

St Vincent De Paul R.C. Primary School, Knutsford

Mission Statement:

Believe, Trust and Be Ready

“That they may have life, and to the full” John 10:10



RE POLICY

Policy Date: February 2020

Review Date: February 2023



St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School, Knutsford –

Religious Education Policy



INTRODUCTION

“What makes the Catholic school distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love ... It tries to relate all of human culture to the good news of salvation so that the light of faith will illumine everything that the students will gradually come to learn about the world, about life and about the human person” (Gravissimum Educationis Vatican Council 11)

Aims/Objectives:

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At St. Vincent's, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and world faiths, and address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of a divine spirit. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding.

Our objectives in the teaching of RE are, for all of our children:

- to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- to develop an understanding of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition;
- to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life;
- to develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
- to develop their investigative and research skills, in order to hold reasoned opinions on religious issues;
- to have respect for other people's views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society.

The Teaching of Religious Education

Religious Education in a catholic school has two main purposes.

- To ensure children have knowledge of their faith. (AT1)
- To ensure children have the opportunity to reflect on and practise their faith.(AT2)
- RE is the responsibility of the school, home and parish.

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Christmas, etc. to develop their religious thinking.

- A total 10% is allocated to the teaching of Religious Education. This equates to 2 ½ hours a week in Key Stage 2 and 2 ¼ hours in Key Stage 1.
- We follow the objectives in the scheme 'The Way, The Truth and the Life' (WTL).
- The scheme involves a one year cycle and covers Foundation Stage all the way through to the end of Key Stage 2. The way the scheme is structured ensures that pupils revisit themes but in a way that is accessible for their age and ability and builds on prior learning as they progress through the school.

- We study one topic per half term
- The 'WTL' scheme is set against the liturgical cycle of the year and so it is possible to ensure that the liturgical feasts and seasons are celebrated.
- Children participate in Masses, assemblies, hymn practice and other liturgical celebrations
- Collective acts of worship take place every day (either class or whole school)

Children are actively involved in the planning and celebration of Collective Worship. Throughout the key stage children are all encouraged, each term, to plan and lead collective worship within their class/ year group. (Further detail in our Collective Worship policy)

Relationship and Sex Education

See RSE policy

Planning

RE is a core subject in a Catholic School. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with The Way, The Truth and the Life Scheme of Work. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

- We use 'The Way The truth The Life' (WTL) objectives completing one unit per half term.
- Planning sheets are from the Leeds Diocese as recommended by our own Diocese.
- The RE coordinator will ensure up to date materials for planning are available on the network.
- Planning to include opportunities for differentiation; ongoing assessment; ICT (include websites you may have used so we can build up a resource base); reflection; faith response and worship.
- Planning to include the use of 'driver' words taken from the assessment criteria from the Bishops' Conference 2012.
- All staff to ensure a copy of their RE medium term planning is placed on the shared area with the other medium term plans.
- Links with other faiths are delivered as advised by the Diocese. Bishop Mark believes that children should have a thorough understanding of their own faith tradition and a firm foundation from which to explore and engage with other faith traditions. This is therefore the reason why "The Way, the Truth and the Life" (WTL) leaves this to Yr 5 to be delivered in dedicated RE Curriculum time. However, outside of the dedicated 10% RE time it is vital, in addition to the guidelines offered by WTL, that we explore other cultures through a cross-curricular approach, in order to prepare our pupils for life in a diverse and multicultural society.

Assessment

Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future.

We follow the assessment policy as set out by the Diocese as follows:

- Three assessment opportunities per year using the Shrewsbury Diocese Assessment tasks where appropriate.
- Emphasise the use of 'driver' words in teachers' planning and in the assessments
- The use of the 'I Can' statements which are at the front of each unit of work
- Teachers complete the RE assessment tracking grids and ensure any evidence is passed to the RE coordinator
- This is collated by the RE coordinator to track and monitor for any gaps which may occur

The RE coordinator keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio; this demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school.

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning in RE

The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the Head teacher an annual summary report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in RE and indicates areas for further improvement;
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe RE lessons across the school.
- Provides and organises CPD for staff including Foundations in Faith where necessary

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the Head teacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations.

The RE link governor liaises with the Head Teacher and subject leader in order to be kept informed of new developments and visits school to experience RE lessons and collective worship.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our RE lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour.

- We contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education.
- We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility.
- In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through RE in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development.

- Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life.
- We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions.
- We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society.
- Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

RE and inclusion

At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Support and the involvement of outside agencies will lead to the creation of an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) for children with special educational needs. This, or an SFP (School Focus Plan), may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to religious education.

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

- All staff are involved in the school celebrations.
- Children are encouraged to be involved in the preparations and in the events themselves.
- It is the role of the RE coordinator to plan the 'Celebration Timetable' for each term in liaison with the Head Teacher, the Parish Priest and colleagues.
- Children experience liturgy and prayer in a variety of ways. They are encouraged to listen and to be actively involved. This is done as a school, class or group and on an individual basis. Music plays an important part in many of the celebrations.

Mass

- Mass is celebrated in the school at least twice per half term.
- All parents and parishioners are welcome to attend masses.

Assemblies

- Whole school assemblies are held on Monday and Friday morning.
- Each class presents a class assembly once a year.
- When there is no Mass on a Tuesday, there are Praise assemblies led by our music specialist and a member of staff on rotation.

Staff Prayer and Reflections.

- The staff meeting at the beginning of each half term allows an opportunity to reflect on the new themes and liturgical events of that term.
- This is coordinated by the RE coordinator with each member of staff taking turns to lead
- Each year one Inset day is set aside for the purpose of promoting and reflecting on the unique ethos of our Catholic school.

Other opportunities for reflection/prayer.

- Teachers are encouraged, as good RE teaching practice, to build in reflection/worship opportunities within lessons as appropriate.
- Each class must have a prayer focus area.
- Class prayer tables should reflect the liturgical seasons ensuring correct colour cloths and relevant artefacts.
- A model prayer focus area would ideally have: a display board with up to date work from pupils relating to their current topic; example of Scripture; a cross, candle(s), something living like a plant or flowers, and relevant prayer material.

Storage/records of whole school worship.

- As far as possible, all material relating to whole school worship should be saved on the 'staff share' area on the network in the folder entitled 'Masses and Assemblies'.
- Other resources are found in the hall cupboard.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

- Through 'WTL' topics 'Sacrament of Reconciliation and 'Celebrating the Mass' the Year 3 children are able to learn about the Sacraments of Forgiveness and Holy Communion.
- Most children receive the sacrament of First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion in Year 3, but provision is made for older children when required.
- The Sacramental Programme for the First Sacraments involves very close links between Home, School and Parish.
- Parents/Carers attend Meetings, led by the Parish, where work being done by the children is explored at an adult level through Bible readings, discussions and prayerful reflections.
- In school, all the learning that has been ongoing through the 'WTL' topics, is reinforced and related directly to the Sacraments and their true meaning.
- Parents' Meetings are led by parents who are members of the parish community. Parents/Carers of children making the First Sacraments are encouraged to participate very actively in these sessions.
- Members of the parish are invited to be prayer sponsors.
- At the beginning of the programme, children visit St. Nicholas's Catholic High School for a retreat day involving activities and reflections.

SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS

- **Enrolment Mass** At a Sunday Mass candidates are formally enrolled and introduced to the congregation. Children ask to be enrolled and Parents make a commitment to help their children with their preparation. Each student is presented with a medal and asked to wear it each time they come to Mass so that the parishioners can identify them and pray for them.
- **First Forgiveness**. This takes place during Lent in church. The evening starts with a short service involving readings, prayers and singing. The children then receive the sacrament of Forgiveness from a priest seated on either side of the altar.
- **First Communion**. Pupils receive this sacrament at the 11am Mass on a Saturday early in June. This is followed by a party in the parish hall which is attended by the children, their families and any other Year 3 children who, for various personal reasons, did not receive the Sacraments. On the subsequent Sunday all the children are presented to the parish and receive their certificates.

DISPLAYS

- Class displays will reflect the current theme being taught in RE from the 'WTL' scheme. Therefore, they will need to be updated each half term.

RESOURCES

- WTL teacher and pupil book
- NATRE website
- RE Today magazine
- Other resources, for example, the internet, books, worksheets, thinking skills frameworks, vocabulary, drama, prayer, art, music, hot seating etc – creative teaching! Thinking skills frameworks are on the 'staff share' area.
- Resources for the teaching of RE, including books used to support the WTL scheme, Cafod, PSHE and for celebrations are located in the classrooms, the cupboard in the hall and the KS2 corridor.

CHARITABLE WORK.

- Various charity events are held during a year.
- Children are aware of the important work of CAFOD
- The annual Harvest Festival also enables children to become aware of the needs of other and make an individual contribution to this.
- A record of funds raised by the school is kept by the school bursar, the RE coordinator and certificates are displayed for the children to see.

*Policy owner: Lisa Holland
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