



# **Policy for Religious Education**

**February 2017**

## Mission Statement

**St. John the Baptist Catholic Primary School is rooted in the local Catholic community with which it shares beliefs and values.**

**Christ is the way, the truth and the life.**

**Our school is a welcoming Christ-centred community, committed to the development of faith and worship.**

**Our mission is to provide a loving and stimulating environment, where all are inspired and empowered to achieve their true potential as unique and valued individuals.**

**Our children will be encouraged to develop an awareness and respect of others as well as themselves, as we all journey through life with Christ.**

### **Rationale of Religious Education:**

- At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore, we believe that religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.<sup>1</sup>
- We believe Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.
- Religious education contributes to evangelisation and catechesis but its specific contribution to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and so Religious Education will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.
- We understand Religious Education to be the systematic study of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold.<sup>2</sup>

‘The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.’

### **The Aims of Religious Education**

- to promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- to promote knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose
- to promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, para. 4, Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, p. 10, Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 1996

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

## Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Collective Worship.

## Programme of Study:

To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - **The Way, the Truth and the Life** is used in our school, as recommended by the Diocese of Leeds.

## Process

'Our starting point in Religious Education is **Revelation**. God is always the initiator in the history of our creation and redemption; it is his revealing of himself that makes classroom religious education possible. To begin with revelation ensures that we respect the revealed nature of Christian faith.

From revelation we move onto Church; in other words, we consider how revelation gives life to the Church. The Church is the bearer of God's revelation and the means by which human beings live out their response to revelation, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

From here we focus on two aspects of the Church's response to God's revelation; Celebration – the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and Life in Christ – the moral life and the pursuit of holiness.

However, attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential.<sup>4</sup>

'Teaching in Religious Education ....should help people be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible.'<sup>5</sup>

## Methodology

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

Since the total curriculum in our school is based on the values of the Gospel and because we see all education as revealing the mystery of God, we recognise two aspects of Religious Education in the school:-

- Implicit, or unstructured Religious Education – those opportunities which arise in the course of the school day to lead pupils through curriculum content or through relationships to a religious understanding of their implications. It is the policy of this school to use such opportunities as they arise.
- Explicit, or Curriculum religious Education – those timetabled or planned periods of time given to an explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom. It is the policy of this school to give 10% of the timetable to Curriculum Religious Education.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Way, the Truth & the Life*, *Teacher Book 4*, 7, CTS, 2004

<sup>5</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, p. 11

## **Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

We recognise that assessment, recording and reporting are a natural part of teaching and are integral to the learning process. They are continuous processes requiring a close partnership between teachers and pupils, and the involvement of others as appropriate. They are the responsibility of all teachers.

We believe that assessment is at the heart of good teaching and does not require complex procedures. We acknowledge that our approach to the assessment, recording and reporting of religious education will be broad in character and will recognise the innate dignity and worth of each individual.

- Good assessment strategies will be rooted in effective planning linked to 'driver' words in attainment targets.
- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress. Evidence across all five strands which will be assessed according to the attainment targets. Assessment data will be submitted to the RE Coordinator to be put onto the RE Tracking Grid. Analysis of the data will be undertaken by the RE Coordinator and this will provide a basis for discussions at Pupil progress meetings. This will also include the discussion around vulnerable groups and closing the gap between groups.
- The process of recording will enable us to provide evidence of the quality of teaching and learning for ourselves as teachers and governors and for parents and inspectors.
- Examples of level assessed and moderated work will be collected in a whole school portfolio This will be developed within the school year containing samples of work from each Attainment Target where possible.
- An in - house moderation meeting is held to be held on a termly basis. Joint RE moderation will also take place with other schools within the BKCAT and at Diocesan level.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations and work scrutiny will take place following schools timetabled schedule linked to SDP
- Marking pupil's work will be approached positively and constructively so that it affirms and celebrates success and encourages future learning, linking to the 'I Can' statements, and the schools marking and feedback policy.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

### **Policy review.**

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by staff and Governors and updated every 2 years.

### **Management of the subject.**

Mrs Lesley Warters the Co-ordinator/Subject Leader has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

### **Curriculum**

1. Formulating a written policy for the curriculum area.
2. Ensuring that the curriculum area reflects cross curricular concerns such as multicultural issues, equal opportunity and personal and social education.

3. Organising the integration of information technology computer assisted learning within the curriculum area.
4. Devising teaching and learning activities appropriate to the full ability range.
5. Fostering curriculum continuity, consistency, balance, match and progression through classroom observation and work scrutiny.
6. Stimulating cross curricular approaches and the use of creativity across the RE Curriculum
7. Organising whole school themes and activities.
8. Contributing to the formulation of the whole school development plan.

### ***Communication***

1. Communicating effectively within the school
2. Acting as a consultant to colleagues
3. Encouraging positive attitudes towards the curriculum area
4. Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy in the curriculum area.
5. Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community.
6. Liaising with the Diocesan R.E Centre and colleagues in partner schools. Working effectively with the BKCAT RE Coordinators group and Mission group to ensure consistency and quality across the BKCAT.

### ***Assessment and Monitoring***

1. Assessment and evaluation of the curriculum area, ensuring consistency with the school policy.
2. Monitoring standards with the curriculum area – through monitoring of assessment and planning, Learning Walks and book scrutiny.
3. Observations of classroom teaching linked to effective planning.
4. Having oversight of and developing record keeping and tracking systems.
5. Analysing data to ensure achievement and attainment is in line with other key curriculum subjects.
6. Informing the Headteacher of standards and developments within the curriculum.

### ***Resources***

1. Evaluating existing resources
2. Managing the purchase and deployment of resources.
3. Budgeting efficiently

### ***Professional Development***

1. Arranging and organising school based in-service activities
2. Keeping up to date by personal reading
3. Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
4. Working alongside other RE Colleagues from within the BKCAT to ensure quality religious Education.

### ***Other Faiths***

Community is a fundamental part of what it means to be Catholic.

This is evident in our school irrespective of whether most places are occupied by Catholics or where places are available to welcome others too. In each pupil, member of staff, and visitor we are called to see the richness of God's creation and to undertake our work knowing that in each unique person we see Jesus Christ. We continue to work towards a society in which all feel valued, and respected irrespective of background. and traditions

### **Home – School – Parish Partnership**

We believe that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children and that we are called to support them in their God given task.

We believe that this school, rooted in the mission of the Eucharistic Community of St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School has a particular responsibility to support parents in their task of nurturing their children in faith, love, and human growth.

We believe that through our school we enable our parishioners to experience a vibrant, Christian community whereby we as a parish engage with the world and offer an experience of the Gospel to all who have contact with us

To achieve this we will reflect annually on our practice, celebrate and consolidate our successes and realistically explore ways of journeying more closely together.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **The Role of the Co-ordinator for Religious Education**

#### **The Religious Education Co-ordinator will be responsible for:**

- Working with senior leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutiny according to school practice.
- Organising and maintaining the school portfolio of pupils' work.
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and leading in-house staff training and development.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education.

- Liaising with the Headteacher, Governors, parents, the *Office for Education & Schools* on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.

Amended: February 2017

SMT:

Staff Meeting:

Governors: