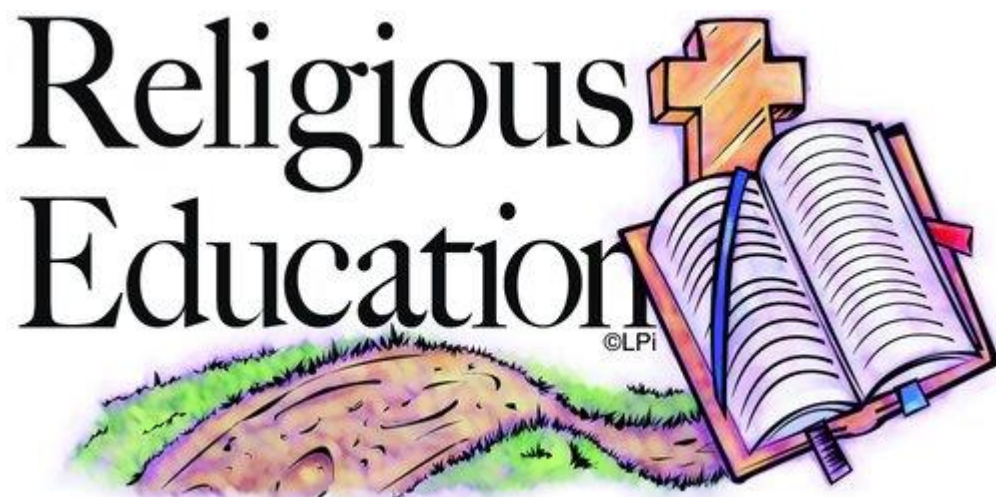




St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



R.E. Policy

Autumn 2021

Our Mission Statement.

'Guided by Jesus, Learning Together, Striving for Excellence'

God in his love has created each one of us as unique. God is therefore at the very heart of our school. Each member of our school community, adults and children, are on a journey. It is our role to teach the message of the gospels. The Gospel values of trust, honesty, forgiveness, loving, and caring, for one another are part of our everyday life.

Our entire curriculum at St Joseph's Catholic School, the Diocesan Scheme of Work, 'A curriculum strategy for Religious Education in Catholic Primary schools of the Archdiocese of Birmingham- Learning and Growing as the people of God', will reflect these values and in our search for excellence each individual must be encouraged to use Gods gifts fully to realise his/her potential.

National Policy Statement.

As Catholics we believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation upon which everything else is based and develops from. This is why we have adopted our mission statement - **'Guided by Jesus, Learning Together, Striving for Excellence'**

The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for and substantially shape the school curriculum.

We are committed to delivering the national curriculum within this Christian environment providing a range of educational experiences appropriate to the age, ability and special needs of our pupils.

We believe that Religious Education is a subject in its own right and should be taught as an academic subject developed and funded with the same commitment as other subjects.

Aims of Religious Education.

At St. Joseph's, our Mission Statement is reflected in our aims of Religious Education in our school.

We aim to encourage pupils on their journey of faith by:

- Developing in the knowledge and understanding of Catholic teaching and practice.
- Knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to questions about human life's origins and purpose.

- Promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice.
- Developing their involvement with their church community.
- Developing an awareness of the needs of others providing, opportunities for caring and respecting, others.
- Developing opportunities to reflect upon God's world and establishing a personal relationship with him.

In other words we aim to develop:

- 'Thinking, Christian children.'
- Children who have learnt to pray.
- Who have a solid relationship with a loving God through knowledge of Him through His Gospels.
- Who will have respect for others of all ethnic backgrounds and religions.
- Who will have respect for themselves.
- Who will have moral standards based on the teachings of Christ.
- Who will live adult lives with Christ at the centre.

The objectives of Religious Education at St. Joseph's School are:

- To develop knowledge and understanding, of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold.
- To develop awareness and appreciation of catholic belief, understanding of its impact on pastoral and social behaviour and of the vital relationship between facts and life, life and faith.
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection on Christ's teach
To develop appropriate skills e.g. to listen, to think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically; to acquire knowledge and organise it effectively; to make informed judgements, so that pupils can grow intellectually, spiritually and morally.
- To foster appropriate attitudes e.g. respect for truth, respect for views of others, awareness of spiritual and moral responsibility, of the demands of religious commitment in every day life and especially in the challenge of living in a multicultural, multi faith society.
- The desired outcome is religiously literate young people who have knowledge, understanding and skill - appropriate to their age and capacity to think spiritually,

ethically and theologically and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in every day life.

Organisation

The scheme of work provides progression throughout the school within the key areas of Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ. It also allows opportunities for monitoring and assessment. The scheme is intended to link in with other curriculum areas; it should be resourced using Bibles, Missals, Computing, Sacramental programmes, multicultural resources and other resources appropriate to the RE Programme of Study. As well as in classrooms, resources for RE can be found in the RE resource areas. The RE coordinator can advise what is available.

Each classroom and communal area has a religious focal point. The mission statement will also be displayed clearly. A crucifix and a Bible will be displayed in a prominent place. Prayer areas should include cloths appropriate to the liturgical season and an appropriate prayer focus, with children's work and artefacts.

The R.E. Programme.

These objectives will be carried by:

1. Teaching the pupils about developing their understanding of:
The Gospel message
The Sacraments
The Mass
The establishment and traditions of the church.
2. Encouraging pupils to have:
A personal relationship with God by developing their prayer life.
3. Encouraging pupils to be:
Part of a worshipping, community through daily acts of collective worship, school and class assemblies and school masses.
4. Fostering skills so that pupils can:
Listen, think critically, and develop spiritually, ethically and theologically.
5. Fostering, attitudes so that pupils recognise:
The uniqueness of the individual and have a respect for the truth and the views of others and be aware of their spiritual and moral responsibilities and the needs of others.

Teaching and Learning Strategies.

It is fundamental that the provision of Religious Education takes place in a loving, community, which strives to live by and foster Gospel values.

Everything; that happens in our school each day has the potential to speak of God's loving care for each individual child.

The pastoral care and discipline is the responsibility of each person in our community.

As members of our community the children will be provided with a wide range of learning experiences, to develop them as thinking, feeling and relating; human beings.

The role of the teacher is to witness to the Good News of God's Love, by providing a safe, secure environment where children are valued as individuals and inspired to such truth in all that they do.

We recognise the qualities of staff who are not Catholics and the beneficial effects of their sincerity and support to the school community.

Our special religious education, values & virtues and sacramental boards for display highlight and emphasises the importance of RE. It is a focus for the children's learning. The displays are used in lesson discussions and therefore are an interactive part of Religious Education.

Methodology and Planning.

In St Joseph's, R.E. accounts for ten per cent of the curriculum, which is the equivalent of 30 min per day, following the Diocese schemes of work.

The children also have other opportunities to learn directly about God in assemblies led by the Head teacher and Deputy Head Teacher, prayer services, assemblies and Masses.

In teaching R.E. we use a variety of appropriate teaching methods according to the age and ability of pupils.

In planning our RE curriculum we take note of the key principles outlined in the Bishop's Statement.

"Differentiation, a Catholic Perspective" CEPS 1997

Every Learner:

- Has a divine origin and is a unique, individual gifted by the Holy Spirit.
- Has the divine right to be included fully in the life of the church community.
- Has the divine right to education and to have potential identified and developed.
- Has the divine right to be regarded as having equal values and worth.
- Has the divine right to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.
- Has the divine right to genuine access to the whole curriculum.
- Has the divine right to be challenged by and to achieve in the learning situation.
- These principle in our policy apply to all curriculum areas.

SEND Provision

Lessons and activities from the scheme are planned and differentiated sufficiently to allow all children to work at their own ability level and to their full potential, including extending the most able.

Long Term, Medium and short term planning.

St Joseph's follows the diocesan scheme of work - Learning and Growing as the People of God as the core scheme.

Each member of staff will use the long-term plan and medium term plans of the scheme.

The short term, weekly plans and daily plans give more detail of what is taught each half term, weekly and daily and are the plans recommended by the Diocese to help identification of AT1 and 2 being met within the planning and delivery of lessons.

The R.E. leader will meet with each member of staff half-termly to support each class teacher with their RE planning.

Methodology

The Teaching and Learning Policy is used in every curriculum area to provide a variety of teaching methods are used for RE that are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. At times pupils work individually, in groups or as a whole class and many opportunities are given for discussion and evaluation of the lesson.

Varieties of Bibles are available and are used for research at KS2.

Religious pictures/posters and books are used daily to illustrate themes from RE lessons and each class has a prayer focus/RE corner and display board.

Pupils are encouraged to work in a variety of way, at times using the word processor for writing prayers and stories and new CD ROMs. Pupils are encouraged to consider their learning from a variety of perspectives and at times are asked to dramatise their work. A creative approach to learning and recording is encouraged in R.E. to promote enthusiasm and enjoyment and ensure pupils are not limited by their writing ability. Pupil's work is shared with others in the class and the school and is often displayed around the school.

Achievement Through Partnership

We recognise that we have a very difficult task that we cannot achieve alone. Parents and Parishioners are welcomed into school when COVID restrictions allow. We are members of the Birmingham Catholic Partnership, schools working together in true partnership, sharing expertise and enriching the education of all children in an atmosphere of Christian love, for the benefit Catholic Education across the West Midlands.

Our aim is to produce a society in which the Gospel values of life are apparent. We encourage links with home and aim to make our parents feel a valued part of the community.

Father Craig celebrates Mass in school regularly for the children in the school hall and one class of children, on a rota basis, join the Tuesday morning parish Mass in church whenever possible. Parents are invited, as they are to class assemblies.

Children take turns to take home the class prayer bag to share with their family on a rota basis.

We involve the local community as much as possible e.g. members from the Fire Service, PCSOs, members of other churches to talk to children and people from other faiths to visit and talk to our children.

When pupils are been prepared for the Sacraments, meetings are held for the parents and they are asked to support their children by helping with homework, teaching the prayers and by reinforcing the knowledge and skills the children are taught.

Liturgy and Worship

The children pray with their class daily together at the beginning, before and after lunchtime and at the end of each day. There are other opportunities for the children to explore personally with prayer quietly throughout each day.

The children are encouraged to express themselves by writing their own prayers with the confidence and knowledge that others will always respect what they have to say. These prayers are used in different ways e.g. for class use, private use, reading out loud in assembly or putting into class prayer books and prayer boxes.

Each classroom has a display board for RE and a prayer area is a focal point

within each room. It is colour coordinated to the churches year cycle and work is changed regularly so that it is bright and attractive which is also a focus for the children. The class displays follow the R.E scheme, which reflects that Christ is at the centre of our school.

Assemblies

On Mondays, the whole school assembly gives the opportunity for a whole school reflection on the Gospel reading of the week or a particular Bible reading or theme. *During the COVID 19 pandemic, restrictions mean that the class teacher may provide this collective worship in the classroom using 'Ten Ten Collective Worship Resources or a live streamed or pre-recorded assembly provided by the Senior Leadership Team.*

On Friday's, the whole school 'Celebration Assembly' gives the opportunity to reflect on the week and to learn more about the virtues of the Catholic School Pupil Profile which is being focussed on that half term. Pupils are nominated by staff to receive a certificate and sticker in recognition for their actions showing they are growing in Catholic virtues. Parents are invited to attend when restrictions allow. *During the COVID 19 pandemic, restrictions mean that the class teacher may provide this collective worship in the classroom and photographs of children who are awarded certificates are shared with parents using the school website and social media.*

Each class also has a timetabled session each week when they gather for a class liturgy. The staff or pupils can lead this; throughout the school, pupils are actively encouraged to develop their own skills and confidence to plan and lead prayer for others.

Our Assemblies and class liturgies provide the opportunity to gather, listen, reflect and respond to the word of God.

Resources

The school has a wide selection of resources to support the teaching of RE. However we are always adding to our resources through purchasing new books, religious posters and ICT resources to inspire teachers and children.

One of the five designated INSET days each year is designated for RE and in addition to this, regular staff meetings are held throughout the year. The RE coordinator supports the staff in their teaching of RE by planning, advising and working along side colleagues. Staff are encouraged to attend in-service courses organised by the Diocesan RE Dept at Coleshill, or through the Catholic Partnership INSET. All teachers who are new to working in a Catholic school complete 3 days of training with the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service within the first year of their service. All staff receive a staff planner at the start of each academic year / when starting work at St. Joseph's. The planner details the expectations of all staff when working in our Catholic School and a discussion about these expectations forms part of the induction process for all new members of staff.

Staff who wish to complete the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) to further develop their own subject knowledge are supported by the school to be able to do so.

Assessing, Recording and reporting.

The school has an Assessment Policy, which applies to all subjects including RE. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess their children's knowledge of the RE topics that have been covered. Six children's work in RE, of different ability children is given to the RE coordinator for whole school moderation of 3 children and as examples of pupil work and each term it is put into the RE evidence folder as an example of achievement. Each piece of work is assessed and levelled accordingly.

Teachers are able to make judgments about the quality and content of written work and about a child's knowledge about Gospel stories, the mass etc.

The end of year statements can also be used for final assessment. Work is marked according to the agreed marking policy for all subjects.

The teachers on going assessment and records are used to identify pupil's strengths and weaknesses and to plan the next stage in their learning, adapting the short term plans to meet the needs of the individual pupils.

Sacramental Preparation

Preparing the children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation are the responsibility of the home, school and parish. It is an integral part of the Religious Education of our pupils. Parents attend at least one meeting in preparation with their children. An enrolment mass for the sacraments take place for Reconciliation, Holy Communion and for Confirmation.

Parents are also involved in the preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

The overall scheme of work for Year 3 includes work on the Sacraments and more specific skills and knowledge's are taught the term prior to the Sacrament. In accordance with the wishes of the parish and following the agreement with the Bishop, Reconciliation will generally take place in Year 3 and First Holy Communion will take place in Year 4.

The children work on an ammended booklet tailored to the needs of the children from the resource 'Heart Speaks to Heart' produced by the Leeds Catholic Diocese. The children work through this book in school and at home during their preperation for the sacraments. This book is monitored by the Parish priest at regular intervals.

In Years 5 and 6 the children are prepared by the R.E Co-ordinator and the Year 6 teacher for Confirmation. This takes place every two years. The parents are invited to attend meetings to discuss the commitment being undertaken and asking for support and involvement in the preparation. During the Summer and Autumn term the children research information about their chosen saint and will work through an ammended booklet from the scheme 'Gifted in the spirit'. This book is monitored by the Parish priest at regular intervals.

In all years, the children work hard to prepare for the Sacraments; photographs and displays are produced in school so that the sacraments have a whole community involvement and are to be celebrated. The celebrations involve the whole faith community and there are opportunities afterwards to socialise.

The role of the RE Coordinator

The role of the RE coordiantor has a responsibility for a core subject in a catholic school. The role involves developing the faith journey of the children in our care, of creating a truly catholic community which is centred upon Christ in the Eucharist, and witnesses to Christ's teachings.

The RE Coordinator is responsible for the long term and overall planning of the RE curriculum. The coordinator should secure high standards of teaching and learning. Also to monitor the medium and short-term plans drawn up by the class teacher and is responsible for ensuring progression and continuity taking place and that assessment techniques are developing.

The coordinator provides leadership and direction for religious education in school. They should offer advice and support to staff by providing them with ideas and resources and by making them aware of clear guidelines and expectations. They also are responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning, by providing exciting resources to deliver the curriculum.

They are also responsible for helping the class teacher provide a comprehensive outline of the sacramental programme discussing the planning, providing resources, liaising with priest, parents and teaching themselves should it be necessary.

The coordinator should provide leadership and direction for prayer and collective worship and support and guide those leading collective worship. The coordinator should provide evidence of catholic life in school.

The coordinator is responsible for drawing up RE policy documents in discussion with the staff and governors. The coordinator will ensure that the religious education programme in school is constantly developed and monitored

so that the teaching and learning in the school is more effective to enable pupils to develop skills and knowledge to grow in the love of God.

It is the responsibility of the coordinator to ensure the delivery of the RE programme. The coordinator ensures that 10% of the timetable is spent on RE and they ensure that all plans are handed in for monitoring purposes. The coordinator is responsible for supporting staff and putting the RE policy into practice, for making a yearly audit of resources and replenishing and developing the RE resources.

Multicultural Aspects

Our school seeks to reflect the spirit and values of the Gospel. Since Christ loves all and died for all, the universality of that love must be reflected in the life and conduct of the school.

Aims:

- ◆ To foster respect and consideration for people of all races and cultures and to appreciate the rich diversity of the human cultural inheritance and achievement.
- ◆ To combat racial antagonism by promoting understanding of the cultures and to widen the cultural perspective of pupils and to foster friendships and respect.
- ◆ Opportunities must be offered to reflect the multicultural nature of Catholicism.
- ◆ To acquaint children with other religions, and to foster in them an understanding and respect for the religious convictions of others.

Process:

- ◆ In learning about other religions our school should concentrate on symbols and festivals etc. and their significance.
- ◆ Visits to places of non-Christian worship should form part of the topics.
- ◆ Non-Christian speakers can be invited into school to talk about their religion.
- ◆ Links with other schools that have a diverse racial and cultural mix are to be encouraged.

Spiritual Development

Our school aims to foster spiritual develop through prayer. We aim to give our pupil's opportunities, experience and guidance so that they become more aware and are able to develop a special relationship with God. All staff attend assemblies and participate in leading assembly or in preparing their classes for assembly. Staff and pupils participate in the school Masses by writing prayers, reading, singing hymns and parts of the Mass.

Moral and Social Development

In our school the RE programme recognises the dignity of the human person, the importance of human freedom and the common good and a proper understanding of conscience. The pupils are taught love of God, love of neighbour, and are encouraged to develop the ability to make the right choices and know right from wrong. Self-discipline, responsibility and respect for others are values that are given high priority through teaching the life of Christ.

The oldest pupils in the school are encouraged to look after Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils on occasions at lunchtimes, in the playground or hearing readers etc. Pupils learn about the church in its widest sense and collect for charity during Lent and Advent for charities such as CAFOD and Father Hudson's.

As the pupils move through the school, Relationships and Health Education (RHE) is geared to stages of development, not simply concerning itself with the facts but allowing the pupils to develop a growing awareness of self, place in society and respect for their own and others sexuality.

Pupils throughout the school are taught RHE according to the school' RHE policy using the 'Ten Ten; Life to the Full,' resource. Please refer to the school RHE policy for further information.

Cultural Development

RE is the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values it communicates inspire and unify every aspect of school life. The RE programme is enhanced by other areas of the curriculum for instance in Geography, pupils explore the impact of climate change and link this to our responsibility to care for God's creation.

Equal opportunities

Each child is made in the image and likeness of God. We believe that all children should have equal access to all parts of the curriculum including the RE programme.

Children who are not involved in Sacramental preparation are always included in some way.

All pupils participate in assemblies, liturgies and Mass. It is only in the final preparation for the Sacraments that the Catholics are taught separately.

Monitoring and Review of Policy.

The RE Policy Statement will be reviewed and updated each year as , necessary by the coordinator , Governors and staff.

The coordinator will monitor the implementation of the RE policy throughout the school.

The policy will be displayed on the school website and paper copies are available from the school office on request.