



## **Religious Education Handbook**

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## 1. Mission Statement

In our School we seek to promote the academic, spiritual and personal development of the individual in a happy Christian environment. Our Mission Statement is at the heart of all we do.

**At our school we recognise Jesus at the heart of all we do  
Our school is a happy and safe place where everyone is challenged to do  
their very best in both work and play'  
Our family community includes home, school, parish and the local  
neighbourhood  
As children of God we value, respect and love each other and celebrate  
our differences  
We say sorry support and forgive each other as Jesus showed us  
We welcome and support those in need.**

**School Motto:  
'Let Your Light Shine'**

## 2. Aims

At St. Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School, we believe the purpose of Religious Education in a Catholic School is to enable every child to develop their knowledge and understanding of God and their relationship with him, to prepare them for a life centred on Gospel values and to promote the spiritual nature of the child irrespective of their religious maturity.

## 3. Objectives

- Provide opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection in implicit and explicit ways.
- Promote the status of R.E. so that it is recognised with the same academic 'weight' of other curricular areas
- Develop the teaching of multicultural education within the framework 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' to enable them to appreciate the many people who hold different religious convictions and beliefs.
- Provide children with the language of religious experience – a 'literacy' in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, people and objects.

- Through the RE programme deliver ‘a systematic presentation of the Christian event, message and way of life’ in ways appropriate to the stage of development of the child.
- Develop understanding of teachers of the underlying theological as well as educational principles of our R.E. programme through training (see point 18 of R.E. Handbook).
- Provide support and supplementary material for the Sacramental Preparation.

#### 4. National Curriculum Requirements

- As in line with the current Education Act:
- We recognise and fulfil the Bishop’s recommendations of 10% curriculum time devoted to the teaching of R.E.
- At St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Primary, R.E. is given a high status and we recognise its academic value. This is reflected in our planning and display which give it a prominent place in our school.

#### 5. Subject Delivery

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use ‘The Way, the Truth and the Life’ programme of Religious Education. The aim of this programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupils’ own experiences and with universal experience. Links are also made with the experience of other faith traditions.

For all children the programme will raise questions and provide material for reflecting on their own experience. It will help them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition and where appropriate of other faith traditions.

##### 5a. Whole School Planning

The topic headings for each year group are as follows:

	half term 1	half term 2	half term 3	half term 4	half term 5	half term 6
FS	God’s World	God’s Family	Getting to know Jesus	Joy & Sorrow	New Life	Church

Y1	God's Great plan	Mary, Mother of God	Families and Celebrations	Following Jesus	The Resurrection	Miracles
Y2	Chosen	Mysteries	The Good News	The Mass	Eastertide	Birth of the Church
Y3	Christian Family	Mary, Our Mother	Called to Change	Eucharist	Celebrating Easter & Pentecost	Being a Christian
Y4	The Bible	Trust in God	Jesus, the Teacher	Jesus, the Saviour	The Early Christians	The Church
Y5	Creation	God's Covenant	Inspirational People	Reconciliation	Life in the Risen Christ	People of Other Faiths
Y6	The Kingdom of God	Justice	Exploring the Mass	Jesus, Son of God	The Transforming Spirit	Called to Serve

Wherever possible visits to places of worship, or visits from members of the religion being studied will be organised.

The time allocated for religious education is:

Key stage 1 – 2 hours per week  
 Key Stage 2 – 2.5 hours per week

### 5b. Class Planning

A copy of the school proforma is included in the appendices of this handbook. Staff are asked to fill in the proforma with reference to the scheme Teacher's Books, the scheme web site: [www.tere.org](http://www.tere.org), the web site of the diocese: [www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org](http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org) and of other diocese with helpful web sites, for example <http://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education/education/primary/way-truth-life.php> which is highly recommended. Pupil activities should be planned with regard to the **Driver Words** in the Attainment Targets. This planning is monitored alongside books in the termly, planned monitoring session.

### 5c. Special Educational Needs

Our mission statement recognises the unique qualities of each child, and his or her right to an education which will enable them to reach their full potential morally, spiritually, socially, emotionally and academically.

The planning, organisation and implementation of the curriculum allows the pupils with special educational needs to follow a broad and balanced differentiated curriculum and to enjoy equality of opportunity (*Refer to the S.E.N. Policy*)

It is recognised that those pupils with learning difficulties require tasks that are

adapted to meet their ability, giving them achievable tasks.

#### **5d. Learning and Teaching Styles**

Children will be taught in a variety of styles suited to their age and ability. Each pupil will be considered as an individual and given appropriate work which enables them to fulfil their potential. Teaching and learning takes place through:

- 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' scheme
- using relevant supplementary materials and our own ideas based on the New Testament
- shared worship, prayers, assemblies, Mass, Penitential Services, Hymn Singing, Stations of the Cross, Celebrations of Sacraments
- all curriculum subjects R.E. comes into Science, Language, History, Games, Geography, and vice versa (e.g. Science etc comes into R.E.)
- our Pupil Parliament have Religion ministers who ensure that pupils' views are taken into account and they participate in scrutinies of the quality of teaching and learning of RE alongside the RE co-ordinator
- working with the parish Priest and other local clergy, whose presence and example has a great influence on our lives.
- encouraging the children to be aware of others less fortunate and to do something positive to help e.g. charity fund raising, Mini Vinnies, Faith Council
- encouraging the children to take part in groups which enhance the lives of people outside school, e.g. reading at Mass, folk group, presenting plays, singing at Care Homes, serving on the altar, taking up the gifts at Mass, Faith Council.
- Sacraments of First Communion and First Reconciliation which link home, school and parish.
- Integrating ideas and activities from Building the Kingdom which compliment school's Catholic Social Teaching activities

Any topic would develop all or some of the following skills through a variety of methods adopted by the teacher delivering R.E. These skills are a thread that runs through the whole of our creative curriculum;

- **Investigation skills** e.g. gather data from a variety of sources
- **Interpretation skills** e.g. interpret the language of religion, signs and symbols
- **Communication Skills** e.g. pupils can express themselves through factual and creative writing
- **Critical Skills** e.g. form reasoned opinions based on evidence
- **Affective and Social Skills** e.g. working in groups, exercising empathy

- **Evaluation Skills** e.g. distinguish between rules and principles, opinions and beliefs

Attitudes fostered through the topics can be associated with those gifts of the Holy Spirit, as identified in scripture and catholic tradition, as signs of growth and maturity

- **Wisdom** e.g. thirst for meaning
- **Understanding** e.g. seeking meaning and purpose in one's personal life
- **Knowledge** e.g. an openness to search for meaning
- **Right Judgement** e.g. making choices
- **Courage** e.g. a willingness to persevere with challenges of Christian living
- **Reverence** e.g. sensitivity to others, their views and beliefs
- **Awe and Wonder** e.g. respect for mystery and the gift of the imagination

## 5e. Cross Curricular Links

At St. Elizabeth's School, R.E. is an integrated core-subject which permeates all subject areas and life experiences. We believe that the WTL programme gives R.E. an academic status in line with other curricular areas and can provide starting points for the development of other subjects.

## 5f. Information Technology

We are committed to the use of ICT resources and techniques in all subject areas. We use a variety of ICT to support the teaching of RE. Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard and classes also use the laptops and iPads to complete individual work. We regularly use digital cameras and video cameras in teaching and assessing RE. We also use Social Media as a platform to engage parents and carers in children's religious education. Activities at a school, class, group and individual level can be easily captured, shared and celebrated with parents/carers/educators/governors and clergy through twitter and the school website which are both updated on a daily basis.

## 5g. Display

Displays are used to reflect the teaching and learning of the WTL programme. Each classroom has a dedicated RE display and prayer table which are used to celebrate the children's work and provide a prayer focus. We have a central board in

the hall that we use to display work from each topic and there is a collective worship board that is used as a prayer focus during assemblies.

## **6. Assessment**

Assessment establishes what the pupils know and can do. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith. A sample of three pieces of work is collected from each class representing those considered to be within the range of top, middle and lower levels, this contributes towards an Assessment Exemplar File.

In our school it involves:

### **6a. Informal assessment**

- General observation of children engaged in classroom activities and tasks. Observations of contributions made to classroom displays.
- Review at the end of a task, activity, lesson and topic e.g. discussion and questioning.
- Marking of more formal work and set assessments.

### **6b. Formal assessment**

Topics are planned with activities designed to allow children to show achievement of the Diocesan Attainment Targets – paying close attention to the DRIVER WORDS. Over the course of a year, teachers plan to visit all strands of both ATs 3 times to allow a judgement to be made as to whether the ATs have been securely achieved. The choice of level of ATs will depend on what the children have already achieved coming into the class.

In order to ensure continuous and progressive provision, the school uses Key Stage Tracking Sheets to record the AT levels the children have achieved at the end of each year. These sheets are based on the 5 column grids used in English and Maths. These sheets follow a class throughout the school and enable staff to see what level the children are judged to be at, and where they can be challenged to aim towards. The end of year target is informed by the high expectations for the standards that learners should achieve based on their current level of understanding within AT1 and AT2.

### **6c. Target setting**

Target setting is undertaken at two levels:

- Key Stage Tracking sheets are used to guide staff in challenging

children to achieve end of year targets informed by the Diocesan recommendation as to what constitutes 'high' standards. Targets are then set at Pupil Progress meetings and focus group children are identified for targeting.

- Children are guided to use 'I can statements' before and after each half term's WTL topic to encourage them to be aware of what they are supposed to be learning, and therefore to take responsibility for their own learning. These targets will be put in to books at the beginning of each topic.

## **7. Staff Roles**

### **7a. Role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher's role is to ensure the introduction, implementation and development of this scheme and to ensure that all staff and governors receive the necessary training and resources for its implementation.

### **7b. Role of the R.E. Co-ordinator**

The co-ordinator is aware of available resources, offers advice and monitors the teaching of R.E through the scrutiny of books and lesson observations. Samples of assessed work are also collected to provide an exemplar of levels of achievement throughout the whole school. The co-ordinator also takes overall responsibility for the organisation of whole school and class masses, as well as class assemblies. Funds are made available for new resources as required in response to an annual audit.

### **7c. Role of the Classroom Teacher**

The role of the classroom teacher is to teach the 'Way, Truth and the Life' scheme. They will need to plan, evaluate, record and assess the work children are doing. They are required to develop interest and enjoyment through the use of a range of teaching and learning styles. Within this it is also their responsibility to create a secure and prayerful environment and to nurture within the children a respect for one another. In years one to six the classroom teacher also has the responsibility to deliver Sex and Relationships Education through our chosen programme 'Growing and Changing' (C/f Appendix)

## **8. Staff Development**

The RE co-ordinator attends RE co-ordinator meetings within the diocese and the Wythenshawe Catholic Cluster. The Headteacher attends diocesan meetings as well as regular local Catholic cluster meetings.

As part of our staff development, every staff meeting commences with a reflection selected by individual staff on a rota basis. All INSET days also commence with a reflection. All teachers will also undertake the Lat Baylock Creative RE days and the Headteacher and RE co-ordinator will attend Building the Kingdom training and support staff in implementing ideas from this training. Staff will also be supported in this by the assistant Parish Priest, Fr. Michael Coughlan, during staff meeting planning times. Fr. Michael will also be in school fortnightly to support class teachers and pupils in their faith journey.

One day is set aside each academic year for an R.E. in-service Day. Each alternate year the school joins with a cluster of local catholic schools for an in-service day on a chosen theme.

## **9. Collective worship**

Acts of collective worship at St. Elizabeth's are celebrations involving the whole school, each key stage or individual classes taking the form of assemblies, mass and informal liturgies.

The elements of collective worship we try to incorporate in our worship are; celebration, prayer, reflection readings/stories from the Bible, gesture and symbolism of a spiritual and catholic nature. Each class has developed their own prayer box in which the children collect their own prayers, pictures and objects. Every class also has a collective worship book where they record examples of their responses and missions from collective worship sessions. Each time the class has a collective worship one child is responsible for choosing the prayers and objects that reflect the theme of the session. In addition to this we have been using the 'Gather, Word, Response & Mission' cards that were suggested by Shrewsbury Diocese to give our collective worship different focuses. We expect our children to take the lead in all of the collective worship opportunities in school by thinking of themes, writing prayers and selecting appropriate music.

(For further information please refer to the Collective Worship Policy.)

### **9a. Prayer**

Assemblies offer the opportunity for prayer, but class prayers can often be more informal and take into account individual needs of the children. Each class has its own prayer corner in which there is a copy of the school prayer book. On days when there are no assemblies children have a quiet, prayerful collective worship with their own class teacher. Grace is also said before meals and after meals and our day concludes with a home time prayer.

### **9b. Liturgy**

School masses are celebrated at significant points throughout the school and liturgical year, for example, at the beginning and end of terms and on Holy days of Obligation. They are prepared by the R.E. Co-ordinator and Headteacher.

Class masses, liturgies and penitential services occur on a termly basis throughout the year. The children's involvement is encouraged and the liturgy and music are prepared by the children and class teacher.

We are very keen to develop the good, existing school and parish links. Parents and parishioners are invited to attend all masses. Parents receive advance notification of mass dates and also receive a personal invitation to their child's class mass. After all class masses this welcome is extended further by inviting parents and parishioners back to the classroom for refreshments. We regard this as a very important part of our children's social development.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 have their own liturgies at significant points during the liturgical and school year.

## **10. Spiritual and Moral Development**

We aim to appreciate and express awe, wonder, respect and reverence in all aspects of life; to know the difference between right and wrong, and to understand the purpose of life and its rules. (For further information refer to the Spiritual and Moral Development Policy)

## **11. Education for Relationships**

The quality of relationships is fundamental to a happy and productive school life. Through our teaching of R.E. we aim to promote the principles of trust, compassion, love and respect in personal and interpersonal communication with the school and family community.

At St. Elizabeth's the scheme 'Growing and Changing' has been implemented to teach S.R.E. We have written lessons to enhance each lesson which makes explicit links to scripture.

We also use the SEAL framework to deliver lessons on the social and emotional aspects of learning. We make good quality links between the framework and the WTL scheme.

## **12. Links with Parents**

At St. Elizabeth's we strive to involve parents fully in the spiritual and academic life of the school. Parents are informed of current R.E. topics via the termly RE newsletter. At the beginning of each term parents receive a list of dates for whole school and class masses. All dates are also on the school calendar and will be available via a new school app in the autumn term 2019. The school social media account is updated daily to

send reminders to parents regarding events and to celebrate pupils' work and achievements. This is also celebrated through Thumbs Up Friday which takes place at the end of each half term and through the Peek and the Week video which can be found on the school website. They also receive an invitation to attend class masses, class assemblies and whole school celebrations. Parents are also informed of other events that may occur throughout the year for example, fund raising events during Lent.

## **13. The inter-relationship between R.E. and our school's policy for:**

### **13a. Equal Opportunities**

All pupils, regardless of ability, race, gender or social circumstances are given equal access to R.E. Our planning and classroom management takes account of these issues and reflects this policy in accordance with our 'Mission Statement'.

### **13b. Pastoral Care**

Within every catholic school, Christ's ministry should be reflected in all aspects of the school life. The ministry is threefold: affirming strengthening and healing. It is concerned with the individual needs of each person.

At St. Elizabeth's a positive approach is taken in dealing with all aspects of the child's school life. They are encouraged and rewarded for good work and behaviour.

All the children belong to houses (Barlow, Campion, Clitheroe and Ward) and receive house points for good work and good behaviour. House points are used to encourage and reward children. A whole school celebration takes place during a weekly 'Gold Award' assembly, where those children nominated will receive a Headteacher's award. We also encourage and reward children through our V.I.P table, lunchtime 'chance slips' and each week a child receives 'Let your light shine' award that is decided by the children.

We are aware that children today can often lead complex lives, and there are times when they may become troubled. A member of staff has been identified to work with children who are experiencing particular difficulties. She works with individuals and groups as the need arises.

The partnership between parents and teachers is very important where issues of discipline arise. Our aim is to foster links and create a positive partnership to help sort out and eliminate any problems. When pupils are disciplined in school we always ensure that the dignity of the individual is maintained.

## **14. Transition and Transfer**

Starting school and transferring from one school to another are both times of change that needs to be handled with understanding for both parent and child. Parents are invited to meetings prior to their child's entry into Foundation Stage and then before entry into School. Our Mission Statement, the catholic ethos of the school and the WTL scheme are presented and discussed. Transition from Foundation Stage to Year One is managed effectively and takes place from the beginning of the Summer Term and throughout the Autumn Term. We have pupil progress meetings each half term and in the summer this meeting is used to hand over all the relevant information to the new teacher. Children joining the School are invited to visit with their parents and there is Foundation Stage meeting for parents each year.

Our children go to a variety of secondary schools. We enjoy a good relationship with all of these schools and many links have been built up over the years. A representative from each of the schools is invited to come and talk to the children about transfer arrangements. The children are also invited to attend an induction visit at their new school.

## **15. Sacramental Programme**

We recognise that the School, Parish and Family are powerful influences on children growing in faith, particularly when they work in partnership. It is our aim that the families and their children show commitment towards the Sacramental programme. This is emphasised by the children's regular attendance at after school preparation classes.

Meetings are arranged for parents at the beginning of the preparation for the Sacrament of First Forgiveness and then again at the beginning of their preparation for First Holy Communion. Advice is given on how they can assist and guide their children.

Preparation for the first sacraments takes place in year three. At present we use "God's Greatest Gift" as the core preparation for the Sacramental Programme. Children are enrolled onto the programme at the Mass of Enrolment. The sacrament of First Forgiveness is celebrated with confession in school. The liturgy is prepared by the children and catechists. Families are invited to attend and to take part in the service.

## **19. Links with the Parish**

The school enjoys close links with the parish and parishioners are often invited to school to participate in events.

The school now benefits from the support of the PTA, this organisation consists of members of both the school and parish.

The school is also involved in charity events and collections e.g. CAFOD during Lent as well as others throughout the year. In this way the school demonstrates its position in the community at large.

## **20. Resources**

### **a) Staff Members**

Mrs L Kelly	Headteacher .
Mrs J McLaughlin	Deputy Headteacher
Mr C Knight	Year 6/RE co-ordinator
Mrs A Capper /Miss A During	Year 5
Miss S Prunty	Year 4
Miss S Brennan	Year 3
Miss J Dwan	Year 2
Mrs A Williams	Year 1
Mrs AM Bambrick/Mrs S John	Foundation Stage
Miss E McCrea	Foundation Stage

## **21. Evaluation of R.E. Policy**

Policy to be reviewed every two years with the whole staff. The R.E. co-ordinator will audit current situation and measure against Policy, making suggestions for discussions on improvements and developments