



St. Mary & St. Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement

We are guided by God who is at the centre of everything we do.

We support each other to be the best we can be to secure bright futures for everyone.

With our parishes, families and the community, we work together to create a school that is safe, happy, respectful and inspirational.

Our school prayer

*Guide us O God, to be the best we can be,
In every thought,
In every word
And in every deed.
Amen*

INTRODUCTION

This policy reflects the mission of the Catholic Church in relation to the teaching and learning of Religious Education. It is intended for all teaching staff and governors and is available to parents on request.

At St Mary & St Andrew's Catholic Primary School we believe that Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum as we strive to proclaim and live the Gospel values. We see our role as supporting parents in leading their children to a greater understanding of who God is and to celebrating, with deeper faith and more understanding, the liturgy of the Church. We believe that religious education provides children with opportunities to recognise, affirm and celebrate the gifts and talents they and others have been given.

In proclaiming the Gospel message, we endeavour to share the Gospel spirit of love in all that we do by providing a warm, family atmosphere, fiercely promoting the dignity of all our school family and ensuring all children feel, 'safe, happy, respected and inspired'.

Our six key school values – based on Gospel values and closely aligned with the Beatitudes – are present in all we think, do and say. Each half term, we focus on one strand and help our children understand their meaning and how to apply these values in their own lives.

Be appreciative

Be forgiving

Be loving

Be generous

Be honest

Be bold

INTENT OF OUR RE CURRICULUM

Religious Education is the subject from which all other subjects can grow and be taught - it is the centre of our core curriculum and is vital in the human development of our children.

The aims of our curriculum are drawn from the *Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales, Fit for mission? Schools and The Diocese of Lancaster RE Curriculum advice*. This provides the core of our teaching which is enriched by the use of a variety of schemes and resources approved by Lancaster Diocese, in particular *Vine and Branches, Come and See* and additional *Cafod* resources.

It is our intention to give children the opportunities to search and question their religious understanding and experience. All children are encouraged to develop their skills using strategies to help them cultivate ways of thinking, feeling and acting, enabling the children to become more reflective, open and enquiring. We aim to foster and inspire genuine interest, understanding and respect of the Catholic faith and the faith commitment of all, as a strong foundation for their future years.

The inclusive and equitable programme of study takes account of the needs of all children irrespective of gender, race, religion, ability and social circumstance and positively promotes the four golden threads that run throughout our whole curriculum: inclusion, diversity, growth mindset and success.

The aim of our Religious Education curriculum is to:

- Grow our children's knowledge and understanding of the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith, whilst enabling pupils to grow in their awareness of what it means to be a member of the Catholic Church.
- encourage our pupils to reflect on their daily lives and on society, in the light of the gospels and the church's moral and social teaching, bringing clarity to the relationship between faith and life and faith and culture
- enable pupils to recognise, explore and appreciate the religious, spiritual and moral dimensions to life
- deepen the children's understanding of the gifts and power of the Sacraments and develop their awareness and understanding of the seasons of the church within the liturgical year
- increase pupils' awareness and knowledge of other religious traditions and cultures, thus developing respect and understanding
- equip our children with the means to express and record their understanding, communicating it effectively and celebrating their achievements
- encourage children to relate the knowledge they have gained from Religious Education to other subjects

IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR RE CURRICULUM

As a Catholic school, RE is central to our whole school curriculum. It occupies at least 10% of teaching time and informs all other areas of the curriculum. All staff take every opportunity to incorporate RE across the curriculum, reinforcing to our children the integral nature of God's influence in our lives.

Planning & Delivery

The RE curriculum is delivered primarily using the diocesan recommended Vine and Branches scheme which follows the Religious Education Programme for Catholic Primary Schools. Content is reviewed yearly to ensure that our classes, often of mixed-age, are working at age related expectations, whilst ensuring that learning tasks are differentiated to meet the needs of specific groups and individuals and fulfil all the requirements of the RE Directory. Additional materials such as those from Cafod, Missio, ACN, Come and See and other approved sources, enrich the children's learning experiences and encourage them to think deeply and to ask and answer often challenging questions. Important liturgical celebrations, other world faiths and key aspects of HRSE are interwoven throughout curriculum, as are opportunities to explore our school values throughout the year.

It is the responsibility of each teacher to plan and deliver creative and inspiring lessons that meet curriculum objectives and the needs of the children they teach. Lessons are sequenced to build on prior learning, revisit key themes and explore scripture in more details. Our lessons fit within topics to ensure depth of study appropriate to the child's age range.

Children are taught in mixed ability and often mixed age classes. Class teachers ensure that work is differentiated to meet the needs of all children and that lessons are engaging and inspiring and appeal to all learning styles.

We value creative and cross curricular links and RE lessons often incorporate artwork, writing, discussion, role play and drama, music and reading. Teaching is supported by other resources including stories, artefacts and scripture, and involves visits and visitors. Class teachers are often ably supported by Teaching Assistants who support and extend the learning of our children.

Marking

Other than children in EYFS, all pupils have individual pupil books for recording work in RE. Our youngest pupils' work is celebrated within a Class RE book/floor style book. In addition, all other classes have an RE scrapbook, where additional evidence (photos, notes on discussion, questions etc) can be displayed to support the children's learning.

Marking pupils work is approached positively and constructively so that it celebrates success and encourages future learning. Marking is carried out regularly, in line with the school's Marking and Feedback Policy; next steps in learning are indicated where appropriate to further drive understanding.

Parish Links

We are well supported by our Parish Priests and nuns, who are regular visitors to school and provide a wealth of support for both staff and pupils in curriculum RE and collective worship. Canon Adrian Towers, parish priest of St Andrew's and Blessed George Haydock, Cottam visits school regularly. School staff work closely with neighbouring Catholic schools to deliver Sacramental programmes and liturgical celebrations. As a school community we value the contributions and links with our parishes and are extremely blessed to have active and supportive parishioners who are keen to be involved in the life of the school.

THE IMPACT OF OUR RE CURRICULUM

We measure the impact of our RE curriculum through a rigorous assessment and monitoring system. We engage in regular moderation with local schools and diocesan wide moderation sessions. Our children do well and achieve highly in this area.

Assessment

Assessment in RE establishes what pupils know, understand and can do: it does not assess faith or the practice of faith.

Assessment takes place in a number of ways and includes observation and questioning of pupils during lessons and via marking of written work. It also includes internal and external moderation, with other schools within the Diocese. By moderating externally, we ensure rigour and validation for our assessments.

At the time of writing, it is not possible to outline the strategic measures used to assess pupils work as the RED is going through a period of change with nothing being expected to be securely embedded until 2025. However, in the meantime, we assess classes teaching RE using Come and See against present ATs and those being trained in the new RED will be measured against the new criteria outlined in the directory.

EYFS pupils are assessed on entry to give a baseline of religious experience, awareness and understanding as they start school. They are then tracked termly throughout the year, in line with all other pupils, according to their phase objectives.

Monitoring

The RE Subject Leader and the Head Teacher are responsible for monitoring the standards of teaching and learning in curriculum RE. Monitoring schedules include observation of teaching, scrutiny of children's work, pupil progress meetings, staff CPD and INSET, pupil interviews. Annual action plans are shared with governors and evaluated and updated termly.

Both the Head Teacher and RE subject leader attend at least termly training sessions led by Diocesan advisors and disseminate this information to both staff and governors.

Reporting to Parents

Assessment and progress information is shared with parents via report sheets at the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. Religious Education heads the subject list on our school reports. Staff also meet with parents up to three times a year, to discuss pupil progress, attainment and next steps.

Reviewed September 2023 by Sarah Roach