

# St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

“Loving and Learning together as Jesus taught us”



**St Catherine's Catholic Primary School**

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## Religious Education Policy

**Date of Policy: October 2015**

**Next Review: October 2017**

Policy written by: Mary Ainger (Deputy Headteacher & RE Subject Leader)

Policy reviewed & passed by: St Catherine's Governing Body

Chair of Catholic Life: Father John

*Related Policies: The Equality Plan, The Health & Safety Policy, The Special Educational Needs Policy, Liturgy & Worship Policy, Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Policy*

St Catherine's Primary School  
Religious Education Policy

**Mission Statement**

*Loving and learning together as Jesus taught us.*

*We the members of St Catherine's School aim:*

- *to enrich the experience of belonging to a community based on the teachings of the Catholic Church.*
- *to recognise our own self worth*
- *to respect and value the other beliefs within the world in which we live and grow.*

*Our School is one where:*

- *children, staff, parents, parish and community all support each other*
- *prayer, worship and liturgy are the foundations of our faith*
- *a happy and caring environment is created*
- *learning is stimulated and enhanced*
- *our children are prepared to form meaningful relationships to face the wider demands of adult citizenship.*

*Each member is valued as a unique individual and given the opportunity to develop his/her full potential, spiritually, emotionally, physically and academically.*

**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. (Teaching Office of the Church). 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.<sup>1</sup>
- Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.
- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

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<sup>1</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

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

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.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Aims of Religious Education**

RE plays a central and vital part of the faith of the Catholic School. At the heart of Catholic Education is the Christian vision of the human person. RE is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the human process.'

(Bishops' statement 2000)

Our overall aim in teaching RE is:

'religiously literate young people who have knowledge, understanding and skills-appropriate to their age and capacity-to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.'

- 1 To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and 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 able to communicate this effectively;
- 3 To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary 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 faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- 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.<sup>4</sup>

### **Curriculum time allocation:**

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Collective Worship.

### **Programme of Study:**

To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory - Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - 'The Way The truth and the Life' programme is used and the Diocesan Resources.

### **The Way The Truth and The Life**

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<sup>3</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

<sup>4</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

This scheme was implemented in September 2008 and links effectively with the 'Here I Am' scheme. The WTL makes clear links to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), the Bishops RE Curriculum Directory (RECD) and other relevant documents. RE is taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. Cross-curricular links are encouraged both in the WLT planning sheets and in our teaching. Each year group follows six units per year.

## Process

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 makes classroom religious education possible. To begin with revelation ensures that we respect the revealed nature of Christian faith.

From revelation 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.

From here 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.

However, attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential.<sup>5</sup>

## 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. It 'serves in the examination and acceptance of the truths which are contained in the deposit of Revelation.'<sup>6</sup>

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

## Planning

- The long-term plans are found in the WTL syllabus.
- The medium and short-term plans are in each class teacher's RE folder. The plans are set out in weekly format.
- The different key phases meet weekly during PPA time and discuss the weekly plan and then annotate the activities, skills etc they intend to teach the following week.
- Each weekly plan contains the content, skills and attitudes, learning objectives and opportunities for assessment. They also give a range of differentiated activities and opportunities for a cross curricular approach. Teachers plan to ensure that each child has the opportunity to achieve.

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<sup>5</sup> *The Way, the Truth & the Life, Teacher Book 4*, CTS, 2004, p. 4

<sup>6</sup> *Briefing*, 26 May 1994, quoting *General Directory for Catechesis*, 74b

A half- termly newsletter is available for parents giving them an overview of the topics and suggestions on how they can support their child.( On Fronter) Details of the website are also given to promote a partnership. [www.tere.org](http://www.tere.org)

### **Marking and commenting on work**

A personal verbal dialogue between teacher and pupil is encouraged whenever possible.

Marking work in Religious Education needs to be:

- Consistent with the school's marking policy
- Positive and constructive so that it affirms and celebrates success and encourages future learning
- Serve to challenge and encourage pupils to reflect
- Encourage high standards
- Give attention to key vocabulary
- Comments made will reflect on the progress in understanding of Religious Education concept or concepts being explored. Consistency of approach across the classes is important.

### **Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress.
- The school portfolio of pupils' work contains samples of work from each teacher for each assessed topic covering a range of abilities.
- An in - house standardisation meeting is held every term
- A Diocesan Moderation Meeting held every term
- The school portfolio of assessed samples of work is available for inspection.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning - work scrutiny half termly, observations termly, learning walks termly
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Children are also instrumental in the assessment process- Self assessment, Peer assessment, Pupil Interviews
- Teachers use a great repertoire of assessment tasks
- Achievement can be demonstrated through art, drama, mime, music, visual representation (photographic, video) celebration and liturgy, as well as, through written work including summaries of discussion, collation of findings and topic evaluations by teacher and pupil.

### **Management of the subject.**

Mary Ainger, the Subject Leader has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. Evaluation informs planning and therefore each teacher is encouraged to reflect upon the unit taught and to use these ideas for future planning. The Subject Leader meets with children to discuss their lessons.

### **Special Educational Needs**

As a Christian Community we recognize 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 wide range of activities and ways of recording, which allows children of all abilities to participate. It is vital that RE work is differentiated to cater for the child's ability, spiritual and moral developmental stage and religious experiences.

### **Education for Personal Relationships**

RE deals with beliefs and values, which underpin the ways, individuals behave and the choices they make. It is therefore directly linked with EPR. The Diocesan scheme for EPR makes direct links to topics with the WTL.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Catholics are called to be committed to respecting people of other faiths and to recognize that God is at work in them. In the multi-faith society of today, RE should introduce children to the background of beliefs of people of other faiths so prejudice and misunderstanding can be overcome from an early age.

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 his / her uniqueness and is encouraged to fulfil his / her full potential regardless of race, belief or sex. At St Catherine's we provide an atmosphere of mutual respect enabling all our members to share their experiences willingly.

### **Other Faiths**

During the course of the school year the whole school will study other faiths and this will become a focus for a week in the Autumn and Summer Term. A display will be central to this study and will depict our respect for other religions and cultures in our world.

### **Policy review.**

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by Head teacher, SLT, all staff and Catholic Life Committee *and* updated every 2 years.

***To Be Reviewed October 2017***

## APPENDIX 1

### The Role of the Co-ordinator for Religious Education

#### The Religious Education Co-ordinator will be responsible for:

- Working with senior leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Organising and maintaining the school portfolio of pupils' work.
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Attending and participating in Diocesan Moderation meetings
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and leading in-house staff training and development.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education.
- Liaising with the Head teacher, Governors, parents, the Diocese of Westminster on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.