



St.Mary's Catholic Primary School

Part of The Christus Catholic Trust

Religious Education Policy

Respect Ourselves, Respect Others,
Respect our School, Love God

This school is committed to safe guarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment

Our Mission Statement

Respect Ourselves, Respect Others, Respect our School, Love God

Introduction

The message of the Gospel is central to our school: it is essential to our view of education and underlies all we do. We recognise that the children in our care may be at different stages in their faith journey and we aim to help each child discover God through their life experiences, to come to know, love, and serve Him; to develop a personal relationship with God in their daily lives.

Aims and Objectives of Religious Education

1. To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be
3. able to communicate this effectively;
4. To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can
5. make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
6. To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
7. To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
8. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
9. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
10. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

At St. Mary's we place great emphasis on our Religious Education (RE) programme and it is the central strand running through the life of the school. We aim to:

- Foster in each child a loving and trusting relationship with God and with Jesus His Son through the actions of the Holy Spirit.
- Bring each child to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the religious and spiritual dimensions of life.
- Bring each child to a deeper understanding of the Catholic Faith and its relevance to everyday life.
- Deepen each child's personal faith, commitment and sense of awe and wonder.
- Encourage respect for the beliefs and feelings of others, including those of other faiths.
- Be prepared to give living witness to what they teach;

- Fulfil our professional responsibilities with regard to all that develops and enhances the life of the Catholic school;
- Plan and teach schemes of work that are engaging and accessible so that all pupils may progress appropriately in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith; we follow the Come and See scheme
- Have high expectations of all our pupils;
- Ensure that 10% of the curriculum is devoted to Religious Education;
- Ensure that Religious Education contributes positively to the broad and balanced curriculum of a Catholic school through cooperation and dialogue with other subjects;
- Take care continually to deepen our own knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- Take seriously the duty of every Catholic to form his or her conscience;
- Be given opportunities for our own spiritual and professional development as Catholic educators.

In order to facilitate the above our teaching involves:

- Study of sacred writings and the historical and social context in which they were produced.
- Study of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church.
- Study of the Saints in order to make the children aware of, and encourage them to benefit from, the example of great Christian figures.
- Applying a Catholic perspective to everyday life and the development of values, social awareness and a caring and Christian outlook.
- Participation in the liturgical life of the school, including an act of daily worship.
- Forging links with the parish community.

The Religious Education Curriculum

Process for delivery of R.E.

The Religious Education Scheme we follow is “Come and See”. Religious Education is taught through the process of *Explore, Reveal, Respond*. This takes account of “what to believe entails”: the human **search** for meaning, God’s initiative in **Revelation** and the individual’s **response** in faith. Each term, a short unit is taught on another world religion; currently they are: Judaism; Islam; Hinduism

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning strategies from across the curriculum can be appropriately adapted appropriately to inspire the learning needs of pupils.

Inclusion

All pupils have the right to have access to a differentiated Religious Education.

Assessment

Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE agreed by Bishops' Conference.

The time allocation for specific religious education is 10% of the taught week in each key stage, in accordance with the guidelines from the Bishops of England and Wales.

Cross-curricular links

As religious education is an integral part of school life, RE incorporates other curriculum areas. Aspects of PSHE, sex and relationship education, spiritual development and moral education are catered for through the RE programme (see Sex and Relationship and PSHE policies). RE is also made cross-curricular through a number of themed enrichment weeks throughout the school year.

Liturgy within the School

Liturgy in all its forms - prayer, the celebration of the Mass, reconciliation and alternative forms of liturgy - are vital to the everyday life of the school. Children, staff and parents (where space and time permit) are encouraged to take an active part in the spiritual life of the school. There is a well-established pattern to our life of praise.

Prayer

Prayer is fundamental to our relationship with God. We provide our children with opportunities to pray formally and spontaneously and to think and reflect, because it is in times of quiet reflection that we often hear that 'still small voice within'.

Each day begins and ends with classroom prayers and each classroom has a religion table – a focal point for shared devotion and a visible symbol of God's presence throughout the school.

A number of prayers are explored in school. These include:

The Sign of the Cross	Morning Prayer
The Our Father	Evening Prayer
Grace Before Meals	Grace After Meals
Glory be	The Hail Mary

The Eucharist

The celebration of Mass is central to our lives and an integral part of the life of our school community. We are fortunate that our parish priest is generous with his time and we are establishing greater contact with him. We follow the Liturgical Calendar and Diocesan directory with a pattern of Mass celebration as follows:

Whole School Masses

- * Our School Feast Day
- * Holy Days of Obligation falling within the school year

Other Masses

- * Class Masses on a rota basis for all Years R-6.
- * A Year 6 Mass at the end of the Summer Term

Parents and friends are invited to Masses.

Reconciliation

At present preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation does not take place in school. However the school is in close liaison with the Catechists and follows up key points of preparation within Year 3 RE lessons. The intention is to harmonise the RE study programmes within the school and so reinforce and enrich each child's spiritual development.

Alternative Liturgy

We recognise that there are many ways in which we can express our love for God and many ways in which we can bring our lives and work before God. Children, like adults, vary enormously in the ways in which they reach out to God. We try to present, develop and explore the Gospel in a variety of ways:

- We encourage children to be innovative in the use of spontaneous prayer and to organise prayer sessions.
- Our children prepare an Easter service/play as part of their sacramental preparation.
- We start the month of May with a special service for Our Lady that includes the crowning of her statue. Parts of the Rosary are said in class, dependent upon the age of the children. Prayers to Our Lady are written out and added to a 'May is the month of Our Lady display'.
- At Pentecost we celebrate the birthday of the church.
- We have a Harvest service in the Autumn term which focuses on a different charity every year.
- In November the children are encouraged to pray for the deceased and enter names in a book of remembrance – All Saints/All Souls.
- We have Christmas celebrations, some of which are of a religious nature. These include:
 - Nursery Nativity
 - A Key Stage One Nativity
 - A Key Stage Two Carol Service
- On occasion, special visitors are invited in to lead assemblies – e.g. Cafod representatives, guest speakers relating to enrichment weeks etc.

Links with the Parish

The school is keen to develop and strengthen its links with the local parish of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Tilbury; events could include: joint parish and school Masses; services of Reconciliation in the parish church and visits to the school by the Parish Priest.

First Communion

Our First Communion course is Parish-based with catechists drawn from the congregation. We do all we can to support and reinforce the work of the First Communion Programme by ensuring that beliefs are taught and lived in school.

The role of the RE Leader

- To lead staff in the implementation of Religious Education as the focal point of the school's mission statement.
- To co-ordinate the development, monitoring and evaluation of the Religious Education programme.
- To keep abreast of current developments in the teaching of Religious Education, by attending in-service training which may be provided, nationally, with the Diocese, or MAT.
- To review current policy, and to ensure up-dating when necessary.
- To organise the selection, ordering, cataloguing, and storing of appropriate resources throughout the school.
- To consider appropriate assessment criteria in consultation with the Headteacher and staff.
- To co-ordinate liturgies which are an integral part of the Religious Education curriculum.
- To co-ordinate the use of display within school and the Church community in order to reflect the Catholic character of the school.
- To monitor, throughout regular contact with staff, the R.E. throughout the school. This, ideally, will include working alongside teachers in the classroom.
- To establish an R.E. portfolio to assess continuity, differentiation and standards throughout the school.

In Service Training

The cascade method of disseminating information is employed following attendance at relevant courses.

It is our intention to arrange further such school-based staff training activities in accordance with our School Development Plan.

Staff have opportunities for prayer and personal growth and development. Participation in the C.C.R.S. programme is encouraged and financially supported. All Teachers are encouraged to secure this qualification in R.E. It

is expected that the R.E. Leader and all aspiring to Senior Leadership in Catholic schools will obtain this.

Resources

Each member of staff has a copy of the 'Come and See' scheme. In addition, there is a range of support material available on the "Come and See" website.

Equal Opportunities

At St. Mary's we do not tolerate discrimination in any way. We strive to create an environment free of unfairness and prejudice. Both boys and girls serve Mass and everyone has the opportunity to take part in masses, liturgies and assemblies.

Race Equality and Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals and are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment to achieve their potential.

Date Reviewed: April 2021	Reviewed by: M Jones	Date of Review: April 2022
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