

UPDATED JULY 2020

REVIEW JULY 2021

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Mission Statement

We belong to the family of St. Joseph's School. We love, live, learn and celebrate together;
building God's kingdom with Jesus our Lord.

Rationale of Religious Education

St Joseph's School acknowledges that Religious Education is a lifelong process and recognise that the primary years are significant in the lasting impression they make upon our children.

- 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,

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

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all St Joseph's pupils.*

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

- 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.

"Understanding" is used in a wide sense, being concerned with feeling and empathetic insight as well as an intellectual grasp of certain information. The child is not simply learning about religion, they are learning from it.

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*

The Religious Education Programme

To fulfil our aims we use the Come and See programme of Religious Education as recommended by the Diocese. In accordance with the guidelines from the Bishops' Conference the children at St Joseph's receive 10% curriculum time not including Collective Worship.

It integrates the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Levels of Attainment and the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Children explore the mystery of Faith through Scripture and Tradition.

Links are made explicitly in planning documents to the resources and plans are adapted to meet the needs of the unique cohort. Lessons are very well resourced with both interactive stimuli, a variety of artefacts and making cross curricular links. There are three topics taught

¹ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

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each term and 2 'other faith' units; Islam and Judaism. Come and See meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.

There is a selection of ritual objects, books, videos and posters etc in school. Staff are encouraged to involve members of the Jewish and Islamic faith community. Children in KS2 have opportunities to visit the Mosque in Hartlepool.

Planning

Taking a whole school approach in using Come and See, we are confident that the breadth of the curriculum is being taught and that there is good progression from year to year. Please refer to the Come and See materials for more detail about planning and curriculum coverage. (Newcastle and Hexham Diocese Education Website)

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.

The advantages of this approach are:

- Appropriate content for each group is ensured
- Planning and recording is clear
- Continuity and progression across the school are assured
- Communal celebrations are possible

Cross Curricular Links

When planning R.E. we recognise that there is a great deal of scope for cross- curricular work and integration with other subjects. At St. Joseph's we seek to develop learning across the curriculum through R.E. wherever opportunities arise.

Marking

Work should be marked in accordance with the school marking policy. Work should be marked in relation to the learning intentions. Key words must be corrected. Comments should encourage children to reflect, analyse and should be interactive. Driver words should be used to develop progression. Children should be given time to respond to feedback.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Each teacher has the responsibility for maintaining records on the children in their class.

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils progress.
- Whole levels are entered onto a tracking grid for each topic and then sublevelled at the end of each term. The subject leader/SLT analyses attainment and progress. This information is then used to inform action planning.

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- The school portfolio of pupils' work contains three samples of work from each teacher for the Diocesan agreed task each term, covering a range of abilities.
- An in - house moderation meeting is held every *term*.
- Examples from the school portfolio of assessed samples of work are presented for Diocesan Moderation at RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the summer term.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is through a range of ways- work scrutiny , lesson observations, walkthroughs, samples of planning etc
- RE is reported formally to parents in the annual reports, stating the child's attainment and progress through the year.

Inclusion

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

Religious Education cannot proceed on the assumption that all pupils will, or should, have positive religious convictions or commitments. St Joseph's school, should however, foster the search for meaning, value and purpose since these are implied by the very concern to educate the whole person. It is therefore a legitimate part of the pupil's education that he/she should be encouraged to consider his/her own response to such issues.

Management of the Subject

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

The Religious Education Subject Leader

The first purpose of the RE subject leader's role is to help improve the quality of the teaching and learning that the pupils receive in Religious Education.

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring relevant documentation is up to date
- Co-ordinating the teaching throughout the school by encouraging collaboration between year groups or key stages
- Being involved in the process of assessment, recording and reporting
- Monitoring the quality of teaching, the progression and continuity of Religious Education throughout the school.
- Offering support and advice to colleagues
- Identifying resource requirements
- Maintaining a strong relationship between the school and the Diocese, and with the school's Diocesan advisor
- Maintaining the high status of worship within the school
- With the headteacher, completing the Religious Education action plan and using it to inform the School Improvement Plan
- Keeping resources well stored, catalogued and available
- Ensuring that the Come and See programme is followed and delivered efficiently

Policy Monitoring and Review

Governors and staff are fully committed to the safeguarding of the welfare of all St Joseph's pupils.

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the governors and whole staff and updated every 2 years

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