

# Religious Education Curriculum

## **Purpose of Study**

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide an environment where our children can actively live their faith and experience being a part of a caring and compassionate family.

Opportunities for regular prayer and liturgy enable the children to explore their spirituality and response to God and other people. They take part in many forms of prayer, music and meditation. The Eucharist is at the heart of our prayer life and our children participate as fully as possible in an age appropriate way.

Our children are taught to understand and respect other faiths, and during the year there are opportunities for them to explore other faiths and learn from the practices of other faiths (e.g. patterns of prayer, fasting, pilgrimages etc.).

## **Rationale**

As a Catholic school, Religious Education underpins the whole curriculum - delivered through "The Way, The Truth and The Life" programme, and supported by programmes for PSHE and 'Statements to Live By' for personal relationships. It contains systematic and rigorous teaching and learning.

We ensure that this programme of study is enriched from EYFS through into KS2 with a developing variety of creative activities that include history, geography and art. Giving lessons an historical perspective of the time in which Jesus lived, and the traditions followed, allows us to give the children a greater and deeper understanding of the stories we study in the bible. The children will often study maps to gain a better insight into where the stories took place and also examine famous paintings that can give a fresh insight into Jesus's time and teachings.

The units of work cover the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church and their implications for the lives of people today, and particularly for the lives of our children.

The scheme incorporates attainment targets: learning about the Catholic faith (AT1) and learning from the Catholic faith (AT2). These are set out in the form of specific key learning objectives for each module.

We work with parents, who are the primary educators of their children; Our Lady Queen of Peace parish; our Diocese and the local communities of which we are a part. As children of God, we want each child to understand their calling to serve others; and to have an innate respect for their "neighbour" (Catholic values - British values), irrespective of their faith; their gender; their background or their capability.

## **Implementation**

Religious Education is taught as a discrete subject, but is at the centre of everything we do as a Catholic school and permeates through every aspect of the curriculum and school life.

It is taught to all pupils at our school regardless of their personal faith commitment, their parent's commitment, their faith tradition, their gender, race or ability. We ensure that a minimum of 10% of Curriculum time is allocated for RE teaching across all key stages (approximately 2.5 hours per week in KS2 and 2.2 hours per week in Foundation and KS1).

We use the Diocesan programme 'The Way the Truth and The Life', which meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, set out by the Bishop's Conference of England Wales. There are 6 topics per year group from Reception to Y6. Through the topics taught, they are challenged to think about how they put the teachings of the church and Jesus into practise in their own daily lives. They are inspired to become critical thinkers and to reflect deeply upon their own faith journey.

Although 'The Way the Truth and the Life' programme provides the basis of teaching religion, many additional resources are used to give the children the best possible opportunities to deepen their understanding. Teachers use CAFOD, Mission Together, TenTen and many other resources to ensure a rich and varied curriculum.

Other world faiths and important Liturgical celebrations are interwoven throughout the year as children are encouraged to question and reflect on their own lives and the religious lives of others.

The children are encouraged to think about their own spirituality and teachers plan opportunities for children to explore this through discussion, lesson, prayer and weekly Collective Worship.

Each unit begins with a 'check in' task to assess the children's prior knowledge and at the end of each unit of work a 'check out' task is completed to measure progress through the topic. This is used as a monitoring and assessment tool by teachers and a self-assessment tool by pupils.

All year groups use the RE level descriptors to assess the attainment of the children and their progress is tracked on a termly basis.

Teachers also highlight 'I can statements' (in children's journals) which reflect the children's learning across a unit.

Children are assessed on their individual, group and oral work through each topic as well as completing an assessed piece of work which is moderated by staff across the school termly to ensure judgements are well evidenced and verified. This enables both class teachers and the subject leader to monitor coverage and identify progress made throughout the pupils' time at school.

The children in Year 3 and above have the opportunity to take part in the Sacramental Programme and make their First Holy Communion. The after school sessions are delivered by member of staff to both pupils and parents to question and reflect on their own faith journey.

Each new term commences and ends with a school Mass, and during Lent and Advent there are weekly Masses in school for KS groups; their families and parishioners are all welcome.

All children participate in pupil led and teacher led Collective Worship sessions as well as taking part in assemblies, Masses and liturgies. Children are encouraged to take opportunities to express their faith through various school organisations such as Pupil Parliament and Mini Vinnies.

## **Impact**

Children of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well in RE, reflected in outstanding progress that reveals a clear learning journey from their starting point. There is a record of success in journals and assessments that reflects the impact of their learning as well as pupil voice activities.

Children are happy learners within RE. They experience a wide-ranging number of learning challenges in RE and know how to respond to them. They are confident, resilient and have opportunities to be engaged in the wider society.

Children are able to describe and discuss areas of RE. As they get older they will confidently use skills such as retelling, describing, comparing, giving reasons, explaining the meaning of biblical stories and considering the impact of beliefs.

Through wider reading in RE, children know about a range of historical religious events, people and Saints, and how we can learn from their example. They are able to make links between Jesus' life and teaching and link it to their own lives, making links between different forms of Christian action, such as in rituals and charitable acts.

Through RE, children deepen their appreciation of their faith and fulfil their God-given talents and are able to reflect, celebrate and live their faith in an active and positive way, always aware of the presence and love of Christ guiding them.

Visits within RE enrich the lives of the children and they are able to discuss how the experiences impacted their knowledge and understanding. As a consequence, they can talk enthusiastically about their learning in RE.