



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

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Mission Statement

We Value All in the name of Jesus the Christ

'At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we provide an environment for our community

that enables each unique member to feel valued and become stronger

as we embrace challenge and change.

We let God's love inspire us and his Word guide us

as we grow together as a community in our enthusiasm for

excellence in all that we do'

At St Mary's we endeavor to ensure that through Quality First Teaching, intervention and leadership we maximise opportunities for all learners to embed, retain and use knowledge effectively within a broad, balanced and faith-based and language rich RE curriculum.

Rationale of Religious Education:

- Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church. 'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'¹
- Religious Education is 'the core of the core curriculum.'
'Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school..... All pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.'¹
- Religious Education is the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ and is a rigorous academic subject in its own right.

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

Religious Education is regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. ² As such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

“Excellence in religious education, then, will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material.” ³

- Whilst evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils, the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.
- The outcome of Classroom 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”.⁴

² Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops’

Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3

³ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7

⁴ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops’

Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

Intent

We understand Religious Education to be the systematic study of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold. ‘The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.’

The Aims of Religious Education

- to promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- to promote knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose

➤ to promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include daily acts of prayer and liturgy (See prayer and liturgy policy).

Programme of Study: To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ, we implement the Come and See scheme of work as recommended by our Diocese.

Methodology

In line with other core subjects, the RE curriculum is taught through the application of high quality pedagogy to enable pupils to know and remember more in the long term.

In addition, we ensure that high quality Religious Education is taught not only effectively but that can be distinguished from other core subjects due to the unique RE specific pedagogy which is applied.

Focal Point

All RE lessons require a focal point. This must include a piece of cloth, a candle, the Bible, a crucifix and any other artefacts that you may think will enhance the focus of learning and stillness.

Quiet, reflective music to be played or 'special' gathering.

Gathers

- Wherever possible, children to be seated around the focal point and use this time for stillness and reflection (not a long time but enough time to instill calmness and a sense of peace)
- For older pupils, children may start with their prayer journals as quiet music is played.

Examples of 'Gather' activities

A powerful image that provokes deeper thinking.

A powerful question linked to a piece of news/image (i.e., What would Jesus do?). A starter song with actions.

Prayer journaling; (perhaps with the lights off and a tea light on each table)

Quiet meditation...Imagine they are walking with Jesus... Imagine if Jesus comes to you and asks you to follow him

(Not all require pupils to respond)

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

Each teacher keeps a class record of pupils' progress on the RE assessment tracker spreadsheet. They track progress against the diocesan attainment descriptors for each year group.

Come and See topics are clearly demarcated in the children's books using title pages that contains the Attainment Targets for that unit of work, 'I can...' statements and clear learning outcomes. The work covered clearly indicates the evidence towards these statements and outcomes.

There is a **clear sequence** of learning in each unit of work: **Explore, Reveal and Respond** with examples of Rejoice/celebration (these could be photos, liturgies, speechbubbles etc. to capture the end of topic celebration).

Links to scripture are made frequently in the EYFS and KS1 and as an expectation within every KS2 lesson.

Driver words (Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary) are also evident in either books and RE displays.

In the EYFS, evidence is recorded in the class RE 'Floor Book'. Photographic evidence is not the main form of recording in EYFS. Examples include, mark making, children's work, answers to questions posed by the teacher, children writing themselves/teacher scribing if necessary.

By the end of Year 1, there are very few photographs used as evidence of RE work and children are using other examples to record.

Retelling of Biblical stories/events continues after Year 2 but only when these are specifically linked to scripture, prayer, psalms etc – pupils are supported with exploring the meaning of scripture in greater depth. Staff are encouraged to plan a variety of creative tasks to support pupils' progress and attainment in RE, for example: Playscripts, poetry, writing through the eyes of a witness, reports, artwork, drama, music etc.

All year groups to have a 'Going Deeper' challenge for pupils, at the end of each lesson

Feedback/Marking is rigorous and in line with the marking policy and all pupils should have the opportunity to edit their work and respond to feedback. Feedback reflects the Attainment Targets, the level descriptors and/or key questions to develop deeper thinking and understanding.

In Upper KS2, **prayer journals** also support teaching and learning as a time for stillness.

Quantity and expectations are in line with core subjects and progression across the school is evident.

Assessments are in line with core subject expectations and linked to Attainment Targets. Teachers update the RE assessment tracker based upon the children's work termly in order to provide a clear picture of pupil progress.

Knowledge Organisers are used from EYFS through to year 6. These are in the children's RE book (EYFS Floor book) after the assessment cover page for each topic and can be used for to support teacher, peer and self- assessment.

Internal and external RE moderation meetings are held throughout the year with schools from across our local RE network.

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

Virtues and Character Education

We follow guidance from Nottingham Diocese. Through the teaching of Catholic character education, a shared vision of life based on Christ Centered virtues is reinforced to further support the flourishing of pupils, young people and all members of the school community.

St Mary's is proud to be teaching the children to be virtuous and responsible citizens.

Policy review.

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the RE leader, governors and staff and updated December 2023.

Management of the subject.

RE Leader (Mr O'Connor with the support of the SLT team) has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. Other Faiths is taught via the core scheme alongside different World Faiths teaching, which is woven and embedded into our curriculum, as a whole.

This Policy links to our Good Practice Guide

