

The Federation of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, Esh Winning, & St Joseph's, Ushaw Moor, Catholic Schools



*“Living, loving and learning together,
With our eyes focused on Jesus.”*

Religious Education (RE) Policy March 2023

Rooted in a firm understanding in the love of God, our aim is that each child who leaves our schools will be a caring, confident and accomplished member of the community; with a desire to continue to flourish.

‘The convention applies to everyone: whatever their race, religion or abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.’

Article 2 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

‘The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect them.’

Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child



Reviewed in line with the Diocesan Model Policy for Religious Education

Mission Statement

‘Living, loving and learning together, with our eyes focused on Jesus.’

To create within our Catholic school an extension of Christian traditional family values based on the gospels, which actively encourages full participation of our children, staff, governors and parents in living out these values as potential is developed.

To promote daily self-discipline within a loving, caring and forgiving framework.

To provide, within the framework of the National Curriculum, an education which strives to attain the highest educational standards whilst being a living example of Gospel values.

To utilise school life to provide a holistic education for all pupils to widen and deepen themselves as confident and secure people which values the individual and develops their feeling of self-worth alongside their variety of talents

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

- Whilst evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils, the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

- 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”.

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 used as recommended by the Diocese. This is supplemented by a wide range of resources.

Process

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 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.'⁶

Methodology

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

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.

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

Right of withdrawal from RE

Parents have the right of withdrawal from RE for their children. Any parent wishing to discuss this further should make an appointment with the head teacher.

Other Religions

Two other religions are taught from EYFS to Year 6 following the programme of study in 'Come and See'. One of these is Judaism, which is usually taught in the Autumn, and the other is Islam, which is taught in the Summer Term. At least one week's teaching and learning time per year is given to Judaism and Islam

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each child's RE book has a Skills Grid which maps out the requirements of AT1 Knowledge and Understanding, AT2 Engagement and Response and AT3 Analysis and Evidence (KS2 only) for the academic year. The class teacher annotates the grid with the date the skill was taught and embedded across the year. The child's work for these assessed pieces is annotated with a comment by the teacher relating to degree of independence, e.g. whether work was scaffolded.
- An in-house moderation meeting is held at least annually.
- A sample of books from each year group are presented for Diocesan Moderation at RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the summer term.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning involves a combination of many things including; lesson observations, book and planning scrutiny, learning walks, student discussion, pupil surveys, discussions with RE Link Governor.
- Termly pupil progress meetings establish which pupils are on track to achieve ARE by the end of the Summer Term and this information is used to ensure that progress and achievement is recorded and tracked.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors at the end of the academic year.

Management of the Subject

Mrs Yates (OLQM) and Mrs Curtis (STJ) as the Co-ordinator/Subject Leaders have responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. This is overseen and supported by the Head Teacher, Mrs Keenan.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Local Governing Committee.

March 2023

Review due March 2025

Appendix 1:

Primary RE Coordinator Job Description Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

5 APPENDIX 1 Primary RE Co-ordinator Job Description

- To be responsible to the Headteacher and colleagues for the monitoring of teaching, assessment and planning of Religious Education based on the development of the children at each stage. Monitoring occurs in order to support staff and should include classroom observation, book scrutiny, planning and discussion with pupils.
- To manage resources and facilities for Religious Education.
- To liaise with the Diocesan Department for Education particularly through attendance at the Co-ordinators' meetings, and inform the Headteacher and colleagues of current standards and developments within Religious Education.
- To attend appropriate In-service training for Religious Education, keep up-to-date with current developments and feed these developments back to staff.
- To advise individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the Religious Education process and teaching methods.
- To set up and maintain a portfolio of work in order to monitor progression and continuity. Samples of work should reflect the appropriate Attainment target strands and levels.
- Attend annual diocesan moderation meetings with the school portfolio.
- To track data and use this, in consultation with the Headteacher, to set realistic targets in RE.
- To ensure that cross-curricular concerns such as literacy skills, multi-cultural issues, equal opportunity, the use of Information Technology and PHSE are reflected in Religious Education.
- In consultation with the Headteacher to communicate with parents, governors and the parish community regarding issues associated with Religious Education.
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- To liaise with other primary and secondary colleagues.
- Working with the Headteacher and colleagues, to undertake a regular audit/review of Religious Education in line with the school development plan.
- To be familiar with the current inspection framework and to consult with the Headteacher to complete the school's CSED document.
- To keep up to date with any changes to the Areas of Study (Religious Education Curriculum Directory)