



St John the Baptist RC Primary School

RE Policy

Mission Statement

l o v e o f l e a r n i n g
a n d p l a y i n g t o g e t h e r
o n e c o m m u n i t y
a i m i n g h i g h
h e l p i n g e a c h o t h e r
a n d p r a y i n g t o g e t h e r

O n o u r j o u r n e y w i t h C h r i s t

Rationale of Religious Education:

Catholic schools are guided in all they do by an important and coherent vision of education. This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who is our Way, Truth and Life.¹

- Religious education is about engaging with the deepest questions in life and finding reasons for the hope which is within them (1 Peter 3:15)
- It is about the Christian vision of the human person.
- It is the core subject which is central to the life of the Catholic school.
- Religious education is the systematic study of;
 - the mystery of God, as discovered through the Bible and particularly through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ,
 - the teachings of the Church,
 - the lives of the saints,

¹ Joint Pastoral Letter on Catholic Education:, Bishops' Conference, September 2007

-the relationship between faith and life.

- For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith or for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith.
- Religious Education should be planned, taught, resourced, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

Excellence in RE teaching requires;

- marked progression through the different stages of education,
- the encouragement of investigation and reflection,
- development of appropriate skills and attitudes which allows for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life,
- the use of skills in other areas of the curriculum,
- 10% of curriculum time to be allocated to Religious Education, excluding Collective Worship.

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.²

The Aims of Religious Education in Our School

- 1 To nurture pupils' faith and present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- 2 To Grow in understanding and appreciation of the Word of God and its place in Christianity;
- 3 To grow in experience, knowledge and understanding of the social teachings of the Catholic Church, and use its teachings to ensure the welfare of all to ensure peace and justice in the world;
- 4 To develop pupils' involvement with the Church community;
- 5 Prepare for, participate in and appreciate liturgical prayer and worship;

² *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

- 6 To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- 7 To develop the skills required to be able to examine and reflect on religious belief and practice, including those from other faiths and cultures, relating this to daily life;
- 8 To stimulate pupils' imagination, provoking a sense of awe and wonder and a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- 9 To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- 10 Develop a moral awareness as they reflect upon the human condition, their own and others' lives in the light of the Christian message and so bear witness to Gospel values;
- 11 To develop understanding of the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.³

Planning and Programme of Study:

To fulfil the above aims and to provide progression within the four key areas of study outlined in the RE Curriculum Directory, the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ– St John's has adopted the 'Come and See' programme as recommended by Salford Diocese.

The teaching and learning objectives of the scheme are;

- To teach RE discretely and developmentally. Including the deepening of knowledge, understanding of theological ideas and their application to life.
- To offer ample opportunities for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively.
- To engage with pupils' own and others beliefs and values to help expand good attitudes and dispositions so that children are instilled with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning.
- To engage with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face to enable pupils to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose.
- To offer children a sense of self worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

When planning teachers should follow the guidelines of the scheme and the process of;

³ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

- Search – Explore (1 week), where the topic is introduced and children’s life experiences are explored, the questions raised are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance is reflected upon.
- Revelation – Reveal (2 weeks), where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living.
- Response – Respond (1 week), where learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life.

Lessons and activities from the scheme should be planned, resourced and differentiated sufficiently by teachers to allow all children to work at their own ability level, including extending the most able. Teachers should use the resources available to develop tasks that will help the children make progress towards the levels of attainment in RE.

To supplement ‘Come and See’ and aid provision for the social teaching of the Church, at the end of each unit we use the ‘CARITAS in action’ programme to plan activities related to one of the themes of the social teachings of the Church. Children have the opportunity to take part in lots of experiential and active learning, where they can develop their understanding of how they can become a bigger part of their community and ensure the welfare of all.

Cross Curricular Links

As RE is a core subject which is central to and underpins the life of a Catholic school our teachers highlight cross curricular opportunities for RE in other subject areas within their medium term planning. We seek opportunities to develop our writing around the Living Word by planning opportunities for writing around lived experiences within RE and the rest of the curriculum. Many creative opportunities, visits within the community as well as our CARITAS in action work are planned into the school calendar each year to facilitate such experiences.

Going forth, from September 2018 each year group’s long term curriculum planning will be underpinned by celebrations of the Liturgical calendar, taking inspiration from the Building the Kingdom workshops lead by EducareM. Each half term there will be a whole school focus on key liturgical celebrations which we will bear witness to through a range of festivities. These focuses will be used to interact with big questions about the meaning of life and further explored and broken down through links within the other curriculum areas and during collective worship sessions.

Marking

When marking RE work teachers should make specific comments about progress against Religious Education objectives and the ways in which the child's work could be improved, rather than those for handwriting or literacy, giving focus instead to religious vocabulary etc. Marking should highlight improvement needs against the RE learning intention and success criteria and give scaffolding for an improved response, e.g. "Tell me more about...Add another word to...Find a better word for...Change..." or give a reminder for the next time.

Assessment

Recording of the children's work and assessment takes many forms- pictorial, written, role play, wall displays assemblies etc. All children from reception upwards keep an RE exercise book throughout the year and children are continually assessed on their knowledge and understanding of topics in a variety of ways, including differentiated questioning, discussion, marking of pupils' work and observation of activities within class.

During this interim period whilst we are awaiting a new assessment framework from the Bishop's conference members of staff are expected to provide a level of attainment for both AT1 and AT2 on the School Pupil Tracker at the end of each term, Autumn 2, Spring 2 and Summer 2. Each 'Come and See' unit provides a detailed level summary for the activities included in that topic. These are used by teachers to plan their weekly RE activities, ensuring the children have enough opportunity to succeed in achieving the goals outlined for each of the levels of attainment in AT1 and AT2. Teachers then assess against these level summaries, highlighting the achievements of the child throughout their work in that unit on an individual assessment sheet in their RE books. The objectives met on these assessment sheets are then used to inform the levels which teachers input to the online tracker SPTO.

To further aid colleagues with their assessments there are a wealth of resources available on the 'O' drive, including APP style level descriptors and Ladders of 'level driver words' for AT1 and AT2.

Foundation stage classes are expected to provide a copy of their development matters scores for Understanding of the Word and People and Communities alongside the word in their shared RE book.

Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

Environment

Each classroom and the hall is centred by our holy Altars which are all resourced with candles, rosary beads, the Bible, a Romero Cross, prayer books and a wealth of natural

resources which can be used in prayer sessions. They are covered with the corresponding cloth for the periods of the liturgical year.

Each classroom has its own RE working wall (in line with other core subjects Literacy and Maths) displaying the keywords and scripture for their current Come and See topic and any other useful information or classwork to aid the children's independent learning.

Around the school and within each classroom is evidence of quotes from Scripture, our prayers and creative activities within RE. The school hall and corridors display a range of 'big art' topics linked to RE and celebrations throughout the school year and each Key Stage regularly updates their own displays of RE work outside their classroom areas.

We have been extremely lucky during recent years to also be able to identify and develop our two, extraordinary prayer spaces. We boast a beautiful prayer room inside and our stunning prayer garden which host a range of activities throughout the school year for collective worship, but are also continually available for individual prayer time or intentions for all of our school faiths.

GIFT

Our GIFT team meet each week to plan and discuss their work in school. They are responsible for leading the collective worship assembly for the whole school on Monday and Thursday. They have become extremely competent in unpicking the meaning of the weekly Gospels and talking about what the messages mean to them personally. The children then write their own bidding prayers and present the liturgy to the whole school.

The GIFT team work on a rotary basis to ensure that someone is always available in our prayer room or prayer garden for children who want to stop by and take some time to reflect or have someone to talk to.

They keep a display board to show the school what they are working on each half term and are also responsible for ensuring that all of the altars in school are fully resourced and are covered in the correct coloured cloth for the time of the liturgical year.

The School in the Community

We aim to develop in the children concern and charity towards others in the community. We do this by involving the children in charity fund raising throughout the year, lead by our G.I.F.T. team. We raise funds to support the work of a wide variety of charities including, CAFOD, Caritas and Project Harar. The children also take part in projects for Harvest and with local hospices and retirement homes. We hope through these and other activities children become aware of the needs of others both near and far, and develop sensitivity, generosity and a sense of responsibility toward their neighbours in Christ.

Parents and parishioners are invited to attend our Class Assembly each Friday afternoon and to participate in our Masses and many other celebrations of life in a Catholic primary school.

We celebrate whole school masses at St John the Baptist RC Church at least once a term and one class each week celebrate a lunchtime mass at Church.

Sacraments

The Sacramental programme is in accord with the Salford Diocese and is parish led. In Year 3, the children (and their parents) work closely with Catechists to prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. Preparation for these Sacraments is an integral part of our RE programme. Teaching within school is linked with the Parish programme – involving parents and catechists.

Other Faiths

Within our schools we are seeking to educate pupils of whatever religion to be able to live a way of life that integrates their beliefs with all other aspects of what it means to be human. As part of this they must learn to live alongside others who are different and hold alternative views, including religious views.⁴

As a school who welcomes children of many cultures and faiths we value and respect each child and celebrate their talents and uniqueness. Other faiths education in our school will be based on Christian principles and should reflect the respect that Christ showed for people, regardless of race, religion or cultural background.

The study of other faiths is built into the R.E. Scheme 'Come and See'. The teaching of other religions for primary aged children is about how members of that faith community live as a family and how they worship. It begins from the faith community's own understanding of itself and what it is like to be a member of that particular faith. The teaching of other faiths in the programme follows a process of ;

Look – an introduction to another faith and the discussion of children's own experiences,

Discover – the main teaching and learning about the religions,

Respect – to reflect on what children have learnt and appreciate and respect what it means for followers of that religion.

The Role of the RE Co-ordinator

The Religious Education Co-ordinator will be responsible for:

⁴ Paragraph.201, Meeting God in Friend and Stranger 2010, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

- Working with senior leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Organising and maintaining the RE evidence file.
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring 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.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, Governors, parents, the *Office for Education & Schools* on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.