

# St John the Evangelist Catholic Primary School, Bradford



## Religious Education Policy

### **Mission Statement**

*St. John's is a place where we meet Jesus.  
Everyone is enabled to fulfil their unique potential  
and together we celebrate being part of God's creation in all we think, say and do.  
In our school everyone is respected and cherished and differences are valued.  
Each member of our community is supported to truly reflect the person of Jesus*

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

- The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ...In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human — that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation — is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church.<sup>1</sup>
- Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.
- For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step by step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.<sup>2</sup>
- Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

The outcome of 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.<sup>3</sup>

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

- To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;

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<sup>1</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

<sup>2</sup> *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000, p. 8-9

<sup>3</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

- 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;
- To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.<sup>4</sup>

### **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 programme is used as recommended by the Diocese.

### **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>5</sup>

### **Methodology**

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. It 'serves in the examination and acceptance of the truths which are contained in the deposit of Revelation.'<sup>6</sup>

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

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<sup>4</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

<sup>5</sup> *The Way, the Truth & the Life, Teacher Book 4*, CTS, 2004, p. 4

<sup>6</sup> *Briefing*, 26 May 1994, quoting *General Directory for Catechesis*, 74b

## **R.E. Lessons**

- R.E. is a timetable subject covering 10% of teaching time.
- R.E. is taught systematically throughout the school using *The Way, The truth and The Life* scheme. This provides continuity and progression in each year group
- R.E. as a subject is taught in isolation and where appropriate should be linked with other curriculum areas including I.C.T.
- Children are expected to develop a repertoire of prayers appropriate to their year group.
- All KS2 children should have a developmental knowledge and understanding of The Stations of the Cross and the Rosary.
- All children should be provided with the opportunity in their R.E. lessons to pray together as a class, to make up their own prayers in both oral and silent form.
- R.E. written work should be marked in accordance with the schools marking policy. Special emphasis must be made on the spelling of key words -"God", "Jesus", ensuring the correct use of capital letters.
- Lesson objectives should be shared with the children and an opportunity for prayer and reflection may be included at the start and end of each lesson- e.g. light a candle to set R.E. apart from other lessons. At the end of the lesson blow the candle out to emphasise the specialness "of an R.E. lesson.

## **Cross – Curricular Links**

The R.E. scheme provides many opportunities for Literacy links. Relevant texts can be studied as part of Literacy lessons. R.E. can also be used to develop speaking and listening skills, drama and role play.

R.E. provides opportunities for a variety of I.C.T. activities and can be linked to the History and Geography curriculum.

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

- 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.
- The school portfolio of pupils' work contains samples of moderated work from each year group covering a range of abilities.
- Teaching and learning of RE is monitored regularly in line with the school's calendar of monitoring and evaluation.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

## **S.E.N. Provision**

Lessons and activities from the scheme should be planned and differentiated sufficiently to allow children to work at them at their own ability level, including extending the most able.

## **R.E./Prayer Focus Area**

- An R.E. /prayer focus area should be encouraged to be the focal point in each classroom.
- This area should have drapes of appropriate liturgical colour, a crucifix, a candle and Bible.
- Classroom R.E. displays will relate to the theme being studied to stimulate further work or to celebrate the work that has been undertaken.
- Other displays and areas of reflection around school will be changed according to the liturgical year.

## **Liturgy and Celebration**

- School Masses and liturgies are an essential factor in the religious life of the school.
- Preparation for Masses and Liturgies should take place within the context of the R. E. lessons with pupils developing their understanding of the meaning and structure of the Mass/Liturgies as they progress through school. All children should be actively involved in their Masses/Liturgies by doing the readings, offertory procession and singing hymns.
- The Parish Priest should be involved in the preparation of Masses as time permits.
- All parents/guardians are invited and encouraged to take part in Masses/Liturgies.
- A liturgical school calendar identifies the opportunities for worship throughout the year including liturgies, and class visits from Father Paul.
- Children pray at the beginning and end of the school day, providing opportunities to pray both traditional and informal prayers, and also before and after lunch to give thanks for their food.

## **Assemblies and Collective Worship**

- All children take part in a daily act of worship; this maybe the whole school, key stage or class.
- Assemblies are considered an important element in the delivery of moral and religious education to the children.
- The content of assembly should be of a religious or moral nature. During assembly time the school community is expected to discuss, sing and pray together, it is expected to prepare for special feasts and follow the church liturgical calendar.

The Assembly Plan is as follows:

Monday: Whole school ethos assembly led by a member of staff on a rota

Tuesday : Class Collective Worship

Wednesday-a.m Whole School Mass/Class Mass as identified on the Liturgical calendar  
11.30 Wednesday Word Collective Worship

Thursday : Class Collective Worship

Friday: Whole school assembly –led by a class and their teacher

## **Sacramental Preparation**

Sacramental preparation for Reconciliation and Eucharist is an important part of the Religious scheme. It is important that the whole faith community (children, parents, catechists, teachers, priest) are involved in this preparation. We are following the new directives of the diocese with regard the changes in the Sacramental Preparation and are working closely with Father Paul and the Parish to develop a programme which involves Family Catechesis with support from the school. This is due to begin in November.

## **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Services of Reconciliation are celebrated during Lent and Advent and children in Key stage 2 are given opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## **Management of the subject.**

Mrs Ruth Westbrook(RE Co-ordinator) has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

## **Other Faiths**

The children will learn about other faiths and foster attitudes of respect, tolerance, understanding for beliefs and traditions. Each Base/Key Stage will study Judaism and one other faith as part of the curriculum. In addition children will learn about a variety of festivals from other faiths. Where possible, people from other faiths will be invited into school to talk to the children and the children will visit various places of worship.

### **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 scrutinies 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, CSPTSA, parents, the Office for Education & Schools on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.

### **Moral Issues**

We recognise that the ethos of the school is very important for personal and moral growth. An atmosphere of love, respect of others, sympathy and forgiveness, contributes to the children's self- confidence and self –acceptance, and develops their capacity to relate to others and to God.

We encourage children to develop the moral qualities of self- discipline, patience, fair play and considerations for others. The school has a high standard of behaviour and follows an assertive behaviour policy (See Behaviour Policy). This helps the children to acquire self –control, to appreciate the rights of others and to realise that there are limitations to their own freedom.

### **Policy review.**

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Governing Body and updated every 2 years.

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body..... Date.....