

# St John's Catholic Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

Autumn 2023

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



As a Catholic school, religious education is at the heart of our curriculum as we strive to proclaim and live the Christian values taught by Jesus Christ, within the Catholic tradition. This permeates every aspect of our school life. With parents and Parish, we hope to lead children to a greater understanding of who God is and to celebrating with deeper faith and understanding, the liturgy of the Church.

This is why we have adopted our mission statement – ‘Belong, Believe and Become’.

Our pupils belong to God’s family, to the church family and to St John’s family.

We support them to believe in God, in each other and in themselves.

We encourage them to become the best person they can become.



**Intent**

Our subject specific aims for the teaching of religious education are to enable all children to:

- grow in understanding of who God is, and to deepen knowledge and understanding of Jesus’ life and teachings
- gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic tradition and the liturgy of the Church
- 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
- promote the Catholic ethos of the school through prayer, reflection, forgiveness, reconciliation, celebration and liturgy
- recognise and appreciate the spiritual and religious dimensions of life through feelings of awe, wonder, delight and joy
- promote equal opportunities by acknowledging and respecting the needs of the individual child and the diversity of home backgrounds, providing the children with the opportunities to examine their own religious feelings, views and responses in a safe and supportive environment.
- provide a framework for teaching Relationship and Sex Education that takes into account the needs of the child, the family and the Church.

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 Advisory Service. 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. 10% of curriculum time will be given for RE.

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 ICT
- 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 – English, 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 is based on the Ways of Knowing: Understand, Respond and Discern. 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

- Prayer and Liturgy
- Spiritual and Moral Development
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Behaviour Policy
- Personal, Social, Emotional and Education

## 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 allstaff  |

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. Our school works in collaboration with our parish priest to build on the resources we have.

### Review and Further Developments

Agreed by governors: Autumn 2023

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