



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

School Mission Statement:

"Learning and Growing Together in the Light of God's Love"

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School..

We cherish the uniqueness of all individuals.

We aim to create a learning climate which promotes the development of the whole child and engenders a love for learning and excellence, so that within the framework of a broad and balanced curriculum, all may realise their potential.

We proclaim the Gospel values in the ways in which we love ourselves and others.

Worship, prayer and our relationship with God are at the heart of school life.

We embrace our role in the wider community and seek to bear witness to our Catholic Faith in all that we do.

Date of Policy	September 2023		
Policy Category:	Curriculum	Review Cycle:	Biennial
Next Review Date:	September 2025		

Policy Formation:

The policy was developed using the model policy produced by the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle's Education Department (2016) and advice from the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

The policy is reviewed and evaluated every 2 years by staff and governors (specifically the RE Link Governor). The RE Subject Leader and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring the implementation of the policy.

Last updated: September 24 –update regarding implementation of RED programme.

Our teaching, assessment and monitoring of Religious Education, as set out within this policy, is central to achieving our Mission Statement and fulfilling our purpose as a Catholic school. As such, it will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

Rationale of Religious Education

- Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church.
*'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'*¹
- Religious Education is 'the core of the core curriculum.'
*'Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school..... All pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.'*¹
- Religious Education is the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ and is a rigorous academic subject in its own right.
*Religious Education is regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines.*² As such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.
*"Excellence in religious education, then, will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material."*³
- The outcome of Classroom 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".*⁴

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

² Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3

³ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7

⁴ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

The Aims of Religious Education as stated in the RE Curriculum Directory are:

- To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- 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;
- To raise pupils’ awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- To stimulate pupils’ imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.⁵

Religious Education - Curriculum Time Allocation

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 four areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, 2012 – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - the ‘Come and See’ programme is being used as recommended by the Diocese for particular year groups.

For other year groups, where the new Religious Education Directory is being phased in as recommended by the Diocese, the programme of study has four structural elements: knowledge lens, ways of knowing, expected outcomes and curriculum branches.

The Implementation Plan for the new RED is as follows:

September 2022	Year R
September 2023	Years 1 & 6
September 2024	Years 2 & 5
September 2025	Years 3 & 4

Process

Where the “Come and See” programme is being used, Religious Education is taught through the process of *Explore, Reveal, Respond*. This follows the pattern of: the human **search** for meaning, God’s initiative in **Revelation** and the **response** in faith. This pattern is outlined both in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the Curriculum Directory.

As the Directory states: *‘Teaching in Religious Educationshould 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.’*⁶

Where the new Religious Education Directory is being used, 'knowledge lenses' divide the content of the programme of study into four systematic sub-sections for the study of Catholicism and an additional two lenses for the study of religions and worldviews. These knowledge lenses are: hear, believe, celebrate and live (for the study of the Catholic Religion) and: dialogue and encounter (for the study of other religions and worldviews). In the new Religious Education Directory, the children's learning is sequenced through six 'curriculum branches' that correspond to the six half-terms of the year. The six curriculum branches are: Creation and Covenant, Prophecy and Promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, Desert to Garden, To the Ends of the Earth, and Dialogue and Encounter. These branches are revisited in each year of the school, which enables children to come to a deeper understanding of its significance for Catholic belief and practice, which allows children to make links between the four knowledge lenses.

Methodology

RE is taught in every class with consideration of the needs and abilities of each child. The age, stage of development and the child's own faith journey are taken into account. A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils. Teachers create a climate that stimulates thinking and celebrates achievement by, for example:

- Posing open ended questions that challenge pupils
- Responding to pupils' answers in a way that extends thinking
- Providing opportunities for independent and collaborative working
- Providing a wide range of resources to support and enrich learning
- Deploying Teaching Assistants to support, enhance
- Giving pupils opportunities to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways
- Continuing to be learners themselves.

Inclusion and Equality

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Right of withdrawal from RE

Parents have the right of withdrawal from RE for their children. The school will refer to the Catholic Education Service (CSE) document 'Guidance on the right of withdrawal from religious education and / or collective worship' in the event of such a request being received.

⁵ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

⁶ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.7

Other World Faiths

Where year groups are following the 'Come and See' programme, two other religions are taught. These are Judaism, which is usually taught in the Autumn Term, and Islam, which is taught either in the Spring or Summer Term. At least one week's teaching and learning time per year is given to each.

Where year groups are studying the new Religious Education Directory, other faiths are studied within the 'Encounter' curriculum branch, which takes place in the Summer term. For children in Early Years and Key Stage 1, there is a focus on Judaism and also developing respect for the beliefs of people from different communities. As the children move into lower Key Stage 2 they build on their knowledge of Judaism and learn about the importance of Islamic beliefs and theology to the life of British Muslims. In Upper Key Stage 2 children continue to develop their understanding of Judaism and learn about Dharmic beliefs, practices and ways of life.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Children following the "Come and See" programme are assessed at the end of each topic. Children following the RED programme are assessed against the expected outcomes for their age. This information is recorded and tracked to capture progress and achievement.
- Work in RE is marked according to the school policy using the "Pink and Green" system, marking codes and post-its.
- In-house and Deanery moderation sessions are held to inform assessment practices and moderate judgements (usually looking at 3 children's books with a range of ability)
- Moderation evidence is kept by the RE Subject Leader.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out by the RE Subject Leader. Evidence may be gathered in a variety of ways including: lesson observation drop-ins, work scrutiny, pupil interviews /questionnaires, analysis of assessment data, learning walks, class spiritual Journals etc
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in the End of Year written reports. There is also the opportunity for parents' consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring Terms, where parents may discuss their child's achievement and progress in RE, and an open evening in the Summer Term where parents can view their child's work.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors via the Headteacher's report and through liaison between the RE Subject Leader and RE Link Governor.

Liaison with Parents

An RE newsletter is sent out to parents at the beginning of each term providing updates and information for parents and outlining the topics to be taught and the key feasts of the liturgical season. Teachers send out a Curriculum Sheet at the start of each term which includes information about RE teaching and also send out a weekly focus sheet at the beginning of each week which includes RE. Information about Masses and liturgies is included in the weekly newsletters. Evidence of opportunities and achievements in RE learning are publicised through the newsletter. A parents' consultation evening is held in the Autumn and Spring terms, and achievement and progress in RE is recorded in the End of

Year reports. In the Summer Term there is an open evening where parents have the opportunity to visit the classroom and share their child's learning in their books.

Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation usually takes place when the children are in Year 3, though other children in KS2 may also participate. It is a Parish based programme but members of staff support the preparation at school.

Management of the Subject

The RE Subject Leader, has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

The quality of Religious Education may be monitored by the following:

- The subject leader monitoring that 10% of curriculum time is being allocated to RE teaching
- Classroom observation drop-ins by the subject leader and SLT
- The subject leader monitoring pupils' RE books
- Moderation of assessment at Deanery level
- Discussions with teachers at pupil progress meetings
- Gathering pupil voice

Policy Monitoring and Review

The RE Subject leader, the Headteacher and the RE link Governor are responsible for monitoring and review. This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by staff and Governors every 2 years.