

## **Religious Education Policy**

### ***Our Vision of Catholic Education***

“Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject amongst many but the foundations of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life.”

(Bishop’s conference of England and Wales 1988)

### ***Aims and Objectives of our Religious Education Programme***

Curriculum religious education aims to promote:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and life.
- Knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origins and purpose.
- The skills required to engage in the examination of the reflection upon religious belief and practice.

The objectives of curriculum religious education in Catholic schools are:

- To develop knowledge and understanding of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold;
- To develop awareness and appreciation of Catholic belief, understanding of its impact on personal and social behaviour and of the vital relationship between faith and life, life and faith;
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection by the pupils;
- To develop appropriate skills: e.g. ability to listen; to think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically; to acquire knowledge and organise it effectively; to make informed judgements;
- To foster appropriate attitudes: e.g. respect for truth; respect for the views of others; awareness of the spiritual, of moral responsibility, of the demands of living in a multicultural, multi-faith society.

### **Our Religious Education Programme**

We follow the ‘COME AND SEE’ programme, as prescribed by the diocese. The scheme is used to provide a child centred experience of God’s love for each one of us, and of our growing choices and responsibilities in responding to His love.

Appropriate to the age and development of the children, they are given opportunities to:

- Learn about religion and to learn from religion, that is, they have access to a structured and developmental knowledge of the content of the faith in terms of their experience and physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development;
- Celebrate, pray and reflect in implicit and explicit ways;
- Develop knowledge of religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, peoples and objects;
- Develop an understanding of the history of Christianity, its message and way of life;
- Develop an awareness and understanding of personal, social and moral attitudes and responsibilities

The whole school explores each religious theme through the same topic following a yearly cycle. Other faiths are included in our planning as recommended in 'COME AND SEE'.

### ***Time Allocation***

The time allocated for Religious Education is 10% of the total curriculum time. This does not include collective worship times or hymn practices.

### ***Assessment***

Marking pupils' work will be approached positively and constructively so that it affirms and celebrates success and encourages future learning.

Assessment is made at the end of each topic as appropriate to the children's age and ability. Good assessment strategies will be rooted in effective planning.

Assessments are based on the "Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools and Colleges".

### ***The RE Co-ordinator***

- Will keep up to date with developments within the 'COME AND SEE' scheme and feed back to staff.
- Will attend appropriate in-service courses.
- Will monitor the quality of teaching and learning in RE.
- Will monitor the agreed assessment of and record keeping for RE.
- Will manage the purchase and deployment of resources.
- Will work with colleagues in the development of class and school celebrations, assemblies and masses.

### ***Role of Class Teacher***

- To undertake to use the 'COME AND SEE' scheme as the main part of their religious teaching.
- To actively promote the life of the school within the Vision Statement.
- To ensure that there is an area in the classroom which acts as a focal point for prayer and worship.
- To have an appointed display area for religious work.
- To ensure that there are opportunities for collective worship to be undertaken within the class.

### ***Worship***

#### ***The nature of Collective Worship***

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, thanks and praise to God.

#### ***Aims of Collective Worship***

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff to:

- contemplate the mystery of God
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs
- respond to and celebrate life
- experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- develop a common ethos and shared values
- enrich their religious experience
- grow in liturgical understanding
- reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- reinforce positive attitudes

### **Arrangements for Collective Worship**

Collective worship takes place daily in each class. Teachers are responsible for developing the prayer life of pupils whilst in their class. Pupils say prayers at the beginning and end of each day and before and after meals. Whole school assemblies are held three times a week. Each class teacher will work with their pupils to prepare a class assembly.

Mass is celebrated with the Catholic pupils on special feasts in the local church.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We regard it as a special time and expect the children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully and to participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, candles or other objects to focus the attention of the children.

Our aim is that children be exposed to the full spectrum of prayer experience, which can take many forms – traditional, scriptural, liturgical and creative prayer. These forms of prayer may be expressed in many ways: stillness, listening, reflection, dialogue, music, drama, song or dance.

We aim to make prayer, worship and liturgy real spiritual and educational experiences in order to contribute to the development of faith of each individual in the school community.

*(October 2017 - to be reviewed October 2020)*