

ST JOSEPH THE WORKER RC PRIMARY SCHOOL



RELIGION POLICY

Reviewed: **October 2022**

Date to be reviewed: **October 24**

MISSION STATEMENT

“Together as God’s children we will, love, learn, grow, inspire, Let your light shine”.

Introduction:

What is Religious Education?

Religious Education at St. Joseph the Worker is the teaching of the Catholic Faith and the presentation of the whole Christian message to our pupils, the desire for God is written in our hearts. Human beings have a capacity for God. We are by nature spiritual beings, coming from God and going towards God. We are created for communion with God, and truth and happiness can be found in Him. To reach this goal for our children it is essential that Religious Education in our school is about developing knowledge and understanding of God, of Jesus and His Church, and of the beliefs of the Catholic Church.

At St. Joseph the Worker the Religious Education programme that the school follows is from the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) and Come and See scheme of work. This is supplemented with Caritas in Action, materials from CAFOD and other relevant resources. As a Catholic school all our prayer and liturgy, assemblies and Religious Education are in accordance with the rites and teachings of the Catholic Church. The teaching and the practice of the Catholic Faith are paramount and fundamental in the life of the school and permeate all we do.

RE. Policy Statement:

Aims and Objectives:

The following aims and objectives relate directly to the aims of St. Joseph the Worker R.C Primary School and therefore, reflect the sentiments expressed in our Mission Statement.

Through Religious Education, we will seek to develop the full spiritual potential of each child. As a school we believe that RE should not only be taught as a core subject but that its influence and effect should transcend the whole curriculum and permeate throughout the life of the school. In order 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;
- raise pupils’ awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;

- stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.¹

Rationale:

- • The R.E. Curriculum at St. Joseph the Worker will seek to help each person to live and grow in a Christian community in a way that reflects human dignity and purpose.
- • It is our aim to make a significant contribution to the child's self-understanding as a spiritual being, capable of responding in integrity *and* freedom to the invitation of God and the challenges of life.
- Religious education is a core subject in our school.

We will endeavour to promote a gradual opening of mind and heart in the search for truth about God, respect for people of other faiths and a willingness to recognise goodness wherever it exists.

Planning:

As a school, we plan and structure our teaching of R.E. using the Come and See scheme of work. We also use Caritas in Action, materials from CAFOD and other relevant resources.

Religious Education is taught for a minimum 10% of the school timetable each week.

The Guidelines provide the essential structure of Catholic Religious teaching, starting with simple foundations in Early Years and continuing through Key Stage 1 and 2, ensuring the continuity and progression, which we find in other National Curriculum subjects. World religions is taught through the Come and See scheme. Each year group has a particular World religion to cover each year. (See appendix 1)

The R.E. Curriculum in our school has a much broader objective than conveying factual information about Christian beliefs. From our planning, it should be evident that its purpose is to develop the concepts, attitudes, essential values and actions, which are fundamental to Catholic beliefs about God, Jesus, the Church, Humanity, Worship and Scripture.

The allocation of time to be spent on the provision of Religious Education in our school is to be no less than 10% of the overall curriculum allocation. Short term lesson planning is created by each teacher using the RECD as a starting point and Come and See, CARITAS in Action and CAFOD etc.

¹ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

The Programme of Study:

The programme of Study speaks of enabling, encouraging, asking and guiding children to:-

- Learn, identify, recognise, study and remember.
- Appreciate, reflect upon, empathise with, form opinions and show sensitivity.
- Observe, search, explore, investigate, discover, find out and imagine.
- Read, listen, discuss, ask questions, respond, meet, show understanding and participate.
- Write, draw, make and plan.

The Religious Education programme will provide a comprehensive and systematic study of Christianity so that the children will be able to:-

- Grow in knowledge of and openness to the mystery of God.
- Become familiar with the person, life and teachings of Jesus who, as Saviour and Lord, reveals both the face of God and the fullness of what it means to be human.
- Grow in experience, knowledge and understanding of the Church, its Life and teachings, its significance in the world today and its concern for peace and justice.
- Grow in understanding and appreciation of Scripture and its place in Christianity,
- Prepare for, participate in and appreciate liturgical prayer and worship.
- Develop a moral awareness as they reflect upon the human condition and their own and others' lives in the light of the Christian message.

Evaluation:

The role of the teacher at St Joseph the Worker is fundamentally important in the development of the Religious Education Programme offered to our children. The role of the teacher in fulfilling this is crucial in three ways;

- 1 By the example of their own faith commitment and the encouragement shown to our children in their Faith Journey, the teacher is central to the spiritual development of the children.
2. By using personal knowledge of our children the teacher can provide a religious content, which will be meaningful to them within the context of their own lives.
3. Furthermore the teacher can also provide the opportunities for our children to hear and use religious language in a variety of contexts including worship, prayer and reflection, which can help them to gain confidence in expressing their thoughts, feelings and questions about religious topics.

Through sound teaching, which reflects children's capacity for learning and growing, the teachers at our school of St. Joseph the Worker will be able to offer a Religious Education programme that will:

- Be informed by a range of teaching styles and the whole variety of ways in which children learn, and will enable teachers to select from or devise appropriate learning experiences.
- Affirm all pupils' value and worth, build on their own experience of living relationships and contribute

to the development of positive self-esteem.

- Provide opportunities for pupils to recognise appreciate and develop their skills.
- Promote the development of independence and autonomy in children so that they are encouraged to accept increasing responsibility for their own learning and are enabled to make ever more fully informed, mature and free responses - choices in relation to God, faith, stewardship and the service of others.

Record Keeping/Assessment

Teachers' individual planning will record work done in all areas of the programmes of study taught throughout the year. Preparation for class assemblies, whole school Masses together with Feast Days, Saints' Days and any other celebrations connected with the Sacramental Programme of special times throughout the Liturgical Year will also be recorded in the planning. Written work, drawing, artwork, etc. will be kept in each child's book, the EYFS RE Journey books and the class Big Question Books. Work for world religions is recorded in our World Religion book.

Assessment:

The assessment process will aim to show achievement and progress made in relation to the Attainment Targets for R E., which are to assist in the growth of self-esteem, wholeness and human freedom through the experience and study of the teachings of Jesus.

In the front of each pupil book will be the AT1 AT2 AT3 programme of study standards relevant to the child's Key Stage in learning. These targets are the end goals for the academic year.

At the start of each Come and See unit of work children will have the 'I Can' Statements for the unit, which provide an ongoing assessment tool for teachers and pupils and provide next steps in learning across the year. (See appendix 2 marking Policy)

At the end of each year, the attainment of each pupil will be tracked on the School Excel tracking system to record progress and attainment.

Special Needs:

Work is differentiated, if need be, to meet all ability ranges. Particular attention is paid to matters of justice, peace and human dignity. Children with Special Educational Needs can obtain maximum benefit from Religious Education if:

- Work is challenging yet achievable
- Tasks are structured so all pupils can achieve success
- Teachers' expectations are appropriate, pupil's successes are recognised.

Links with Parents, Parish and the Diocese:

Parents are welcomed and valued when visiting the school. The development of the partnership between Home, School and Parish is supported by the governors, staff and parents. Parents are provided with information about what is being taught in Religious Education at the beginning of each academic year. They are informed of their child's progress in a written report as well as through discussion at the Parents Evenings in the Autumn and Spring Term.

The Sacramental Programme is supported by the school staff, Parish priest and parents.

Members of the Religious Education Committee meet each half term.

The Role of the Religious Education Lead:

The RE Lead will endeavour to carry out the following duties among others throughout the academic year:

- To lead staff by example through good classroom practice.
- To assist with staff development in Religious Education by arranging for INSET/ lead INSET in Religious Education/prayer and liturgy.
- To inform new members of staff about the policy and practices within the school.
- Co-ordinate development of Religious Education throughout the school through:
- Engaging staff in an audit of Curriculum Religious Education.
- Ensure the correct amount of time is spent teaching curriculum RE.
- Encourage positive pupils' perceptions of Religious Education.
- Organise, monitor and continually develop resources, including human resources.
- Draw up a Religious Education Action Plan each academic year.
- Draw up and maintain a Policy Document for Religious Education and prayer and liturgy.
- Monitor Teaching and Learning through learning walks
- Monitor pupils' RE books and EYFS floor books.
- Monitor Big question books.
- Monitor World Religion books.
- Co-ordinate displays in classrooms / around the school.
- Ensure there is a Focus for prayer in each classroom.
- Report to Head teacher/Governing Body on ongoing developments in Religious Education/ prayer and liturgy
- Keep parents informed about developments in Religious Education and continue to foster links with the Parish and the wider community.

Cross-Curricular Links:

As stated in the "Introduction" of this policy document the teaching and the practice of the Catholic Faith at St. Joseph the Worker is paramount and fundamental in the life of the school and permeates all we do including the teaching of every subject.

Resources:

St. Joseph the Worker is equipped with many R E. resources, which are readily available to all members of staff. From time to time resources while being used are kept in class bases or outside class areas, but are mainly found in the RE. Resource Area.

Recommended resources by the RE. Centre have been purchased and replenished frequently in order to create an extensive and appropriate R.E. resources bank.

Conclusion:

Every effort is made to facilitate the work of the Priest at St. Joseph the Worker, as the children are prepared in school and in their parish for the celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Teachers in appropriate year groups are expected to participate as fully as possible in the preparation and celebration of the children's involvement in the Sacramental Programme.

Acts Of Worship in St. Joseph the Worker

From the very origins of the Church, the disciples of Christ strove to convert people to faith ... not by the use of coercion or by devices of the Gospel, but above all by the power of the Word of God.”

The main focus of every beginning and every end of our school day is to be spent in prayer. The teacher in every class is responsible for organising the opportunity for spiritual devotion. Each class is to have a designated area devoted to spiritual enrichment; this will follow the liturgical colours of the year. Children and staff will pray together at the four major parts of the day, the beginning and at the end of the morning and afternoon teaching sessions. Particular emphasis will be paid, at the mid-day session in thanksgiving for all meals that are prepared and for those who have prepared them.

During each week, there will be three assemblies in school when opportunities for greater numbers to worship together will take place. The whole school will meet for a Monday celebration assembly. The EYFS/Key Stage 1 and 2 children will assemble for separate assembly during the week. Thursday assembly focusses on the Gospel for the following Sunday.

Holy Mass or a Pupil Led Service will be celebrated in school during Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and at the End of the school year. Members of the Parish community are invited. Each class from Y3-Y6 will lead a Service or Mass.

All children will attend Mass throughout the school year.

Staff are encouraged to complete the CCRS Programme and funded by school to do so in their own time.

All K.S.2 classes will be encouraged to participate in Reconciliation Services during Advent and Lent.

At all special times in the Church's calendar celebration will take place in assemblies and non-Eucharistic services.

Please refer to the Policy for prayer and liturgy for further information.

Areas for Development:

Please see coordinators Action Plan for further details.

Signed Chair of Governors _____ **Date** _____

Signed Headteacher _____ **Date** _____