St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

RE Policy

Our Mission:

Guided by Jesus, Learning Together,

Striving for Excellence

September 2026

Mission

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we welcome everyone into our community, where we live out our daily Mission: 'Guided by Jesus, Learning Together, Striving for Excellence.'

Our school mission is at the heart of all that we do. It forms the basis of our relationships with all of our school community. Hence it is also the basis for the teaching and learning of RE which will be explained fully in this document.

Aims of Religious Education

'*Religious education is more than just one subject in the curriculum. In Catholic schools it is the core of the "core curriculum*"'.
(Pope St. John Paul II, 1988)

At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is explored in religious education (RE) making RE the core subject in our school.

The Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD 2012) makes the aims of Religious Education explicit:

1. To present a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
3. 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;
4. To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
5. To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
6. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
8. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

The outcome of excellent Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, 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 (RECD 2012 p6).
(Religious Education Curriculum Directory: https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/about-us/publications)

Entitlement and Provision

Religious Education is a core subject and thus allocated 10% of the school's curriculum time for taught RE lessons.
For both KS1 and KS2 this equates to 2hours and 30 minutes per week over a minimum of two taught sessions.
In EYFS RE is also taught as a discrete subject separate to the curriculum. In Nursery, pupil evidence is recorded in a class floor book and in Reception, the children's work is recorded in their own exercise books.
The celebration of Mass, assemblies, hymn practice does not count towards the weekly provision of the RE curriculum.
In all year groups and classes RE is timetabled and occurs at a set time and place each week.

Scheme of Work for RE

The school follows the Diocesan strategy for Religious Education 'Discerning Disciples'. The strategy covers the following six areas;

1. Creation and Covenant.
2. Prophecy and Promise.
3. Galilee to Jerusalem.
4. Desert to Garden.
5. To the Ends of the Earth.
6. Dialogue and Encounter.

Our school is proud to have St Joseph as our patron and the children learn about the example he sets us work at the beginning of each school year and upon his feast days: 19 March & 1 May. He is also prayed to and referenced in our whole school celebration of the word, class based pupil prepared celebration of the word, class and whole school Masses.

Our school mission statement is at the heart of all that we do in St Joseph's school and is referenced in each assembly, prayer service and daily prayers. The children know our school mission statement and know our role is to improve the life of others around us.

St Joseph's school also teach, reflect and live out the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile Virtues. "Gospel Virtues," are introduced at the start of each half term and the children are invited to reflect upon ways in which they can show and share each of these virtues. Pupils demonstrating these virtues are celebrated during Friday assemblies and given a special virtues certificate. Parents are invited into school to watch and celebrate these special occasions with their children.

Sacramental Education

First Holy Communion and Reconciliation

Preparing the children to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion is the joint responsibility of all members of staff and Father Craig our parish priest.

The programme begins with individual family meetings with Fr Craig. Pupils then take part in a Commitment Mass within the parish, where pupils preparing for the Sacraments attend a workshop with their parents. This workshop is led by staff from one of the parish schools and is an opportunity to reflect on the Sacrament of Reconciliation, what it means and what it entails. After lessons in school, using Archdiocese of Birmingham resources and in the parish, the children will then make their First Confession during their time in Year 3. The children will later be presented with their certificates towards the end of the school year.

The preparation for receiving Holy Communion in Year 4 has many facets, lessons in school using Archdiocese of Birmingham resources, retreat days, sacramental classes in the parish, school Masses and parental workshops all enable the children to get ready for their First Holy Communion.

The day of First Holy Communion is a very special event in the school calendar. A day when the school community comes together to celebrate receiving Jesus for the first time. The children will later be presented with their certificates towards the end of the school year.

Confirmation

During their final year at St. Joseph's, Year 6 children are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The children are prepared following the diocesan programme with weekly lessons in school. The children also joint the wider parish group of pupils preparing to receive the sacrament with Fr Craig and parish catechists. This programme looks at all different aspects of the Sacrament, the symbols of Confirmation and what they mean, its links with other Sacraments and what it now means to become grown up members of the church. This is

supplemented with a parent workshops exploring the importance, meaning and relevance of the sacrament in our modern world and a retreat day.

On the day of Confirmation, the children receive a visit from the Bishop, held in one of the parish schools, when he will meet them and ask questions of them making sure that they are ready and prepared. The evening itself is a great celebration with the whole school family coming together to mark the Confirmation of our Year 6 children.

Other Faiths and Religions

The children learn about other faiths and religions through opportunities in the Discerning Disciples strategy and through our SMSVC offerings, such as our Christmas and Easter Culture days, when pupils come to school to reflect their national dress or culture.

Catholic Curriculum

St Joseph's incorporate aspects of Catholic Social Teaching across the curriculum. This emphasises a series of questions which require deeper thought, debate and questioning from the children in order to relate what they have learnt to answer questions which relate to modern life. This method of questioning the children within our topics also helps to draw out elements of SMVSC and asks questions of our mission statement in how we can make things better for others.

Planning

Staff follow the Discerning Disciples Programme, which clearly sets out the expectation for each unit of work.

Units are obtained from the Discerning Disciples Programme which is stored centrally upon the Staff Common shared area for RE.

<u>Short term planning</u>

Short-term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher, completed on a weekly basis and stored centrally upon the RE area for planning. Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher and units will be completed according to the Discerning Disciples Programme. Support with planning from the RE Leader is available to all staff through planning surgeries.

Equal Opportunities and SEND

RE follows the agreed school policy for Equal Opportunities and SEND which can be found upon the school shared area.

Marking and Feedback, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Each piece of work that the children produce is marked according to the Marking Policy. There are many opportunities for the learning of the children to be extended and developed through challenge which allows the children to interact with their learning, by questioning their own understanding of the task involved and the deeper meaning of their work.

<u>End of Unit Assessments</u>

End of Unit Multiple Choice Question assessments are set by the Diocesan Education Service and are carried out by class teachers at the end of every unit of work.

Assessments are stored and recorded upon an Excel document provided by the Diocesan Education Service and this is stored in the Assessment for the relevant year. A copy of this Assessment data is printed and stored in the Assessment folder of the RE lead.

The children are also assessed on their understanding of the Discern statements within the Discerning Disciples Programme. These are teacher assessed and outcomes are recorded on a spreadsheet. These are found upon the shared area and a printed copy is produced and kept at the end of the year by the RE Lead.

Reporting to parents.

Children's work and progress is discussed with the parents at two parental evenings, one in the Autumn and one in the Spring term. Pupil's books are also available for parents to view on both occasions. A written report is produced for parents at the end of the school year and a further opportunity for discussion is timetabled following the delivery of the written report.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is carried out and lead by the RE lead. Other members of the school community are involved in the monitoring of RE such as the Prayer and Liturgy Leader, Governors and SLT.

The monitoring of RE follows the monitoring schedule which forms part of the RE Monitoring Action Plan, which is produced and updated each year. Findings are shared with staff through performance management meetings, timetabled individual feedback and staff meetings. Governors are informed termly through RE and Catholic Life Governors meetings.

Resources

All resources for RE are held centrally in a specific cupboard where all teaching staff have access to complement and enhance their teaching and display.

RE Displays

Every classroom will have an RE working wall, which will reflect the current Discerning Disciples unit of work. All displays will show the key vocabulary to support the children during lessons.

Each classroom will have a sacred area/prayer focus which will guide the children in prayer and their learning. It will be prominently placed within the room; clean, dignified and well presented; the prayer area will reflect the current Liturgical Season. There will be an appropriate selection of religious objects on display, and an appropriate Bible/bible story will be displayed, as well as appropriate prayers relevant to the children, unit of work and liturgical season.

Links with Parents and Parish

Parents and guardians are the first educators, and they are in partnership with the teachers who have the professional skills to help parents in teaching Catholic faith. We endeavour to do this in an atmosphere of trust and confidence. During the year, parents and friends are invited to join us at many celebrations. At the beginning of the school year, we hold a welcome liturgy for our new members of our community. At the end of the year, we hold a goodbye ceremony to say farewell to anyone leaving us and to thank them for their contribution and commitment to the life of our school. Parents are always invited and welcomed to all our school and class celebrations which include Harvest, Stations of the Cross, and May Procession. Every Wednesday, each family is sent a copy of the Wednesday Word, which encourages children to explore the upcoming Gospels with their families.

We recognise that the school stands in the midst of the local community. At parish level, we take an active part in masses in the parish church on Saturdays once per half term. In addition, alternate year groups attend a weekday mass at church every week. We give regular support to CAFOD, the Good Shepherd, Wolverhampton and Fr Hudson's Caritas enabling our children to become aware of the needs of the wider world. This leads to an appreciation of the diversity of culture, races and faiths within the world.

The parish priest, Fr Craig, has responsibility for the pastoral care of the school community. The parish priest promotes the spiritual life of the school. In addition, the parish priest visits the school regularly to discuss various topics with the children and welcomes the children to church to support them with their learning.

Role of Religious Education Leader

The role of the RE lead follows the agreed guidance produced by the Diocese and can be found here.

Primary RE Subject Curriculum Leader
https://www.bdes.org.uk/uploads/7/2/8/5/72851667/jd__primary_re_leader2.pdf

Health and Safety

The teaching and learning of RE follows the agreed whole school policy for the Health and Safety of the school. Specific references for the use of candles to wherever possible be battery operated when used in class. Class visits to Church for both Mass, and learning in RE are permitted as our Church is nearby.

Legal right of withdrawal

Parents of pupils in VA schools are permitted, by law, to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or collective worship given at the school and any such request shall stand until such time that the parent's request is withdrawn.

https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/religious-education/item/1003623-right-of-withdrawal-from-re

file:///C:/Users/teacher/Downloads/RightZofZWithdrawalZfromZREZandZcollectiveZworship.pdf

Link Governor

Mr Hugh Carroll is the Link Governor for Religious Education.

Review date

Policy to be reviewed July 2027