

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Religious Education Policy.

“Growing in Love, in the Spirit of Christ, for the benefit of all.”

Intent

As a Catholic Academy, religious education and faith development are at the heart of our school curriculum developing the Catholicism and spirituality of our pupils.

Religious Education is an integral part of our lives at St. Joseph's School. We are members of the Body of Christ and members of a Christian Community and recognise that we are all at different stages of our faith journey. Therefore, through our Religious Education program and the way we use Christ's teaching within every aspect of our school and lives, we can develop a deep understanding of our faith which will help us to love and serve God in our daily lives, both now and in the future.

Our aims for Religious Education will be to enrich the lives of the children in the;

- Love of God for everyone and everything He has created.
- Understanding of the Good News of the Lord, to enable them to respond to His love.
- Teaching of the Catholic faith and how their lives should be shaped by their beliefs and values.
- Growth of faith by relating the Gospels to their lives and levels of understanding.
- Development of worship and prayer, allowing children to take a leading role.
- Awareness and respect of other Christian faiths, world faiths and cultures.
- Standards to be high and children to be challenged in their understanding so that they can deepen this.

We feel that the best way to achieve these aims is a three way process involving the Home, School and Parish. We endeavour to make these links wherever possible, acknowledging that the foundation of Religious Education is presented to children from a very wide range of backgrounds and commitment to the faith.

Based upon the varied backgrounds and experience of Church and Religious Education we tailor our programme to meet the needs of all pupils.

Whilst we are first and foremost a Roman Catholic School with a strong mission and vision statement, we do support other religious backgrounds within our school, focussing on the similarities within the beliefs and celebrating the differences.

Implementation

To ensure continuity and progression within St. Joseph's School, we have adopted the "Come and See" Religious Education programme for primary schools. This is published by Rejoice Publications with the authority of the Department for Catholic Education.

This programme is used throughout school from The Foundation Stage to Year Six, and we ensure 2.5 hours in KS1 and 2.7 hours in KS2 of our curriculum time is spent teaching R.E, fulfilling the Bishops requirement (10% of total teaching time). Within each topic, there should be:

- A minimum of two pieces of extended writing;
- A minimum of one piece of scripture analysis/annotation;
- One pieces of evaluated religious art work;
- One piece of recreated art per term.

As stipulated, this time does not include time for collective worship and hymn practice.

For full details of the programme, please refer to the 'Come and See' folders, what follows is a brief summary as described in the programme.

Central to the programme are three basic questions and the three Christian beliefs that are the Church's response in faith.

- Where do I come from? Life- Creation
- Who am I? Dignity- Incarnation
- Why am I here? Purpose - Redemption

These three doctrines of Creation, Incarnation and Redemption express faith in God as Trinity: Creator, Saviour, Spirit; and personal: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: the Holy One whose love gives life to all (Creation); who makes all holy (Incarnation) and whose purpose is to draw all man and women into one, universal family of God (Redemption). These questions concern the mystery of life, its dignity and purpose and are part of the Christian person's search for meaning in life which finds its response in the life of faith. In 'Come and See' these big questions are considered in the light of the Scriptures and Tradition of the Church, as expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) which drew its strength and inspiration from that council.

Come and See is developed through three themes based on the documents of the Second Vatican Council, which are gradually explored each time in greater depths. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian living.

The basic question-belief for each season time is explored through three kinds of themes.

- Community of faith - Church
- Celebration and ritual - Sacraments
- Way of life - Christian living

The themes occur in each season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme.

Church

- Autumn - Domestic Church
- Spring - Local Church
- Summer - Universal Church

Sacramental

- Autumn - Baptism, confirmation, Ordination and Marriage
- Spring - Eucharist
- Summer - Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick

Christian Living

- Autumn - Advent and Christmas
- Spring - Lent and Easter
- Summer- Pentecost

Each theme is explored through different topics in each age group. The programme takes account of the ages and stages of development of pupils and allows the teachers to deliver the lessons at a level appropriate to the development and understanding of the children.

During each of the topics, the threefold process of Come and See is used; that of Explore, Reveal and Respond.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Using the "Levels of Attainment in R.E. for Catholic Schools" by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers and the "End of Year Expectations" produced by The Diocese of Nottingham, we have introduced formal assessment within the subject.

In addition to the assessment task set by David Quinn to all schools in the Diocese each term, teachers use driver words and assess the general ability of the child throughout the term as a judgement. Teachers must submit levels for each child at the end of each term as part of their Otrack data submission. This will clearly identify if children are emerging, developing, expected or at greater depth within a year group. This must demonstrate the ability the child is working at within the two identified attainment targets:

- AT1 - Knowledge and Understanding of Religion (learning about Religion- content.)
- AT2 - Reflection and meaning (learning from Religion- skills.)

On a yearly basis work is moderated within school to ensure that levelling is accurate across all classes. In addition to this work is also moderated with other schools of the Diocese to ensure that our levels match those of all schools and that our expectations of the children are the same across the Diocese.

Other aspects of Religious Education during the year

At St. Joseph's School, we do take into account the different seasons celebrated in the Church's Liturgical Year. This partly takes place in lessons, but it also focussed on in our assemblies and other activities during the year.

Areas covered in the academic year:

- Harvest Celebration
- Advent preparation for Christmas
- Lenten preparation for Easter (including a Lenten service which the parents and parishioners are invited to attend)
- Important feasts of the year celebrated and focusses on - all Holy Days and our Patron Saint Joseph

Quite a number of the topics within the 'Come and See' lend themselves to some of the above and can and are incorporated at the appropriate time.

Home- School-Parish links.

We warmly welcome opportunities for parents to be involved with the religious education we give the children, and for us to assist parents in the difficult responsibility they have in encouragement and guidance, through their example, for their children to nurture and grown in their faith journey.

All parents receive a letter at the start of the term informing them of the topics their child will be learning about in Religious Education. In addition to this they are also invited to celebrate their child's learning in each topic at a 'Come and See' assembly.

We also welcome opportunities where we can join with parishioners and other groups and where we can invite them to join us. We work hard to foster such links and organise a number of opportunities throughout the year:

- A weekly class Mass
- Assemblies
- Lenten and Advent services
- Parents and Grandparents help in School
- Parents help on educational visits
- Christmas concerts - with performances for both parents and local Senior Citizens
- Sports Day and Summer Fair
- Word of the Week videos
- Parish Ambassadors

A number of parents have formed a "Friends of Saint Joseph" fundraising and social group. Their support tremendously adds to our Christian community in action.

Displays and Prayer areas

Within each classroom there is a display of the current R.E topic in the class. This should include a range of children's work as well as key words and questions to promote thought. These displays are monitored by the R.E Co-ordinator, the Headteacher and each House Captain. In addition to this, each class has a Wonder Wall display which they use within each topic to display key ideas, vocabulary and teaching.

In the Hall there are many religious displays which the children across the school contribute towards. Also there is a display which belongs to each class. The class is responsible for planning and completing the display. These displays follow a different theme each year, for example, the Parables.

Impact

Our curriculum has ambition for high achievement of all pupils irrespective of background and starting point.

The teaching and learning process is cyclical, therefore assessments are used to inform teaching, but also to measure progress.

Progress is measured through the use of post learning challenges at the end of each unit of learning.

Outcomes at the end of both Key Stage One and Two are a useful indicator of pupils' learning and one which supports staff in measuring the impact of the school's curriculum. However, at St. Joseph's, we continually measure the impact of our curriculum by scrutinising pupils' books, speaking to pupils about their learning and the use of internal assessments.

SEND Provision

Religious Education is an integral part of our lives at St. Joseph's School. We are all members of the Body of Christ and members of a Christian Community and recognise that we are all at different stages of our faith journey.

Therefore, we ensure that Religious Education is differentiated so that all can access the curriculum. Careful consideration is taken to remove any barriers to learning for example English. The Religious content should therefore be at the core of all lessons ensuring that all children can access the religious content at an appropriate level.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has the responsibility for the leadership of the Religious Education curriculum and delegates responsibility to key staff:

The R.E Co-ordinator should:

- Keep informed of religious issues and inform and support colleagues
- Maintain resources- update and order when appropriate

- Ensure delivery of R.E is taking place in line with the school policy through lesson observations, monitoring planning, monitoring the Catholic life of the school and monitoring children's work.
- Attend Diocesan R.E Co-ordinators courses, as well as other related courses
- Lead INSET and staff meetings
- Ensure the Diocesan termly newsletter is sent to parents
- Moderate work within school and with other schools to ensure assessment and levelling is accurate
- Monitor displays in classes and around school
- Support staff in planning and delivery of the 'Come and See' programme

Class teachers ensure that the curriculum is taught and that the aims are achieved for their class. They plan collaboratively to ensure parity across the year group.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher ensure that the progress of each pupil is tracked and that there is appropriate challenge support and intervention.

Governors monitor the success of the curriculum at whole Governing Body meetings through the Headteacher's report and reports from subject leaders.

Reviewed: September 2024

Review Date: September 2025