist moral codes (e.g. Eightfold Path, Five Moral Precepts) and how these are shown by individuals and the community.
- Symbol of the Wheel (see symbol above).

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