

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

"Loving and Learning Together as Jesus taught us"



Religious Education Policy

Date of policy review: July 2022

Next review: July 2023

Policy Reviewed & Passed by the Governors

Head teacher: Maureen Kelly

Our Mission

Loving and Learning together as Jesus taught us

Our Vision

Our school will provide a loving, secure and stimulating learning environment, where everyone will grow in their faith journey and be inspired to be the best person they can be.

Our Aims

- To value and encourage the whole school community to develop their God given potential
- To nurture and support each child in their faith journey as a worshipping community
- To promote and encourage the individuality of all, respecting ethnicity, attainment, age gender, disability and background.
- To provide a learning environment and curriculum that is safe, stimulating, creative and challenging
- To create a partnership involving school, home and parish and the wider community
- To help each child develop a positive self-image with a healthy lifestyle to become confident individuals who will contribute to society
- To instill a lifelong love of learning

Our Values

Love :- we show compassion towards each other

Faith :- we place our confidence, belief and trust in God

Integrity:- we strive to be honest and truthful in what we say and do

Diversity:- we recognise that each individual is unique

Excellence:- we achieve our best in all that we do

Our aim is for the children to know God in a personal relationship and we should foster this through love, care, sensitivity and joy. To achieve this, adults are encouraged to know and understand the mission statement and lead in its example. The children should be taught about the Mission Statement and the school motto 'Loving and learning together as Jesus taught us'.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of Religious Education at St Catherine's Primary and Nursery Catholic School.

Religious Education

"Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for and subsequently shape the school curriculum and offer living experience of the life of faith in its practical expression". (Bishops of England and Wales, 1988).

At St Catherine's we follow the 'The Way The Truth and The Life' scheme of work from nursery to year 6. It extends this core scheme by work around the Word on Wednesday, Scripture, Inspirational people, Great Artists and the Common Good.

Aims and Objectives 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.'

Equal consideration will be given to the following aims:

- Showing concern for all pupils, all the staff and all the Parents.
- Developing the faith of each individual in the school community, so that God becomes a reality in their lives.
- Preparing pupils for entry into the wider community by developing their confidence and self-esteem;
- Developing the pupils understanding of relationships in a positive way so that co-operation rather than competition exists, and opportunities for reconciliation are provided;
- Providing equality of access to the Religious Education Curriculum, in accordance with the S.E.N.D policy and the Equal Opportunities policy of our school;
- Providing a broadly-based curriculum which challenges and extends the child's whole moral, spiritual, artistic and intellectual abilities;
- Ensuring that the child is at the centre of the learning process.

The Diocesan Policy on Religious Education commits the Diocese to support schools in implementing the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and other norms of the Bishops' Conference. In recent years this Diocesan support for schools has focused on agreeing and developing a fuller understanding of the national Levels of Attainment and in improving the teaching of Scripture.

The school uses the AGREED LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT for assessment and the CURRICULUM DIRECTORY as the driver documents to inform all teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Worship

Worship in a Catholic school should be joyful and purposeful in order for it to become a truly spiritual experience. Collective acts of worship take place every day either in class, as a key stage or as a whole school. Assemblies, prayer services and worship take place throughout the week. Prayer Services take place on Thursdays. Parents are invited into the class masses and prayer services. The Sunday Gospel is the main focus of the Monday assembly. The school uses Wednesday Word to share the gospel with the children and their families throughout the week. Prayer Services are based on the liturgical year and the themes of the RE topics. Worship takes place regularly in the classrooms and may take a variety of forms including prayer, song, meditation, or a scriptural reading.

Prayer

Children participate in various forms of prayer throughout their school life (spontaneous prayer, traditional prayer, modern prayer, biblical and liturgical, silent prayer, meditation, hymns and praise). Prayer can happen anywhere and should be a true relationship between God and the child. A power point of the prayers the children should be familiar with are on My Uso.

Liturgies

School Mass is celebrated at the beginning of the new school year and on holy days of obligation. Class masses take place throughout the year. In class children are given the opportunity to prepare prayers of the faithful to be shared in class masses. The RE subject leader supports class teachers to liaise with the parish priest about their class mass. There is a special Mass for the year 3 children with their parents to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. There is also a special leavers' Mass which focuses on 'Moving On / New Beginnings' celebrated at the end of the summer term. Music is central to all the liturgies, masses, celebrations and feasts. It is a key feature of this school. The KS2 children visit our two churches throughout the year- Ash Wednesday, Feast of St Peter and St Paul and for church tours.

Home/School/Parish Links

The vital partnership of home, school and parish provides the context for the life long process of religious formation. "The first and primary educators of children are their parents". Together we aim to work in partnership and seek ways of involving parents in the religious life of their children. 'The Way The Truth and The Life' overview is made available on our school website at the beginning of each half term so that they too can work with us in developing their child's spiritual understanding.

The school has close links to our parishes- Mary Immaculate and St Gregory and Mary Immaculate and St Peters. Parents and carers are welcome to attend all school masses, class masses, Advent and Lenten liturgies and prayer services celebrated by the children. Parent consultations allow parents to discuss their child's RE work and their spiritual and moral development. The children are prepared for their Communion in the parish. This involves regular sessions held at the church to prepare the children for liturgical celebrations. There is also a cross parish link when penitential services are held for the children especially during Advent and Lent for Years 5 and 6.

Time Allocation

Each topic lasts for a period of five to six weeks. RE is taught for 10% of the weekly timetable . This represents at least 2hrs and 15mins for key stage 1 classes and 2hrs and 30mins for key stage 2 classes. Prayers, assemblies and collective worship do not make up part of this 10%.

Display

Each class has an RE/ prayer focus. There is an RE display in each classroom with a prayer focus. RE displays are also in other specific areas around the school e.g. school entrance, library area, corridor and main hall- Mission Statement, The Catholic Life of the School and a Wordle.

Children's Recording of RE work

Children record written work in exercise books. Work may also be recorded in other ways e.g. book making, painting, group posters, presentations, photographs

Other Faith Education

Respect for the traditions and beliefs of other faiths are important. 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 Spring and Summer Term. A display will be central to this study and will depict our respect for other religions and cultures in our world.

Assessment and Record Keeping

A copy of the 'RE Curriculum Directory' is available to all staff. The frameworks are all cross – referenced to the Curriculum Directory. Assessment is focused by the overall aims and objectives of R.E. Formal assessment takes place at the end of each topic. The assessment is planned for at the beginning of each topic. Teachers are asked to assess each child once a term, at least, and give a 'best fit' judgement using the NEW AGREED LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT. This 'best fit' judgement will be based on evidence gathered from two formally assessed piece of work as well as other pieces of pupils' work that term. It is expected that teachers ensure at the planning stage that appropriate teaching and learning strategies are in place for each pupil to be challenged at the appropriate level based on the NEW AGREED LEVELS. Each teacher is expected to keep a record of the levels of attainment of each pupil during the school year. This data is entered onto the whole school's Route Map. This information is used to plan for improvement and set targets. Informal assessments are made by the teacher through observation, marking and plenary of lessons. Children are also involved in self-assessment during lessons. The marking of children's work is consistent with the school's teaching and learning policy. Teachers give positive and constructive feedback which involves closing the gap comments in order to extend the children's learning. Teachers may use some of the questions in the NEW AGREED LEVELS document to support their marking. Parents are informed of their child's progress at parent consultations and at the end of the year as part of a written report. This is shown as WT, WA and WGD.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to have a Catholic ethos, which provides the content and stimulus for the growth of each child, as an individual and as a member of the school and wider community. Our teaching and beliefs show the children that all people are of equal importance in the sight of God and should have equally the respect and dignity due to the children of God.

In the multi-faith society of today, RE introduces our 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.

Inclusion

Inherent in our R.E. policy is the importance of the contribution made by each child and member of staff towards a happy and caring environment in the school, by showing respect for and appreciation of each person as an individual, regardless of colour, culture, origin, sex or ability. We aim for all children to have equal access to the R.E. curriculum, so that they are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and develop their full potential in recognition that we are all children of God.

Induction of New Colleagues

New members of staff meet with the RE subject leader to find out about the school's approach to RE as part of their induction programme. They are also sent on relevant training days run by the Diocese e.g. INSET days for ECT's.

Resources

A variety of resources such as books, websites, religious artefacts, flipcharts, posters, candles, liturgical music, materials for prayer focus are available to all classes. Resources are kept in the main hall and in wicker baskets in the classrooms.

RHE Policy

Our Catholic faith informs all our teaching and we teach within the guidelines of the Catholic Church. 'Catholic faith has a distinctive understanding of the human person, of the relationships and of the nature of community.' (Bishops Conference, 1994) Education for Personal Relationships is seen in St Catherine's by staff and governors as an important part of a child's development.

Children need to develop knowledge and skills and to explore their own, and others values in order to make informed choices. Our programme is grounded within a moral and spiritual framework in order to instill in each child: a sense of their own dignity, a respect for and acceptance of this, together with a sense of responsibility.

Citizenship

Each class is expected to discuss and display class rules and responsibilities by which the class is expected to live by. The school council is an active forum giving the children in the school an opportunity for their voices to be heard. The school council meets regularly. Children with specific roles in the school support and encourage their peers to work and play together in a harmonious and cohesive way with a strong focus on the Mission Statement. They are encouraged to develop particular life skills e.g. being responsible, productive members of the community and accountability for choices. The PSHE curriculum allows children to explore issues of citizenship and social/emotional aspects of learning.

Rights Respecting School

St Catherine's is a Rights Respecting School Gold Awarded School. This means that we put the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of the school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. The UNCRC sets out a child's rights to:

- Survive and have good health
- Be protected from any form of abuse
- Develop their talents and skills
- Participate in the world to which they belong

We teach about children's and human rights and models rights and respect in all our relationships. The RRS Ambassadors meeting every two weeks.

The Role of Music

Music is central to the liturgies, Masses and celebrations held in St Catherine's. The school has a Specialist Music teacher who teaches from Reception to Year 6 and ensures that children are taught hymns and Liturgical music that will enhance their love and understanding of our Catholic life. Music is a huge part of our culture and ethos at St Catherine's School.

This Policy will be reviewed annually

Review of policy: July 2023