

# St John's Catholic Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

*"I am the vine you are the branches" – John, 15.*



## Rationale

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.<sup>1</sup>

- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup>

## Aims:

- ✠ To provide a whole-school approach to Religious Education, thereby ensuring continuity and progression.
- ✠ 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 stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith
- ✠ To encourage and develop links with family, parish and diocese and to provide a framework for Sacramental preparation that is mindful of the needs of all.
- ✠ To help the children to become responsible and thoughtful members of the community through the promotion of moral issues, of fairness, right and wrong, self-discipline, respect for others and to value the importance of relationships.

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<sup>1</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

<sup>2</sup> *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000, p. 8-9

<sup>3</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

- ✠ 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 promote equal opportunities by acknowledging and respecting the needs of the individual child and the diversity of home backgrounds.
- ✠ To explore the world as part of the universal church and to understand our duty as Christians to make the world a fairer place for everyone.

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use the 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' programme of Religious Education recommended by the Diocesan RE Education Department. The aim of this programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Central to the *The Way, the Truth and the Life* programme are three basic human questions and the three Christian beliefs that are the Church's response in faith:

- Where do I come from?                      Life < > Creation
- Who am I?                                      Dignity < > Incarnation
- Why am I here?                                Purpose < > Redemption

### Planning and Organisation

Planning will show the *The Way, the Truth and the Life* themes, learning intentions, appropriate activities, time scales and resources and, where relevant, will include links with global issues. In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does ***not*** include Collective Worship.

EYFS	1½ to 2 hours approximately
KS1	2¼ to 2½ hours
KS2	2½ hours

Cross-curricular links will be made, especially with Citizenship and Geography. Through using CAFOD's *Universal Church* resources, a global dimension can be added to *The Way, the Truth and the Life* topics. CAFOD campaigns will also be followed and used as part of RE teaching where it is considered to be appropriate.

Consideration will be given to the following points when planning for RE:

- Prior learning
- Sharing objectives
- Creativity in lessons
- Artefacts and resources
- Learning styles and pace
- Use of Technology
- Time for pupils to plan and consider input
- Christ at the centre of the lesson
- Use of prayer – pupil led/pupil input, different methods of prayer and reflection, traditional
- Music – pupil choice, children singing
- Challenging and differentiated
- Collaboration between staff and pupils and children's ideas

Children will contribute to the planning where applicable.

Links will also be made with the children's own experience. This may include experience of other world faiths.

### **World Faiths**

We aim for our children to accept that we are part of a world religious family within which national, racial and cultural differences should never introduce division. We want our children to understand, appreciate and gain from other religious traditions by approaching and learning in a spirit of openness and humility. (*Easter People*). Our aims are:

- 🌐 To understand that we are all children of God
- 🌐 To look at, learn about and understand other faiths and cultures
- 🌐 To develop a knowledge and appreciation of the skills in music and art of other faiths and communities

We will teach about world faiths through a systematic, whole school approach, to ensure that we focus on key teachings of the World Faiths of Judaism, Sikhism and Islam. We will teach about three World Faiths per academic year, as outlined in appendix.

We will portray Britain as a multi-faith society and endeavour to present a contemporary picture. With this in mind, we will also consider teaching about World Faiths when this is most relevant during the academic year, for example – during a festival or significant time of year for particular religions. This will be in addition to the *The Way, the Truth and the Life* programme and will be delivered through a range of curriculum areas.

Through our teaching about world faiths, we hope that our children will recognise that we can learn a lot about ourselves and our Catholic Faith by developing our understanding of all religious traditions. Our key message will be of respect.

### **Cultures**

As well as learning about world faiths, we want our children to appreciate their own cultural traditions. In our culturally rich society, we value contributions from pupils and adults from all cultural backgrounds. We promote a positive ethos for bi-lingual children in our school and we encourage our children to participate in cultural activities and traditions by:

- Exploring times and cultures different from our own
- Welcoming visitors from other cultures to our school
- Making use of our local community in our studies
- Making use of resources available to us
- Visiting places of cultural or historical significance, tradition or perspective

Children and staff will use all aspects of the curriculum – Literacy, History, Geography, PSHE, Art, Music, Dance, Drama – to participate in, and to appreciate, their own and other cultural traditions.

Wherever possible, opportunities will be planned to:

- Visit museums and galleries
- Work with artists, authors and performers
- Develop openness towards music and dance of other cultures
- Appreciate the natural world through Art and Literature
- Recognise the contribution made by other cultures to Art, Mathematics, Science and Technology

The cultural activities and traditions of others will be planned for the whole school, and linked with the *The Way, the Truth and the Life* scheme of work for RE.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting**

Assessment establishes what children know and understand and can do. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith. Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria agreed by Bishops' Conference. Each class teacher completes an 'RE Assessment Grid' for their class each half-term. Six children are formally assessed using 'Context Moderation

Sheets'. Assessments are based on observations, artwork, discussion notes, photos as well as written work, and are then used to inform planning.

We believe that all children should have the opportunity to be included in Religious Education and support those children with Special Educational Needs.

The RE Leader/SLT will monitor planning, teaching and assessment on a regular basis.

RE is included on the children's annual reports and is also discussed with parents at termly parents' evenings.

### Link Policies

- Religious Education
- Collective Worship
- Spiritual and Moral Development
- Progression in Prayer
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Behaviour Policy
- Personal, Social, Emotional and Education
- Geography

### Resources

Apart from year group *The Way, the Truth and the Life* folders and individual class artefacts, RE resources are stored centrally in our Prayer room. These resources include the following:

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| † Bibles and religious story books   | † CAFOD videos, DVDs, resource packs, posters  |
| † Prayer books   |  |
| † Teacher Information Books  | † Websites: <a href="http://www.cafod.org.uk">www.cafod.org.uk</a> & <a href="http://www.edurcdhn.org.uk">www.edurcdhn.org.uk</a> & <a href="http://www.cesew.org.uk">www.cesew.org.uk</a> |
| † Artefacts – boxes of artefacts for Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism | † <a href="http://www.tere.org.uk">www.tere.org.uk</a> – see RE folder on allstaff for more websites   |
| † Posters and display material   | Angelus Resources on Staff Resources   |

Each class has their own 'Treasure box' which includes items of individual importance to that class, as well as general Christian treasures such as rosary beads, crosses and prayers. We also make use of the Shropshire Library Service and the Multicultural Development Service. Our school works in collaboration with our parish priest to build on the resources we have.

### **Review and Further Developments**

Agreed by governors: Spring 2021

This policy will be reviewed within 3 years.

### **Further Reading**

1. [www.cesew.org.uk](http://www.cesew.org.uk)
2. The Way, the Truth and the Life folders
3. Vatican 2