

ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY



"Loving, Learning and Laughter Together with God"

Article 29: "education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment."

Article 30: "Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family"

Article 14:" Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practise their religion"

Our School Mission:

"Loving, Learning and Laughter together with God"

Mission Statement:

St John's Catholic Infant School
is a welcoming, caring community
and an extension of the
home and parish.

The children experience the Gospel
message of God's loving care through
the worship, relationships and teaching
of the Catholic Church.

The curriculum is rich, broad and
balanced reflecting the distinctively
Catholic nature of the school.

We will offer *every* child - whatever their
individual characteristics -
the chance to achieve their
full potential, feel secure and
enjoy growing up.

Our Christian School Values are embedded into the heart of the school:

*"The fruits of the Holy Spirit are: Love, Peace, Faithfulness, Joy, Goodness, Gentleness, Patience,
Self-Control and Kindness" (Galatians 5, 22-23)*

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.¹
- 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.²

‘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

By the time our children leave St John’s Catholic Infant School they will have:

- Developed their personal relationship with God.
- Be aware and open to the awe and wonder of God’s world and the blessings he bestows upon us.
- Have an increased knowledge and understanding of our Catholic Faith.
- Have developed a sense of their own spirituality.
- Have an awareness of our faith community and their role in it.
- Have an understanding of social justice and individual and collective responsibility.
- Have developed an understanding of the importance of love and compassion to others.
- Have an awareness and respect for other faiths and beliefs.
- Have been part of the many celebrations of our Liturgical year.
- Have an understanding of the uniqueness of each person whilst also knowing that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God.

The Religious Education Curriculum:

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

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, Truth and the Life* programme is used in school 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.

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, para. 4, Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 2000

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

However, attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential.³

'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.'⁴

Teaching and Learning

Our teaching and learning of Religious Education at St John's Catholic Infant School is based on a fundamental respect for children and their capacity to investigate, test and maintain curiosity, and to find and appreciate the awe and wonder of God's World. We believe in children's right to play; the right to access outdoors; the right to reflect on their humanity and their place in the world; the right to access risk and the vibrant reality of the world; the right to experience a healthy range of emotions through their interaction with others and their exploration of their place in the world and their faith, and in doing so, to build a sense of God, a sense of self and a lifelong resilience that will enable continued and creative engagement with their Faith, their peers and their potential.

We believe that learning is a lifelong process and that we all learn new things every day in different ways. Learning should be an exciting, rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; and, above all, learning should be life changing.

We aim to teach through:

- Encouraging reflection and prayer
- Discussion and questioning
- Through music, art, role-play and practical activities
- Direct instruction
- Using artefacts and ICT
- Making visits to the church readily available
- Reinforcing knowledge and understanding of the sacraments covered in the "Way, Truth and the Life" programme
- Example and allowing our beliefs and values to govern our relationships with others.

Planning

Planning is adapted and personalised from the "Way, Truth and Life" scheme of work. It runs on a yearly cycle.

Assessment

Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by Bishops' Conference. Assessment is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes developed through the exploration of themes and learning outcomes for each unit of study. Assessment establishes what the children know, understand and can do, through observations and tasks.

Formative assessment and children's self-assessment is on-going and linked to Assessment for Learning, and formal summative assessment takes place at the end of topics. The programmes of study are based upon AT1 – Learning about Religion and AT2 – Learning from Religion.

Marking

Marking is carried out regularly in line with our Marking Policy and is appropriate to the child development and their understanding.

³ *The Way, the Truth & the Life, Teacher Book 4, 7, CTS, 2004*

⁴ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, p. 11*

Monitoring

RE is monitored in a variety of ways:

- Work scrutiny
- Sampling Planning
- Lesson observations
- Questionnaires
- Learning Walks
- Work Moderation (including with the Junior School)
- Pupil voice

Monitoring is undertaken by the Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team, RE Leader, Teachers and strategically monitored by the Governors. There is a named member of the Governing body for RE.

Reporting

Formal reports to parents are given in the form of a written record of achievement at the end of each academic year and during termly parent consultation meetings.

Home Learning

Parents are informed in the half termly RE newsletter about what will be taught in RE for that half term and RE home learning is regularly undertaken and encouraged.

Links with School, Home and Parish

Parents are invited to take part in a wide range of events and celebrations of our faith throughout the year.

The school enjoys close links with St John's Church and St Luke's Parish; the priests regularly attend Masses, assemblies and Liturgies and the children make regular visits to the church.

Inclusion

Children with Special Educational Needs, those that require extra support to achieve national targets and those with exceptional ability, are identified through assessment and tracking.

Individual Education Plans, the use of appropriate resources and Teaching Assistants, will support children who are not achieving set targets. Appropriate resources will be made available to support the more able.

Other Faiths

At St John's catholic Infant School children learn about other faiths and cultures through our RE and PSHE. We celebrate significant festivals from other faiths and cultures across the year e.g. Diwali, Hanukah, through theme days/weeks, focused assemblies and curriculum topics.

The Role of the Subject Leader

It is the subject leader's responsibility to ensure:

- Development, monitoring and evaluation of whole school policy.
- Colleagues are supported in the teaching of Religious Education.
- Continued professional development is available for all colleagues of all faiths.
- Appropriate systems are in place for the assessment of RE.
- The school is aware of developments, through establishing links with fellow RE subject leaders throughout the diocese.
- Resources are developed and maintained.
- Smooth organisation of the programme for Collective Acts of Worship, including assemblies, prayer services and Masses.
- To liaise with the Governing Body regarding the developments in RE.

The Role of the Governors

- To liaise with the subject leader.
- To monitor the policy, provision and standards for Religious Education,

The Role of the Class Teacher

- To ensure planning is in place at the start of each topic, complete agreed assessments every term and mark children's work giving appropriate, developmental feedback.
- To take part in the regular monitoring of learning.
- To differentiate teaching/learning as is appropriate.
- To take responsibility for proper respectful use of religious resources and artefacts.
- To take initiative in regards to their CPD in this area of the curriculum.

Involvement of Parents

Our school recognises parents as the first educators of their children and sees the involvement of the school as beginning an on-going partnership with parents. Parents have access to the RE policy. They are made to feel that they have an important part to play in teaching their children about the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Faith as well helping their children to develop a personal faith.

The Role of the Head teacher

- To lead all aspects of RE in the school.
- To ensure there is a full and rich timetable of faith events.
- To ensure that RE has a key place in the overall vision, and daily practises of the school.
- To lead staff in developing the RE curriculum.
- To ensure that all staff are appropriately trained in all aspects of teaching RE.

Linked Policies

Collective Worship Policy

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

Policy review.

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed every 3 years.

Agreed by Governors on: 21 November 2018	Reviewed due: Autumn 2020
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