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 **Religious Education Policy**

**Agreed:**  September 2017

**Reviewed and approved by Governors:** October 5th 2017

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of Religious Education at Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School. It was prepared and ratified by staff and children in September 2017. It will be presented to parents and governors in October 2017.

**Religious Education**

“Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for and subsequently shape the school curriculum and offer living experience of the life of faith in its practical expression”. (Bishops of England and Wales, 1988). Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School follows the ‘Come and See’ scheme of work from nursery to year 6. It extends this core scheme by work around the Word on Wednesday, Scripture, Inspirational people, Great Artists and the Common Good.

**Aims and Objectives of Religious Education**

Equal consideration will be given to the following aims:

* Showing concern for all pupils, all the staff and all the Parents.
* Developing the faith of each individual in the school community, so that God becomes a reality in their lives.
* Preparing pupils for entry into the wider community by developing their confidence and self- esteem;
* Developing the pupils understanding of relationships in a positive way so that co-operation rather than competition exists, and opportunities for reconciliation are provided;
* Providing equality of access to the Religious Education Curriculum, in accordance with the S.E.N. policy and the Equal Opportunities policy of our school;
* Providing a broadly based curriculum which challenges and extends the child’s whole moral, spiritual, artistic and intellectual abilities;
* Ensuring that the child is at the centre of the learning process

The Diocesan Policy on Religious Education commits the Diocese to support schools in implementing the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and other norms of the Bishops’ Conference. In recent years this Diocesan support for schools has focused on agreeing and developing a fuller understanding of the national Levels of Attainment and in improving the teaching of Scripture.

The school uses the AGREED LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT for assessment and the CURRICULUM DIRECTORY as the driver documents to inform all teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Curriculum schedule for COME AND SEE RE Topics 2017 -2018

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATES: (4 WEEKS) | **EYFS** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** | **Year 6** |
| **TOPIC 1 Domestic Church - family****Mon 7th Sept – Fri 2nd Oct** | Myself | Families | Beginning | Home | People | Ourselves | Living |
| **TOPIC 2 Baptism/Confirmation - Belonging** **Mon 5th Oct – Fri 6th Nov** | Welcome | Belonging | Signs and Symbols | Promises | Called | Life Choices | Vocation and Commitment |
| **OTHER RELIGIONS****Mon 9th Nov – 20th Nov** | Judaism2 weeks. | Judaism2 weeks. | Judaism2 weeks. | Judaism2 weeks. | Judaism2 weeks. | Judaism2 weeks. | Judaism2 weeks. |
| **TOPIC 3 Advent/Christmas – Loving** **Mon 23rd Nov – Fri 18th Dec** | Birthday | Waiting | Preparations | Visitors | Gift | Hope | Expectations |
| **TOPIC 4 Local Church - Community****Mon 4th Jan – Fri 29th Jan** | Celebrating | Special people | Books | Journeys | Community | Mission | Sources |
| **TOPIC 5****Eucharist - Relating****Mon 1st Feb – Fri 4th March** | Gathering | Meals | Thanksgiving | Listening and Sharing | Giving and Receiving | Memorial Sacrifice | Unity |
| **TOPIC 6****Lent/Easter - Giving****Mon 7th March –Fri 15th April**  | Growing | Change | Opportunities | Giving all | Self- Discipline | Sacrifice | Death and new Life |
| **TOPIC 7****Pentecost - Serving****Mon 18th April – Fri 13th May** | Good News | Holidays and Holydays | Spread the word | Energy | New Life | Transformation | Witnesses |
| **TOPIC 8** **Reconciliation – Inter-relating****Mon 16th May – Fri 17th June** | Friends | Saying Sorry | Rules | Choices | Building Bridges | Freedom and Responsibility | Healing |
| **Other Religions****Mon 20th June – Fri 24th June** | Islam | Islam | Islam | Islam | Islam | Islam | Islam |
| **TOPIC 9****Universal Church – World** **Mon 27th June – End of term** | Our World | Neighbours | Treasures | Special Places | God’s people | Stewardship | Common Good |

**Worship**

Worship in a Catholic 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 or as a whole school. Whole school worship and assembly takes place on a Monday morning at 10.15 am. KS 1 and KS 2 assemblies and worship take place on Wednesday and Friday at 10.15am respectively. Each assembly lasts for approximately 20 / 30 minutes and takes place in the hall. Parents are invite in on Wednesday and visit their child’s class after. The Sunday Gospel is the main focus of the Monday assembly. The school uses Wednesday Word to share the gospel with the children and their families throughout the week.

Assembly themes are based on the liturgical year and the themes of the RE topics (see appendix on special times of the year). Worship takes place regularly in the classrooms and parish and may take a variety forms including prayer, song, meditation, or a scriptural reading.

**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 for a list of prayers the children should be familiar with).

**Liturgies**

Children attend church on Holy Days of Obligation that fall in term time. Whole school Mass is celebrated at the beginning and end of each term. Key stage 2 classes attend a weekday mass in the church each term with their class partaking in the liturgy prepared by their respective class teachers on a rota basis. In class children are given the opportunity to prepare prayers of the faithful to be shared in class masses. The RE subject leader supports class teachers to liaise with the parish priest about their class mass. The parish priests visit the class leading the Mass to discuss the theme of the Mass. A special leavers’ Mass which focuses on ‘Moving On / New Beginnings’ is celebrated at the end of the summer term. Year 6 children feature strongly in this Mass, participating in the preparation of the readings and prayers. Music is central to all the liturgies, masses, celebrations and feasts. It is a key feature of this school.

**Christian Witness**

Our aim is for the children to know God in a personal relationship and we should foster this through love, care, sensitivity and joy. To achieve this, adults are encouraged to know and understand the mission statement and lead in its example. The children should be taught about the Mission Statement and the school motto.

**Home/School/Parish Links**

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 and seek ways of involving parents in the religious life of their children. The ‘Come and See’ overview is sent home to parents and the beginning of the year so that they too can work with us in developing their child’s spiritual understanding.

The school has close links to our parishes, Our Lady and St Joseph in the Balls Pond Road. Children partake in liturgies and are encouraged to become altar servers. Parents and carers are welcome to attend all school masses and assemblies celebrated by the children. Parent consultations allow parents to discuss their child’s RE work and their spiritual and moral development. The children are prepared for their Communion in the parish. This involves regular sessions held at the church to prepare the children for liturgical celebrations. There is also a cross parish link when penitential services are held for the children especially during Lent for Years 4, 5 and 6.

**Time Allocation**

Each topic lasts for a period of four weeks. RE is taught for >10% of the timetable. This represents at least 2hrs and 15mins for key stage 1 classes and 2hrs and 30mins for key stage 2 classes. Prayers, assemblies and collective worship do not make up part of this 10%.

The starting and finishing dates per topic will be organised at the beginning of each academic year and may vary according to interest and coverage.

**RE Homework**

Children will be given at least one piece of RE homework a week that is based on the topic that they are covering or to do with the Liturgical year. The Wednesday Word includes activities that involve parental support and children are asked to explore them at home with their parents/carers.

**Display**

Each class has an RE/ prayer focus with a copy of the school’s mission statement and prayers on view. There is an RE display in each classroom with a prayer focus. RE displays are also in other specific areas around the school e.g. school entrance, corridor and main hall.

This is another noteworthy feature of the school.

**Children’s Recording of RE work**

Children record written work in exercise books. Work may also be recorded in other ways e.g. book making, painting, group posters, saved files on the computer.

**Other Faith Education**

Respect for the traditions and beliefs of other faiths are important in a multicultural community. Each class from Year 1 is taught Judaism as a two week Topic in the autumn term and Islam as the other faith to be taught in the second two week topic in the spring term and Buddhism in the summer term.

**Assessment and Record Keeping**

A copy of the ‘RE Curriculum Directory’ is available to all staff (see RE subject leader). The frameworks are all cross –referenced to the Curriculum Directory. Assessment is focused by the overall aims and objectives of R.E. Formal assessment takes place at the end of each topic. The assessment is planned for at the beginning of each topic. Teachers are asked to assess each child once a term, at least, and give a ‘best fit’ judgement using the NEW AGREED LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT. This ‘best fit’ judgement will be based on evidence gathered from a formally assessed piece of work as well as other pieces of pupils’ work that term. It is expected that teachers ensure at the planning stage that appropriate teaching and learning strategies are in place for each pupil to be challenged at the appropriate level based on the NEW AGREED LEVELS. Each teacher is expected to keep a record of the levels of attainment of each pupil during the school year. This data is entered onto the whole school’s tracking programme. This information is used to plan for improvement and set targets. Informal assessments are made by the teacher through observation, marking and plenary of lessons. Children are also involved in self-assessment during lessons. The marking of children’s work is consistent with the school’s teaching and learning policy. Teachers mark to target and give positive and constructive feedback which involves closing the gap comments in order to extend the children’s learning. Teachers may use some of the questions in the NEW AGREED LEVELS document to support their marking. Parents are informed of their child’s progress at parent consultations and at the end of the year as part of a written report.

**Equal Opportunities**

We aim to have a Catholic ethos, which provides the content and stimulus for the growth of each child, as an individual and as a member of the school and wider community. Our teaching and beliefs show the children that all people are of equal importance in the sight of God and should have equally the respect and dignity due to the children of God.

**Inclusion**

Inherent in our R.E. policy is the importance of thecontribution made by each child and member of staff towardsa happy and caring environment in the school, by showingrespect for and appreciation of each person as an individual,regardless of colour, culture, origin, sex or ability.We aim for all children to have equal access to the R.E.curriculum, so that they are encouraged to strive for academicexcellence and develop their full potential in recognition thatwe are all children of God.

**Induction of New Colleagues**

New members of staff meet with the RE subject leader to find out about the school’s approach to RE as part of their induction programme. They are also sent on relevant training days run by the Diocese e.g. INSET days for NQT’s.

**Resources**

A variety of resources such as books, websites, religious artefacts, flipcharts, posters, candles, liturgical music, materials for prayer focus are available to all classes. Resources are kept in the cupboards and drawers at the back of the top hall to which all members of staff have access.

**SRE Policy**

Our Catholic faith informs all our teaching and we teach within the guidelines of the Catholic Church. ‘Catholic faith has a distinctive understanding of the human person, of the relationships and of the nature of community.’ (Bishops Conference, 1994) Sex and Relationships Education is seen in Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School by staff and governors as an important part of a child’s development. Children need to develop knowledge and skills and to explore their own, and others values in order to make informed choices. Our programme is grounded within a moral and spiritual framework in order to instil in each child: a sense of their own dignity, a respect for and acceptance of this, together with a sense of responsibility.

**Citizenship**

Each class is expected to discuss and display class rules and responsibilities by which the class is expected to live by. The school council is an active forum giving the children in the school an opportunity for their voices to be heard. The school council meets regularly. Children with specific roles in the school support and encourage their peers to work and play together in a harmonious and cohesive way with a strong focus on the Mission Statement. They are encouraged to develop particular life skills e.g. being responsible, productive members of the community and accountability for choices. The PSHE curriculum allows children to explore issues of citizenship and social/emotional aspects of learning.

**The Role of Music**

Music is central to the liturgies, Masses, celebrations and feasts held in Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School. The school has a Music teacher who teaches from Reception to Year 6 and ensures that children are taught hymns and Liturgical music that will enhance their love and understanding of our Catholic life. Music is outstanding in this school.

**Review of policy**

The RE policy will be reviewed annually.

Date to be reviewed: September 2017



**Appendices**

1. Special times of the year

2. Prayers the children should be familiar with

3. Development of prayer

4. EYFS Expectations

**Special Times of the Year**

**Liturgical Colours**

Liturgies celebrated during the different seasons of the liturgical year have distinctive music and specific readings and rituals. All of these work together, to reflect the spirit of the particular season. The colours of the vestments that the priest wears during the liturgy also help express the character of the mysteries being celebrated.

**WHITE –** the colour of joy and victory is used for the season of Easter and Christmas. It is also used for the feasts of our Lord, the feasts of Mary, the angels and the saints who are not martyrs.

**GOLD** may also be used on solemn occasions.

**RED** (the colour of blood) is used on days when we celebrate the Passion of Jesus on Passion Sunday and Good Friday. It is also used for the birthday of the feast of the apostles and for the celebration of the martyrs.

**RED** (the colour of fire) recalls the Holy Spirit and is on Pentecost and for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**GREEN,** seen everywhere in plants and trees, symbolises life and hope and is used during Ordinary Time.

**PURPLE** helps us during Advent to remember that we are preparing for the coming of Christ. Lent, the season of penance and renewal, also uses the colour **PURPLE.**

**Traditional Prayers**

**EYFS**

Sign of the Cross

Morning and evening prayers

Grace before and after meals

Simple litanies of thanks and praise

Prayerful reflection on the day

Prayer for the blessing of the advent wreath

Prayer for the lighting of the advent candles

**Responses at Mass**

And with your spirit

Peace be with you

Thanks be to God

Alleluia (greeting the Gospel)

**KS 1**

All listed above, plus:

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory Be

Act of Sorrow

**Prayers at Mass**

Lord, have mercy

Prayers of intercession

**KS 2**

All listed above, plus:

I confess

Eternal rest

Act of contrition

Angelus

The Rosary

The Stations of the Cross

**Prayers at Mass**

Penitential Rite (Year 6)

Glory to God

Creed

Lamb of God

**Development of Prayer**

**EYFS and Year 1**

* Making up your own prayers
* Learning to pray regularly at different points in the day
* Learning the words of the Hail Mary, Our Father and the sign of the cross

**Year 2**

* Building on the previous year but now learning to spend a little time longer each time
* The introduction of simple scripture verses to help prayer
* Glory Be

**Year 3**

* Building space for silence into the longer time of prayer
* Learning to be still, quiet, listening
* Prayer in our hearts

**Year 4**

* Learning to use some traditional methods of prayer and to adapt them to their needs e.g. the Rosary, litanies

**Year 5**

* Using all of the above as well as introducing the children to symbols and images as a way into prayer

**Year 6**

* The offering of our lives as a prayer
* Learning to see how everything that we can do be given to God
* Making our lives a prayer

 