

Religious Education Policy

Vision



Together we love - Together we hope - Together we learn

Mission

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive, vibrant, Catholic community where we enable and encourage everyone to share and nurture a love of learning and the love of Christ.

Together, we hope to inspire ourselves and each other to be the best we can and to embrace our future with confidence.

Introduction

Religious Education is a major and central element of the Catholic nature and ethos of St Joseph's School. This document sets out the principles and directives that the school aims to follow.

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 is discovered - that we are created by God and, through the Holy Spirit, we are united with Christ in his Incarnation. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium (The teaching authority of the church).

"He who hears you, hears me; he who rejects you rejects me, he who rejects me, rejects Him who sent me" (Luke 10. 16)

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.¹

Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.

Religious Education may be received by some in a class as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; however, 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.²

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.³

The Aims of Religious Education

1. To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and of other faiths;
2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
3. To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make appropriate judgements about modern culture and society;
4. To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
5. To develop the critical skills of pupils (in Key Stage 2) so that they can relate their faith to daily life;

¹ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

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

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

6. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
8. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.⁴

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, we aim for 10% of total curriculum time to be allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship.

Programmes of Study

To fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ.

Currently the school follows a scheme called "God Matters" originated in the Diocese of Portsmouth.

All classes teach the following units in line with the liturgical year but each unit of work covers different aspects, topics and scriptural references appropriate to the age of the children.

Terms 1&2	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	
	Creation	Prayer, Saints and Feasts	Advent	
Terms 3&4	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 7	Unit 8
	Christmas	Revelation	Lent	Holy Week
Terms 5&6	Unit 6	Unit 9	Unit 10	
	Sacraments	Easter	Pentecost and Mission	

In many of the units (Creation, Revelation, Pentecost and Mission) our starting point in Religious Education is **Revelation**. God is always the initiator in the history of our creation and redemption; it is his revealing of himself that guides the teaching and learning in Religious Education lessons.

In other units (Prayer, Saints and Feasts) we move onto Church; in other words, we consider how revelation gives life to the Church. The Church is the bearer of God's Revelation and the means by which human beings live out their response to Revelation, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

Finally (Advent, Christmas, Easter, Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Sacraments) we focus on two aspects of the Church's response to God's revelation; Celebration – the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and Life in Christ – the moral life and the pursuit of holiness.

Methodology

Teaching in Religious Education should help people be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible.

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the ages, needs and learning styles of pupils.

Other Faiths

As a Christian school, a large proportion of the curriculum is relevant to the different Christian traditions and we encourage children from all faith backgrounds to share their own ideas. As part of the cycle of units in "God Matters", children are taught about the two other Abrahamic faiths (Judaism and Islam). Other world faiths are also covered (Sikhism and Hinduism). Links are made, where possible, to the teaching of the Christian faith and traditions; children are encouraged to understand the similarities and differences of the different faiths and share their thoughts and understanding.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the 2018 pilot for age related outcomes as agreed by the working party created by the Bishops' Conference.

Pupil's progress is monitored in their books. We have matched the outcomes from "God Matters" to the age expected outcomes from the Bishop's Conference.

Moderation workshops are held during staff meetings and with our partnership schools.

RE is included in the monitoring of teaching and learning and includes annual lesson observations, learning walks and book scrutiny/pupil conferencing.

RE attainment and progress is included in pupil progress meetings at least three times per year.

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

Management of the subject.

The Subject Leader has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

Policy review.

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Faith and Ethos Committee and Senior Leadership Team and is updated annually.

Approved by the F&E committee:

12 th January 2024

Approved by Governing Body

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'ML', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

(Chair of Governors)

Date: 25/01/2024

Next Review Date: January 2025