



Mission Statement: To love, to learn with God in our hearts

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What is RE?

“Religious Education in a Catholic school is a comprehensive and systematic study of the mystery of God, of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold, the basis for them and the relationship between faith and life; in a manner which encourages investigation and reflection by the pupils, develops the appropriate skills and attitudes and promotes free, informed and full responses to God’s call in everyday life.”

(Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, 1996)

Aims and Objectives of RE

“.....the outcome of Catholic 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, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.’”

(Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, 1996)

- to develop knowledge and understanding of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold;
- to develop awareness and appreciation of Catholic belief, understanding of its impact on personal and social behaviour and of the vital relationship between faith and life, life and faith;
- to encourage study, investigation and reflection by the pupils;
- to develop appropriate skills: for example, ability to listen; to think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically; to acquire knowledge and organise it effectively; to make informed judgments;
- to foster appropriate attitudes: for example, respect for truth; respect for the views of others; awareness of the spiritual, of the moral responsibility, of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and especially the challenge of living in a multicultural, multi-faith society.

Development of Children

In order to achieve the aims and objectives there are four areas with which we are concerned; Worship, Home/School/Parish, RE Programme & Time.

(1) Worship

Worship in a Catholic Christian 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 group or as a whole school.

(a) Prayer

Children participate in various forms of prayer throughout their school life (spontaneous prayer, traditional prayer, modern prayer, biblical and liturgical, silent prayer, hymns and praise). Prayer can happen anywhere and should

be a true relationship between God and the child. See Appendix 1 for a list of prayers the children should be familiar with.

The teachers practise Mass responses with their class.

(b) Liturgies

Children attend Church on Holy Days of Obligation that fall in term time. Mass is celebrated at the beginning of each term. KS2 classes attend a weekday mass in the Church each half term with their class and are encouraged to partake in the Sunday liturgies at church.

A special Leavers' mass is celebrated for Year 6 children shortly before they leave for secondary school.

(c) Christian Witness

Our aim is for the children to know God in a personal relationship and we should foster this through love, caring, sensitivity and joy. To achieve this, adults are encouraged to be familiar with the mission statement and lead in its example.

(2) Home/School/Parish Communication

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”
(*Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School p.24*)

Our school co-operates by bringing its own distinctive contribution to this parental privilege and responsibility. We aim to work in partnership with them and seek ways of involving parents in the religious life of their children.

The school has close links with the parish. Children take part in liturgies and involve themselves in events organised by the parish e.g. Christmas nativity services, an annual food harvest appeal and a Christmas present collection for the homeless of the parish.

Parents and guardians are invited to all school masses as well as assemblies performed by the children. The Headteacher places dates of weekday and Sunday masses on the school newsletter for parents. Parent Consultations allow parents an opportunity to discuss their child's RE work and their spiritual and moral development.

The school supports the First Holy Communion programme in the parish. Mgr. Seamus O'Boyle & Fr. Allan Alvarado Gil work with children preparing for their Communion in conjunction with the class teacher. This involves regular involvement with liturgical celebrations.

Religious Education Programme

The school follows the 'Come and See' programme and this is used in all classes.

These topics are incorporated into the whole school curriculum map/cycle. A letter is sent home each term outlining what the children will be studying and how they can help their child at home.

RE Homework

A copy of the 'Wednesday Word' is sent home each week to support home/school/parish links. RE class homework is included on a homework cycle in all Key Stages.

Time Allocation

Each topic lasts for a period of four weeks. RE is taught for 10% of the timetable. This represents 2 hours 15 minutes for KS1 classes and 2 hours 30 minutes for KS2 classes. Prayers, assemblies and collective acts of worship do not make up part of this 10%.

Display

Each class has an RE/Prayer area with a copy of the schools mission statement on view. Teachers have an RE display in their classrooms for each topic. RE displays are also in other specific areas around the school and are put up by teachers on a rota basis e.g. hall, library, reception area. The reception area will always have an RE display. During Advent and Lent the focus for school displays is Christmas and Lent respectively. All classes create work to be displayed throughout the school.

Planning

Teachers plan the topics in advance of teaching them. The outline of each unit is sent to the school and a planning session is organised by the RE Leader. Plans are monitored as part of the school monitoring system and feedback is given to all staff.

Children's Recording of Religious Education Work

Foundation Stage should have one 'big book' for each topic.

KS1 and KS2 - Written work is kept in exercise books. Work may also be recorded in other ways e.g. book making, painting, group posters etc. Children and staff are encouraged to link RE to all subjects, both factual and spiritual and moral.

Assessment and Record Keeping

The Diocese are currently reviewing the levels of attainment and how we assess children. The new 'standards' are in draft form and we are part of the diocesan pilot to review these new standards. A copy of all assessment is kept in a separate file by the RE Leader and is reported to the Governors in the Headteacher's Report.

Children are also involved in self-assessment when they evaluate each topic. This self-assessment lends itself strongly to the Remember/Renew section of each topic and is an integral part of the 'Come and See' programme.

Children are given targets for each 'Come and See' topic. Targets are reviewed throughout the topic and children assess, with the guidance of their teacher, whether they have met them.

The marking of children's work is consistent with the school feedback policy which all staff have access to.

Parents are informed of their child's progress at parent consultations and at the end of the year as part of a written report.

Religious Education Leader Job Description

This is kept by the Headteacher and a copy is given to the RE Leader as part of their job description. It is available for anyone to see.

Induction of New Colleagues

New members of staff meet with the RE Leader to find out about the school's approach to RE as part of their induction programme. They may also be sent on relevant training days run by the diocese e.g. INSET day for NQTs.

Resources

Each teacher has access to the 'Come and See' website. A variety of other RE books are also kept in each classroom's RE/Prayer area and references to the internet. Each class has a collection of cloths, publications and artefacts which are used to enhance their RE/prayer areas. Other resources are kept in the hall to which all members of staff have access. Other items such as candles, cloths, music etc. are kept by the RE Leader.

Other Faiths

The school teaches other religions including Judaism and Islam. Each class are taught about an aspect of Judaism in the autumn. Another faith (e.g. Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism) is taught in the spring or summer term. Other Faiths are also taught throughout the year during RE sessions when there are links to the topic. Resources for staff to use, and lists of suitable places to take children on trips are available from the RE Leader.

Inclusion

We understand that religious development of our children is wide ranging. Teachers are given opportunity to assess this in individual pupil assessments as well as at the end of topics through evaluations. This should be used to inform planning.

Equal Opportunities

Our Catholic ethos provides the content and stimulus for the growth of each child, as an individual and as a member of the school and the wider community. Our teaching and beliefs show the children that all people are of equal importance in the sight of God and should be equally respected.

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Relationships and Sex education is taught formally at the school in Years 2, 4 and 6. This is managed by both the PSHE and RE Leaders. Lessons are taught in these year groups in the Autumn Term. These lessons are reinforced through the RE and science curriculum. Any other issues are dealt with openly in accordance with the teachings of the Church. Meetings are held for parents before the teaching of these lessons.

Citizenship

Citizenship is covered through the RE and PSHCE curriculums and also through whole school assemblies.

The school has 'Faith Leaders'. They meet regularly with the Deputy Headteacher. Issues are discussed and taken back to individual classes for a teacher led discussion.