



St. Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Policy 28: Religious Education

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Mission Statement

“Believe, Achieve, Succeed”

Under St. Joseph's guardianship and protection, we will be supported to achieve and succeed in the things the Lord

Created: October 2016

To be reviewed: October 2018

Signed: Headteacher _____

Signed: Chairman of Governors _____

Rationale of Religious Education

- Religious Education at St. Joseph's has a very high priority in the life of the school. We see Religious Education as 'the core of the core curriculum' that has the capacity to engage pupils' intellect, heart and imagination.
- We recognise Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church and we work together in this mission.
- 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.
- We understand Religious Education to be the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ.

'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. 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.'
(Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools – Bishops' Conference 2000)

'Religious Education...is a rigorous academic discipline, and as such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.'
(Curriculum Directory. p10)

'The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.'
(Curriculum Directory p10)

Aims

- To create an atmosphere animated by a spirit of freedom and love, based on Gospel values.
- To promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life.
- To promote knowledge and understanding of the responses of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose.
- To promote the skills required engaging in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice.

Objectives

To help us to fulfil our Mission Statement and our aims, we have formulated the following objectives.

- Ensure we have a welcoming atmosphere in school and show we value the contribution and involvement of everyone within our community.
- To produce careful planning linked to attainment targets and assessment procedures.
- To help all children to fulfil their potential making good progress across key stages by developing assessment for learning in RE (through careful planning, target setting, tracking and monitoring).
- Plan and publish a liturgical calendar and a programme of class assemblies to which parents, the parish and the wider community will be invited.
- Provide opportunities to celebrate special occasions and show appreciation, encouragement and praise to help children build up a good self-image (link to 'Nurturing Human Wholeness' assemblies, topic exit points and class assemblies).
- To ensure there are good communication channels with home, the parish and the wider community, where possible (e.g. School updates in parish newsletter each week).
- Develop links with local schools, agencies and businesses by inviting them to become involved with, or contribute towards meetings and a variety of events (e.g. The Harborough and Bowden Charities allocated £3000 money for library, parish bazaar, printing of the FHC programme).

Implementation

To fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory (Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ) the 'Come and See' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese. The title is from John 1:39 where the disciples ask Jesus 'Where do you live?' Jesus responds with 'Come and see.' This reminds us that we should 'spend the rest of the day with Him' just as the disciples did that day.

Using the 'Come and See' programme, we teach RE through three processes, Search, Revelation and Response. It follows the pattern of: The human search for meaning, God's initiative in revelation and the response in faith.

'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.'
(Curriculum Directory p11)

Three topics are studied each term, with each topic lasting approximately four weeks. These topics fall under the same three themes every term; these are:

- Church
- Sacramental
- Christian Living

Each class studies a different topic specific to their year group. However, the theme of the topics remains the same across the year groups. These topics/themes are also developed through different 'understandings' each term.

- The three autumn topics are developed in the light of an understanding of Creation.
- The three spring topics are developed in the light of an understanding of Incarnation.
- The three summer topics are developed in the light of an understanding of Redemption –the work of the Holy Spirit.

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

The programme does not provide lesson plans therefore medium and short-term planning is recorded onto the term planner based on the 'Come and See' content and

suggested activities. The teacher may also devise their own activities based on the 'Come and See' content, linking to the attainment targets where appropriate.

The activities suggested in 'Come and See' are also supplemented with diocesan assessment activities designed to assess children to enable appropriate planning, teaching and learning specific to the child's abilities and potential. Other resources are also used to supplement the programme including online materials.

Other Faiths

Two other faiths are taught every year following the programme of study in 'Come and See'. One week teaching and learning time per year is given to each religion taught.

Teaching and learning

A range of teaching strategies and learning methodologies will be employed depending on the needs and abilities of the children and the nature of the activities being undertaken.

- Work is differentiated in terms of activity or outcome according to the needs and abilities of the children. One third of all recorded work will be differentiated by task or learning objective (where different ability groups have different objectives written in their books).
- Approaches include whole class teaching, group activities and individual work. Children have opportunities to work individually as well as co-operatively and collaboratively, developing their own knowledge and expertise as well as sharing their experiences with others.
- All work involves thought provoking reflection and discussion, encouraging the children to develop their moral and spiritual consciences.
- Teachers are encouraged to make cross-curricular links when planning RE, incorporating opportunities for art, ICT and extended writing where appropriate.

Assessment and monitoring

It is impossible to assess the level of a child's personal faith and it should not be attempted. However we are able to assess a child's knowledge skills, concepts and attitudes that have been taught in RE. These can be demonstrated through discussions with the child, written work, art work, role-play and drama.

- Formal assessment activities, are provided each term by the diocese. Teachers use these to assess a particular attainment target each term and give the piece a level.
- In addition to the diocese assessments, teachers formally assess each topic. The work and level achieved is recorded in the Big RE assessment books which follow the children through the school.
- A level of attainment is recorded for each topic and recorded for each child on their assessment grid. Using this grid, a teacher assessment of the child's overall level for the term is then recorded and handed to the co-ordinator at the end of every term for monitoring purposes. The Big RE assessment books are handed in to the co-ordinator on an annual basis for monitoring.
- The Big RE assessment books replace the school portfolio of pupils' work and show progress across year groups more efficiently.
- Assessment opportunities are indicated by writing the attainment target, strand and level the activity can assess next to the activities in the planning.
- Informal assessments are carried out throughout each topic to ensure true assessment for learning.
- A school moderation meeting is held every year to ensure levelling is consistent.
- Other monitoring takes place in the form of lesson observations, work scrutiny and display focused learning walks. Planning is handed in to the RE co-ordinator at the end of every term for monitoring.

- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/guardians at the end of each academic year in the school report.

Marking in RE

- To highlight where differentiation is by support, teachers will use the symbols ST to represent Supported by Teacher or STA for Supported by TA.
- In KS1 the use of symbols can be used to facilitate marking and some of these symbols may also be used in KS2 where the teacher see fit. See appendix.

Policy review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the RE coordinator and updated every 2 years.

Management of the subject

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

Role of the co-ordinator

- To lead the staff by example through good classroom practice
- To monitor the teaching and learning of RE within the school
- To consult with staff and lead CPD if necessary
- To co-ordinate the development of the school's RE policy
- To attend diocesan training and courses if appropriate
- To support teachers new to the school
- To facilitate parental involvement and links with the parish

Role of the Head teacher

- To make the basic documents accessible to all staff and Governors
- To provide time for meetings and courses for the co-ordinator and staff