

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Mission Statement

Empowered by the example of Christ, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School strives to promote the education and development of our children in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect.

PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

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 — 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.¹

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.²

Religious Education is a core subject and 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 RE are to promote:

- ✚ knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life,
- ✚ knowledge and understanding of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose;
- ✚ skills required to examine and reflect upon religious belief and practice, and foster appropriate attitudes.

By looking at the life of Christ, within RE, the school lives out its mission statement in every lesson.

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

ORGANISATION OF SUBJECT

'RE requires 10 percent of the length of the taught week for each Key Stage' (Bishops statement). At St. Joseph's 10 percent is taught at both Key Stages and excludes collective worship.

The 'Come and See' RE scheme is followed by St. Joseph's in line with the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. The 'Come and See' programme is developed through three themes based on documents from the Second Vatican Council. These themes are: Church, Sacrament and Christian Living. "Come and See offers the opportunity to search, to explore, to discover, and to respond; this is part of what it is to be human." ('Come and See' p9).

At St Joseph's we follow the strategies and aims set out by 'Come and See', which underpin the effective delivery of Religious Education in a Catholic school.

- Religious Education will be taught discretely and developmentally. It will include the deepening of knowledge, and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life.
- Ample opportunities will be offered for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross-curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively.
- Engagement with their own and others' beliefs and values will help to develop good attitudes and dispositions so that children are instilled with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning.
- Engagement with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face will enable them to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose.
- Offer the 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.

There are nine religious themes throughout the year. The whole school explore these at the same time through different topics following a yearly teaching cycle. There is also the addition of two other faiths that are taught, Judaism in the autumn term and Islam in the summer term.

Each religious theme is split up into three different stages:

- Explore
- Reveal
- Respond

'Come and See' sets out what each of these stages should include:

EXPLORE

This is the introduction to the topic where the children's life experience is explored, the question(s) it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon.

REVEAL

This is the heart of the programme where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living.

RESPOND

This is where the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life.

The timetable shows the topics covered over the year:

Themes and Topics	Early Years	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Domestic church Family	Myself God knows and loves each one	Families God's love and care for every family	Beginnings God at every beginning	Homes God's dream for every family	People The family of God in Scripture	Ourselves Created in the image God	Loving God who never stops loving
Baptism/Confirmation Belonging	Welcome Baptism; a welcome to God's family	Belonging Baptism; an invitation to belong to God's family	Signs & Symbols Signs & symbols in Baptism	Promises Promises made at Baptism	Called Confirmation; a call to witness	Life Choices Marriage commitment and service	Vocation & Commitment Priesthood and religious life
Advent/Christmas Loving	Birthday Looking forward to Jesus' birthday	Waiting Advent; a time to look forward to Christmas	Preparations Advent; preparing to celebrate Christmas	Visitors Advent: waiting for the coming of Jesus	Gift God's gift of love & friendship in Jesus	Hope Advent; waiting in joyful hope for Jesus	Expectations Jesus born to show God to the world
Local church Community	Celebrating People celebrate in Church	Special People People in the parish family	Books The books used in Church	Journeys Christian family's journey with Jesus	Community Life in the local Christian community: ministries	Mission Continuing Jesus' mission in diocese	Sources The Bible, the special book for the Church
Eucharist Relating	Gathering The parish family gathers to celebrate Eucharist	Meals Mass; Jesus' special meal	Thanksgiving Mass; a special time for saying thank you to God	Listening & Sharing Jesus gives himself to us in a special way	Giving & Receiving Living in communion	Memorial Sacrifice The Eucharist the living memorial of Jesus' sacrifice	Unity Eucharist enables people to live in communion.
Lent/Easter Giving	Growing Looking forward to Easter	Change Lent; a time for change	Opportunities Lent; an opportunity to start anew to celebrate Jesus' new life	Giving all Lent a time to remember Jesus' total giving	Self discipline Celebrating growth to new life	Sacrifice Lent; a time of aligning with the sacrifice made by Jesus	Death & New Life Celebrating Jesus' death & resurrection
Pentecost Serving	Good News Passing on the Good news of Jesus	Holidays & Holydays Pentecost: feast of the Holy Spirit	Spread the Word Pentecost a time to spread the Good News	Energy Gifts of the Holy Spirit	New Life To hear & live the Easter message	Transformation Celebration of the Spirit's transforming power	Witnesses The Holy Spirit enables people to become witnesses
Reconciliation Inter-relating Sacrament of Reconciliation	Friends Friends of Jesus	Being sorry God helps us to choose well	Rules Reasons for rules in the Christian family	Choices The importance of examination of conscience	Building bridges Admitting wrong, being reconciled with God and each other	Freedom & Responsibility Commandments enable Christians to be free & responsible	Healing Sacrament of the Sick

Universal Church World	Our World God's wonderful world	Neighbours Neighbours share God's world	Treasures God's treasure; the world	Special Places Holy places for Jesus & the Christian	God's People Different saints show people what God is like	Stewardship The Church is called to the stewardship of Creation	Common Good Work of the worldwide Christian family
---	---	---	---	--	--	---	--

EXPECTATIONS

'RE is a rigorous academic discipline, and as such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.' (Bishops statement) Therefore any marking with RE should be in line with the school's marking policy and comparable with similar subjects.

The long-term and medium term planning for RE can be found on the 'Come and See' website for each Year group. The medium term planning contains the Christian doctrine for each topic; content and focus of the theme; key concepts, skills and attitudes; attainment targets; a topic page with prior knowledge and progression of learning outcomes through the years. When planning teachers make use of the level descriptors for the topic alongside 'Come and See' to ensure that learning opportunities fully cover the range of abilities within the class.

Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher. The teachers select appropriate activities, plan to ensure achievement of the learning outcomes outlined in 'Come and See' and indicate children to be assessed. There is also evidence of the links with the EPR on the short term planning and the ethos statements covered during that topic.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment establishes what the children know, understand and can do. It does not assess faith or practice of faith. It is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes developed through the themes and learning outcomes for each topic. In each topic there are brief summaries of what children are expected to know, understand and be able to do, with levels attached to the different success criteria. When reporting to parents teachers should concentrate on progress and achievement.

Levels of Attainment for RE are provided in the NBRIA document.

There are two main ATs:

AT1 Knowledge and understanding of Religion. (Learning **about** Religion-content)

AT2 Reflection on Meaning. (Learning **from** Religion-attitudes)

At KS1 and 2 there are 3 strands within each of these ATs. One strand for AT 1 is assessed each term, with AT2 being assessed continuously. Levelled work for AT1 is added to the school portfolio at the end of each term. This work is moderated during staff meetings. At St Joseph's we have also organised moderation meetings with other

schools in our Diocese in order to ensure consistency in RE Assessment. As in all subjects, progression in RE is not always predictable and pupils of the same age will be at different levels of attainment.

Children's achievement in each of the nine topics is recorded throughout the year on the school's RE tracker. One summative assessment piece of work per term, assigned by the Diocese, is recorded using levels according to the

'Come and See' programme. Using teacher assessment, levels are recorded at the end of each term and updated to our school's assessment tracker where the children's attainment and progress is then monitored throughout the year.

A range of skills and attitudes are developed within RE through a variety of activities e.g. drama, poetry, art, circle time. This means that work is not always recorded in the children's' books. Therefore, the class teacher must ensure that notes, photos etc. are kept regarding activities.

Throughout each topic the children should be given the opportunity for self-assessment, for the children to record things they know now or how they feel they are progressing. This can be through self-assessment plenaries using success criteria, 'What I now know I did not know before,' block reviews and through worship, which the children have prepared.

EVALUATION

Evaluation informs planning and therefore each teacher, individually and within their year group, reflects upon the topic taught and alters planning for future teaching. The children's own assessments can help teachers in evaluation as they may draw attention to areas, which the teacher was not directly aware of. Evaluation of the whole scheme is made by the RE coordinator in liaison with staff.

INCLUSION

As a Christian community we recognise each individual to be special and unique, created in the image and likeness of God, therefore all contributions within RE are valued and respected. RE provides a range of activities and ways of recording, which allow children of all abilities to participate. It is understood that children must be differentiated for because of their spiritual and religious experiences as well as ability.

Opportunities for the more able are identified in the planning.

EDUCATION FOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

RE deals with beliefs and values, which underpin the way individuals behave and the choices they make. It is, therefore, directly linked with EPR. The Diocesan scheme for EPR currently makes direct links to topics within the previous RE scheme of work 'Here I Am'. Due to this the teachers have linked the EPR statements with the topics and objectives for their year group in the 'Come and See' scheme of work. These links can be found on all of the short term planning.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Within RE opportunities are provided for all children to gain knowledge and understanding regardless of academic ability or religious experience. Each child is valued for their uniqueness and is encouraged to fulfil their potential regardless of race, belief or gender. Each topic provides opportunities for the children to share their own life experiences, some of which will be from different cultures or faiths. Providing an atmosphere of mutual respect enables all members to share these experiences willingly. We include the teaching of two other faiths in our yearly timetable. In the autumn term Judaism is taught for one week and in the summer term, Islam is taught for one week. The planning for other faiths in 'Come and See' builds on the previous year's knowledge and understanding of both Judaism and Islam.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There are no direct health and safety issues within this subject, but reference should be made to other policies, e.g. EPR, when planning work.

BRITISH VALUES

In guidance for maintained schools, issued by the Department for Education in November 2014, a list was provided that describes the understanding and knowledge expected of pupils as a result of schools promoting fundamental British values.

This is given below:

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety;
- an understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;
- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be

- accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we promote the British values by:

Democracy

Having a School Council

Having a Spiritual Council

Highlighting the development of democratic ideas in history lessons

Allowing pupils to vote for House captains

Ensuring all pupils are listened to by adults

The Rule of Law

Classes creating and agreeing to "class rules"

Having a clear behaviour policy that is explained to all

Highlighting the rules of the Church and God in the RE curriculum, for example the 10 commandments and the

Precepts of the Church

Individual Liberty

Encourage students to be independent in their learning

Provide students with opportunities for reflection as they take responsibility to discerning their vocation.

Mutual respect

Having a mission statement that is inclusive

Constantly promoting respect for others as good manners

Reinforcing the value of everyone's opinions in class debates

Having an effective anti-bullying policy

Emphasising in RE and PSHE (including our weekly ethos statements) lessons that every person is unique and

"created in the image of God"

Having active educational links with other schools

Supporting charitable works

Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Highlight how Religious Education provides pupils with a deep understanding of their own faith as well as awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities as a basis for understanding and respecting them.

Show how Jesus encouraged tolerance in stories such as The Good Samaritan and The Women at the Well.

Date updated: Autumn 2018

Date for review: Autumn 2019