



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education (RE) Policy

1. RATIONALE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human - that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation - is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church.

- Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.
- For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step by step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.
- Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. (RECD 2012)

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of Religious Education are to help children:

- To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;

- To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

3. CURRICULUM PLANNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Religious Education Programme in our school is 'Come and See'.

10% of the teaching timetable is provided for Religious Education. This means, 2 hours 30 minutes at Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and 2 hours 30 minutes at Key Stage 2. This is clearly indicated on the class timetable. This time does not include collective worship (other than the Rejoice section), hymn practice, assemblies etc. This time allocation is distributed appropriately across the timetable to ensure quality time is given for effective teaching and learning throughout the week.

Within each lesson there is a balance between input, discussion and activity.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses the human search for meaning, God's initiative in Revelation who comes to meet us and our response of faith. This pattern guides the structure of the programme and informs the process of each topic, opened up through; Explore, Reveal and Respond.

3.1 EXPLORE

The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives - concerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of significance and value of the experiential events of everyday life.

- This will involve: Exploring experiences through story, music, drama, dance, art, etc.
- Investigation
- Story telling
- Consideration of the big questions
- Discussion
- Becoming aware of the questions raised
- Reflecting on significance of these experiences.

EXPLORE will take one week of Religious Education time to complete.

3.2 REVEAL

Reveal is the heart of the process. The teacher and the children together discover the Christian understanding of the mystery of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explore the mystery of human life as revealed in the person, life and gospel of Jesus Christ Christians. It will involve learning about Scripture, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians.

The process of delivery will involve:

- meeting new knowledge of religious education;
- developing an understanding of this new knowledge;

- reflecting on the wonder of the mystery;
- gathering information and collecting facts connected with this knowledge;
- researching, collating and classifying;
- becoming aware of the questions raised;
- working with problems and grappling with puzzling experiences;
- exploring experiences through story, music, drama, dance, art;
- exploring what leads to understanding and meaning;
- asking questions and discussing;
- exploring in creative and practical ways through drama, writing, poetry, song, dance, music, ICT and service of others;
- making links between Christian understanding and the shared life experience;
- evaluating life experience;
- acknowledging and respecting difference(s);
- being open to new perspectives.

REVEAL will take two weeks of Religious Education time to complete.

3.3 RESPOND

‘Remember’ is the first part of this section. The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. This new understanding will enable them to make a personal response in their daily lives. This part begins by reflecting on what the children wonder about. This is followed by providing the opportunity for the children to remember what they have understood and learnt.

This may be done through:

- creating a quiet, prayerful atmosphere for reflection;
- looking at and thinking about the work done;
- drawing attention to different aspects of this work;
- sharing thoughts and feelings.

As part of **‘Remember’** pupils and teachers carry out a topic evaluation which demonstrates all that they have learnt and understood through the topic taught. Pupils and teachers respond to the success criteria for the topic, as a list of ‘I can statements....’ for each level.

‘Rejoice’ is the second part of the section. There will be the opportunity to plan and take part in a celebration. It will be essential to involve the children in the choice of material to be used in the celebration.

‘Renew.’ The teacher helps each child to make an individual response, to hold onto and make their own, what they have understood of the topic. In this part the children will think about how they can apply their learning to their lives. Older children can be offered the opportunity to write or draw in their personal notebooks.

The teacher will undertake an evaluation which will inform future teaching and learning and include assessment for learning.

RESPOND will take one week of Religious Education time to complete.

3.4 OTHER FAITHS AND ADDITIONAL LESSONS

Each year the children study Judaism and Islam. This is important as it helps them to appreciate the other faiths of people amongst whom we live.

From time to time additional RE lessons are provided for children outside of the Come and See scheme that may focus on a range of topics such as the lives of saints, values and virtues, catholic traditions. The lessons may be provided by teachers in the school or catechists from outside the school

4. ASSEMBLIES AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.' (Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005)

Collective worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church;
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

The Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship in St Joseph's School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

4.1 ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies and Collective Worship are organised as follows:

- Monday: Hymn Practice (KS1 and KS2 separately)
Mass for one year group each week.
- Tuesday: Worship in class
- Wednesday: KS1 Class Assembly* or Phase Assembly (am)
KS2 Class Assembly* or Phase Assembly (pm). A class prayer time will take place in the morning
*Each class has an annual planned celebration of learning in RE to which parents are invited.
- Thursday: Worship in class
- Friday: Whole school liturgical assembly, led by the Head Teacher. A class prayer time will take place in the morning

Christmas and Easter: Concerts and presentations are staged in the School Hall or St Joseph's Church for the school, parents and Parish community.

4.2 HOLY DAYS

On Holy Days whole school masses are celebrated in St Joseph's Church. Parents and parishioners are encouraged to attend all celebrations

5. COME AND SEE

The Come and See programme is used to teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the Reception classes.

In Reception, RE is an integral part of the work covered during the year. We relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in EYFS, which underpins the curriculum planning for children up to the age of 5.

6. INCLUSION

6.1 TEACHING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our school curriculum policy and ethos. When teaching RE we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

6.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We aim to give equal access to meet the needs of all children. Classroom activities are planned to include those children who experience difficulty. Children who speak English as an additional language are given opportunities to talk about their faith and to develop their vocabulary.

7. BRITISH VALUES

The five British values: freedom, tolerance, respect for the rule of law, belief in personal and social responsibility and respect for British institutions, are displayed in every classroom and taught indiscreetly through the RE curriculum.

8. ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

At the end of each topic, pupils carry out a topic evaluation and self-assessment. This work is then ascribed a curriculum level. At times other written work and observations are also used to prescribe a level of attainment. The 'Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools and Colleges' from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is used to prescribe the level.

Pupils' levels are recorded for each topic and monitored. Pupils' progress is analysed termly for all children and vulnerable groups are monitored.

Reporting to parents is undertaken on a termly basis through parent consultation evenings and an annual written report.

Staff INSET is provided to ensure continuity and progression.

9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Teachers are encouraged to secure the Catholic Teachers Certificate (CCRS) qualification in RE. Staff CPD takes place through attendance at BRES courses and dedicated RE staff meetings led by the RE coordinator.

10. RESOURCES

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education teaching units.

11. MONITORING AND REVIEW

11.1 THE ROLE OF THE RE LEADER

The Religious Education Leader will be responsible for:

- Working with senior leaders and the Parish Priest on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Reporting to governors on developments in RE.
- Training and monitoring selected groups of children to assist in monitoring and driving forward improvements in RE.
- Organising and maintaining the school portfolio of pupils' work.

- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and leading in-house staff training and development.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.

11.2 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the RE Leader and updated every 3 years.