



## Religious Education Policy

### Our Vision Statement

The values that Christ taught us underpin everything that we do.

### Our Mission Statement

The core of our Mission Statement is:

*Growing Together, Learning Together, Achieving Together in Christ*

This reflects the ambition and vision we have for enabling all of our children to achieve their very best through collaboration and mutual support within the Catholic context. We are a worshipping community, valuing prayer and praise, and enjoying close links with the parish of the Sacred Heart and St Francis in Frinton. Through our mission, and by working with the families in our school, we develop appropriate values and morals to prepare our pupils not just for the next stage of their academic careers, but for life.

### Rationale of Religious Education

Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church.

*'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'*<sup>1</sup>

Religious Education is 'the core of the core curriculum.'

*'Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school..... All pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.'*<sup>1</sup>

Religious Education is the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ and is a rigorous academic subject in its own right.

*'Religious Education is regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines.'*<sup>2</sup> As such, it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

*'Excellence in religious education, then, will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material.'*<sup>3</sup>

The outcome of Classroom 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>4</sup>

Whilst evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils, the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

### **The Aims of Religious Education as stated in the RE Curriculum Directory are:**

- 'To present engagingly a comprehensive content which 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.
- 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>5</sup>

### **Curriculum Time Allocation**

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 four areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, (Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ) the 'Come and See' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese.

### **Process**

Religious Education is taught through the process of *Explore, Reveal, and Respond*. This follows the pattern of: the human **search** for meaning, God's initiative in **Revelation** and the **response** in faith. This pattern is outlined both in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the Curriculum Directory.

As the Directory states:

*'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>6</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.

### **Inclusion**

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

### **Other Religions**

Two other religions are taught from EYFS to Year 6 following the programme of study in 'Come and See'. These are Judaism and Hinduism. At least one week's teaching and learning time per year is given to each.

### **Education in Personal Relationships**

We teach education in personal relationships and sex education through the Brentwood Diocese programme called 'A Journey in Love'. Parents and carers are consulted as to the content and delivery of this programme. We follow the Diocesan policy on Sex and Relationships in the Primary school.

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

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE 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 three samples of work from each teacher for the Diocesan agreed task each term, covering a range of abilities.
- An in-house moderation meeting is held every term.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning includes work scrutiny as well as monitoring of displays and prayer foci.
- Pupils are graded at the end of each term and this information is used to ensure progress and achievement is recorded and tracked.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a Progress Report in the Spring Term and a full written report at the end of the Summer Term.

### **Management of the Subject**

The Headteacher takes responsible for coordinating the RE curriculum at St Philomena's. The coordinator is expected:

- To be responsible to colleagues for the monitoring of teaching, assessment and planning of Religious Education based on the development of the children at each stage. Monitoring occurs in order to support staff and should include classroom observation, book scrutiny, planning and discussion with pupils.
- To manage resources and facilities for Religious Education.
- To liaise with the Diocesan Department for Education particularly through attendance at the Co-ordinators' meetings, and inform colleagues of current standards and developments within Religious Education.
- To attend appropriate In-service training for Religious Education, keep up-to-date with current developments and feed these developments back to staff.
- To advise individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the Religious Education process and teaching methods.
- To set up and maintain a portfolio of work in order to monitor progression and continuity. Samples of work should reflect the appropriate Attainment target strands and levels.
- To track data and use this, in consultation with colleagues, to set realistic targets in RE.
- To ensure that cross-curricular concerns such as literacy skills, multi-cultural issues, equal opportunity, the use of Information Technology and PHSE are reflected in Religious Education.
- To maintain a Subject Leader's file containing:
  - The Religious Education Policy and Guidelines
  - Medium term plans which represent schemes of work in school.
  - Assessment and monitoring procedures for teaching and learning and evidence of that monitoring.
  - Data and current targets in RE.
- To be familiar with the current inspection framework and complete the school's SEF 48 document.
- To keep up to date with any changes to the Areas of Study (Religious Education Curriculum Directory).

## **Collective Worship**

Christian worship in a Catholic school is an integral part of our school life and our worship will be directed at responding to God as present in all aspects of life. It is our loving response in word and action to God's invitation to enter into relationship with him, made possible through the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

### **Purpose**

- To provide opportunities to celebrate through liturgy, sacrament, ritual, symbol and prayer the liturgical season and special feasts.
- To celebrate in worship the common themes in curriculum Religious Education.
- To stimulate spiritual growth and to promote reflection on moral and social issues.
- To enable children to identify with the whole school or group and to experience being part of a worshipping community whether through active involvement in presentation or responding to the worship experience.
- To enable the school community to celebrate, to give thanks, to wonder, to acknowledge success, applaud achievement and to respond to loss and difficulties.
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.
- To incorporate the various cultures which are present in our school community and be sensitive to the perspective of those of other faith traditions.
- To fulfil the legal requirement of daily act of worship for all pupils.

### **Conclusion**

We believe that all pupils are unique and that whatever their backgrounds or stage in faith development, each one should have the opportunity through prayer to develop a personal relationship with God and thus to live out the Gospel in their daily lives.

## **References**

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- <sup>1</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4
- <sup>2</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3
- <sup>3</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7
- <sup>4</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6
- <sup>5</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6
- <sup>6</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.7