

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School
"Living and growing in Christ"

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
POLICY**



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1. Introduction

At the heart of Catholic education is the person of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides an educational framework within which our young people can grow in their relationship with Christ in a way that takes account of their individual human development. We profess Christ as saviour of the world with confidence and clarity. In a spirit of openness and dialogue, we also respect the rights of all members of the school community to hold their own beliefs. We encourage all to engage as fully as possible with every aspect of school life, including curriculum Religious Education, worship and liturgy.

2. Purpose

Within the curriculum, classroom Religious Education's main purpose is to engage pupils in a systematic study of the mystery of Christ which we believe holds the fullness of the truth that God has revealed. In addition, a sound formation in the Catholic faith will recognise the real, though as yet imperfect, communion that exists between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations. It will also provide the basis for an openness to the 'seeds of the Word' that are to be found in other religions. 'The outcome of excellent 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.'

3. Leadership and Management of Religious Education

The headteacher and governors are responsible for ensuring that Religious Education has a high profile in the curriculum, is taught as a core subject and is well resourced and monitored. The Religion Leader is responsible for leading Religious Education across St. Aidan's. The headteacher and governors are also responsible for ensuring that the school's self-evaluation processes monitor and evaluate the identity of the school as a Catholic community and that the C.S.I Self-Evaluation Form is regularly reviewed.

4. Governance

Foundation governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools. Governors in Catholic academies give a written commitment to do the same. The governing body is responsible for the regular monitoring of Religious Education at all key stages and for ensuring the proper allocation of staffing, time, resources and accommodation for the subject.

5. Collective Worship

"For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them" Matthew 18:20. The law requires all maintained schools to provide Religious Education for all pupils, to hold a daily act of worship and promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. Parents have the legal right to

withdraw their children from Religious Education and collective worship. However, since those who choose to belong to a Catholic school are subscribing to its ethos and values, to which both curriculum Religious Education and worship are central, it is reasonable to assume that parents, pupils and all staff will respect and engage with these central aspects of the school's life. The daily act of worship may take place in a variety of ways.

We encourage the children's spiritual development through our ethos, by promoting a sense of awe and wonder, in our collective worship and through other subjects in the curriculum.

Whole School:

- Mass to begin the school year at St Aidan's Church
- Harvest Mass at St Aidan's Church
- Mass to end the school year at St Aidan's Church
- Advent Service at St Aidan's Church
- Stations of the Cross at school during Lent.
- Lenten Service – The Passion led by Yr 5
- Mass at St Aidan's on holy days of obligation
- End of topic assemblies at school
- Remembrance at school throughout November
- Focus on the Rosary in October and May
- Nativity Play at school led by Reception and Yr1
- Spontaneous prayer in assemblies
- Prayer groups led by Prayer Leaders

Individual Year Groups:

- Reconciliation in Lent for Yr 4, 5 and 6
- Class Masses: Yr 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Liturgies and whole school assembly: Reception
- First Communion Masses Yr 3
- Leavers' Mass Yr 6
- End of unit class liturgies led by pupils

Children's Developing Spirituality

Children develop best spiritually when:

- All adults work co-operatively to create an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity;
- There is a warm and friendly environment;
- There is a supportive and positive attitude that understands their needs and builds on their successes;
- There is mutual respect and consideration for others.

6. Professional Development

The school must ensure there is regular and appropriate training and development for all who teach Religious Education and monitor the impact it has in the school. SLT and Coordinators should have access to high quality CPD enabling them to develop high quality school-based training and development in addition to other appropriate provision.

7. Curriculum

Religious growth and development are not confined to time-tabled Religious Education lessons. The whole curriculum should encourage spiritual and moral development, along with academic and social progress.

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales require that 10% of the taught curriculum time is given to curriculum Religious. These time allocations do not include collective worship or hymn practice.

Programmes of study must comply with diocesan and national guidance. St. Aidan's uses the programme "Come and See" as the basis of its religious education curriculum. This programme is followed throughout school from Reception to Year 6.

'Come and See' provides:

- Opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection in implicit and explicit ways.
- Children with the language of religious experience.
- Opportunities to explore and develop religious stories, and events.
- Appropriate materials about other Faiths.

In R.E children explore religious questions about life. Links are made with children's own experiences and universal experience. It will raise questions and provide material for reflection. It enables children to explore their beliefs, values and way of life.

'Come and See' is taught through a series of 9 topics exploring:

- Community of faith- church
- Celebration in ritual- sacraments
- Way of life- Christian living
- Other faith traditions are also explored through discreet topics.

The process for delivering the topics in 'Come and See' has three stages – Explore, Reveal and Respond which enables the pupils with the development of knowledge, understanding, skills and the fostering of attitudes.

In Religion, the children must strive for excellence in a challenging learning environment. To enable this, teachers offer the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential through differentiated activities tailored to the individual's needs and abilities. Art and scripture analysis are embedded along with 'Higher Order Thinking' questions to deepen thinking. Standards in Religion should match that of English within St Aidan's.

The spiritual curriculum has been created and developed in partnership with the Parish which incorporates saint and prayer studies. The children practise the art of meditation as a way of prayer to encourage a deeper understanding of faith and spirituality through personal contemplation.

Reflections must take place at the beginning or end of every R.E. lesson (2-3 minutes)

Beginning

- Children must be offered a way into their R.E. lesson and given an opportunity to distance themselves from their previous activity. It does not have to relate to the lesson they are about to do. *Examples: Close your eyes and think about one thing that happened in the playground that made you happy. Talk to God and thank him for your friends/Think about one thing you were proud of in your last activity. How can you make yourself and your teacher proud during your next lesson?*

Middle

We think about SOAP (Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer)

End

- The reflection at the end of the lesson must be linked to the lesson
- Have a focal point for the children to look at: Picture, candle, flower, etc
- Read out a prayer, poem or short scripture
- Play a piece of music and children to close their eyes
- After a few minutes give the children something in particular to think about
- Invite children to write their reflection on a post-it and place on prayer corner if they wish

8. Assessment

All schools should plan and track for Religious Education with the same academic rigour as the other core subjects, implementing the Levels of Attainment in Religious Education to track and record assessment as stated in the 'Religious Education Curriculum Directory'. Children in KS2 self-assess against a given success criteria for each topic. Teachers use books to assess whether pupils are working towards, at the expected standard or achieving greater depth in RE.

Assessment in R.E. is against learning objectives in the Come and See scheme. We assess fully once a term using a whole book approach rather than assess one piece of work. As a staff we look at the assessment strands and find evidence for each of the levels in our books and the moderate across the different year groups.

End of term assessment is recorded on the summative assessment sheet. These are reviewed each term and any adjustments are made according to pupil's progress in each area.

Marking is against the learning objective for the lesson and is in accordance with the policy for assessment and marking. We have created a series of Big Questions which challenge children and give them time to develop their spiritual thinking.

9. Other Faiths

There is a place within Religious Education in each key stage for teaching about other religions. It is important that children learn to respect and appreciate that people may have chosen another faith and it is therefore essential that we educate children in what others believe and practice. The faiths studied include Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism along with other Christian denominations.

10. Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their children. Religious Education in schools, taught through the planned curriculum and across other areas, supports the parents in this important mission. Parents should be informed of what their children are learning in Religious Education.

As part of collective worship, our school, parish and parents celebrate mass collaboratively. Guidance is given to staff in preparation.