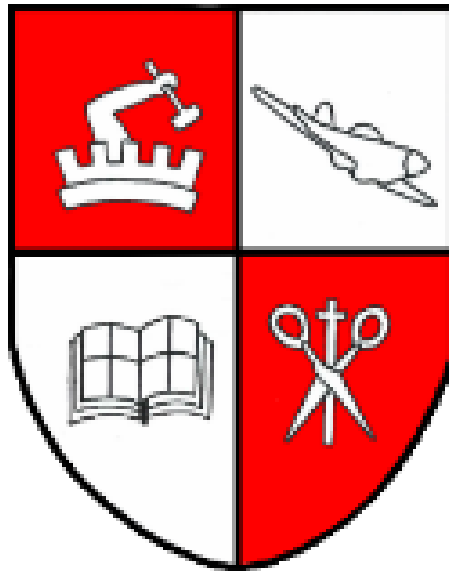


# St Gerard's Catholic Primary School



## Religious Education Policy 2023-2025

*“With Christ at our side, and St Gerard as our guide,  
we live love, learn and pray together.”*

Reviewed: November 2023

## **Mission Statement**

*'With Christ at our side and St. Gerard as our guide we live, love, learn and pray together.'*

Our Mission Statement emphasises our intention that RE is the 'core of the core curriculum.' (Pope Saint John Paul II.) We aim to fulfil the mission of the Catholic Church and help everyone in our community to begin to recognise their vocation: the person that God intends them to be. We do this through providing children with a wide range of opportunities and experiences to enable them to use and develop their God given gifts and talents as well as providing them with the knowledge and cultural capital that will prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

## **Aims of Religious Education**

Religious Education is regarded with the highest priority in our school. Whilst having specific lesson times it, it underpins the foundation of every subject and extends into the daily life and routines of the school. Through teaching, example, worship and shared Christian values we are helping to foster, in partnership with the family and parish, a living and personal faith in the children.

We aim to nurture 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.

Religious Education in our school should:

- Nurture children's faith
- Promote their understanding and appreciation of Catholic Social Teaching
- Develop their involvement with the Church Community
- Develop their ability to show care for others
- Foster children's religious, spiritual and moral development
- Develop the skills required to be able to examine and reflect on religious belief and practice, including those from other faiths and cultures
- Enable children to develop their mortal qualities harmoniously, in order for them to become responsible and caring members of society
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder

## **Entitlement & Provision**

RE is a core subject and is allocated 10% of Curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The 10% relates to 'curriculum time', which is the time allocated for the taught curriculum of Religious Education. This 10% must be provided each and every week of the school year. It does not include time committed to activities such as assemblies, Songs of Praise, RSHE, preparation and attendance at Mass. Each class will take part in two explicit RE lessons per week. RE is not taught in a single block. 10 % of curriculum time is equivalent to 2 hours 30 minutes for children in EYFS and Y1, and 2 hours 38 minutes for children in Y2-6. In EYFS RE is taught as a discrete subject and is not subsumed into the rest of the curriculum.

## **The Scheme of Work for RE**

St Gerard's follows the Diocesan strategy for Religious Education 'Learning and Growing as the People of God'. The strategy covers the following four areas:

1. Revelation: teaching about God's self-revelation
2. Church: about the Communion of life in Christ
3. Celebration: about living the Christian Mystery in worship and prayer
4. Life in Christ: about the search for holiness and truth

We celebrate Saint Gerard's feast day each year with a Whole School Mass and work is completed to ensure the children have a deeper understanding about his life and understand how St Gerard can 'be our guide,' as stated in our School Mission. Each class has a Class Saint; additional work is completed around this Saint and their feast day is celebrated within the class. Other RE lessons additional to the strategy may be taught based upon significant feast days, seasons, and the Catholic School Pupil Profile.

## **Sacramental Education**

The preparation for the Sacraments of Confession, Communion and Confirmation emphasises the co-operation between the school, home and parish. All of these have their part to play in the child's Sacramental development.

- Each year Catholic children in Year 3 are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Y3 class follows a programme using the 'Learning and Growing as the People of God.'
- Each year Catholic children in Year 6 are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Y6 class follow a programme using the 'Learning and Growing as the People of God.'

Parents are invited to attend meetings and workshops during the preparation period. This is to ensure that they are fully informed and to enable the Parish Priest, teachers and parents to share knowledge, experience and faith together appropriate to the Sacramental experience of their children and their own lives.

During the preparation for the Sacraments received in Y3 and Y6, a series of Commitment Masses are held in St. Gerard's Church on a Sunday morning in the months leading up to the children receiving the Sacraments. This ensures that the children and their families recognise the importance of the journey of faith that their children are undertaking.

Children in both Y3 and Y6 take part in a 'virtual retreat' as part of their preparation. As well as this, Y6 visit St Chad's Cathedral.

## **Other Faiths and Religions**

Every year we hold a World Faith Week, where the children learn about different faiths and religious festivals from around the world. Each year group is allocated a particular religion that they will study, including either a visit to a place of worship or a visit from an external speaker.

- EYFS: Catholicism
- Year 1: Christianity
- Year 2: Buddhism
- Year 3: Hinduism
- Year 4: Judaism
- Year 5: Islam
- Year 6: Sikhism

## **The Catholic Curriculum**

Through teaching RE in our school, opportunities for spiritual development are integrated into the whole process, e.g. daily prayer, reflection, etc. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life and our eternal destiny. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions in the light of the teachings of Christ and of the Church. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in doing so, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Children are given the opportunity to develop an understanding of vocation. Children are taught that they are each in turn called by God and are taught to recognise that God has created each person with gifts and talents oriented toward specific purposes and a way of life. An annual Vocations Week is planned in whereby children have the opportunity to learn about the vocations of different people within our community as well as considering who God is calling them to be. We endeavour for a number of visitors, including priests, nuns, police officers, nurses, paramedics, politicians and charity workers to speak with the children about their vocation.

To develop the children's spiritual, moral, vocational, social and cultural development, we have adopted the Catholic School's Pupil Profile (CSPP), which aims to promote Gospel Values and Virtues, thus underpinning the whole of the Catholic life of the school. Each half term, the Diocese selects two Gospel Virtues from the CSPP, as a focus for prayer. The children are encouraged to share ways in which they can live out the Values and Virtues and write prayers to display on their 'Gospel Virtues tree' which each classroom has within their prayer area. Children who actively display these Virtues and Values are then celebrated in our fortnightly 'Gifts from God' assembly and a postcard from the Headteacher is sent home.

A separate policy has been adopted to support Relationships Health and Sex Education RHSE.

## **Planning**

### ○ **Long-term Planning**

At the start of every academic year, a long term plan is created, indicating which units are to be taught, when and for how long. This is the responsibility of the RE Subject Leader. A template is provided by the Diocesan Education Service each year.

### ○ **Medium and short-term Planning**

We have adopted a detailed medium term planning format which combines the medium and short-term together and is the responsibility of the Class Teacher. It is completed on a unit

by unit basis according to the long-term plan. All elements of the short-term plan are included in this. Planning is kept electronically on the Shared Drive, in year group planning folders.

## **Equal Opportunities & SEND**

The individual needs of children will be considered to ensure all children, irrespective of gender, needs or cultural background will be given equal opportunities to achieve success.

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 stretching the most able and gifted and talented children.

## **Marking & Feedback, Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

### ○ **Marking & Feedback**

All children's work is marked in accordance with the School's Marking Policy. Written and verbal feedback should be given in relation to the RE Learning Outcomes and is intended to give guidance to the children about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve and extend their learning. Marking and feedback is often linked to the skills identified in the Age Related Standards.

Through their marking, teachers give children 'Extension Questions,' which will direct their thinking further. These questions are linked to the Age Related Strands and are usually geared towards 'Engagement and Response' (AT2) or Analysis and Evaluation (AT3) skills. Opportunities are then given within RE lessons for the children to go back over previous work so that they can reflect upon it and respond to particular questions raised by the teacher.

### ○ **End of Unit Assessments:**

The Monitoring and Assessment Focus follows a four year rolling programme, set by the Diocesan Education Service on the following themes:

- The Liturgical Year;
- Scripture;
- The Sacraments;
- Living as Christians.

End of Unit assessments are carried out by Class Teachers three times a year as identified in the Assessment schedule and on the Long-term plan. Assessments are recorded on the Excel document, found in the Shared drive, Assessment folder, and are monitored by the RE Subject Lead.

### ○ **Age Related Standards:**

Three focus children are selected for each class. Class Teachers assess pieces of work throughout the year against the Diocesan Age Related Standards for the relevant phase using the appropriate Diocesan template. Evidence of the Age Related Standards is kept by keeping samples of books. Opportunities are provided through dedicated staff INSET to moderate samples of work, and at the end of the academic year, an overall assessment judgment is made for each of the focus children.

- **Reporting to parents:**

Each child's progress in RE is reported to parents during parental consultations in both the Autumn and Spring terms, as well as in the form of an end of year report to parents.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- RE is moderated through regular book trawls, planning scrutinies and learning walks, carried out by the RE Subject Lead and members of the SLT.
- Each Class Teacher has copies of the relevant assessment proformas, which are monitored by the RE Subject Lead.
- The RE Subject Lead has management time to implement monitoring strategies; lesson observations, book trawls, teacher planning, display monitoring, learning walks and staff and pupil voice.
- Regular staff meetings allow feedback, moderation and discussions to be held.
- The RE Subject Lead monitors the availability of Professional Development and informs the relevant teachers.
- Assessments are monitored and a comprehensive data analysis reported is created at the end the academic year and is shared with staff and Governors.

## **Resources**

Staff and children alike have easy access to a wider selection of resources including a copy of the Diocesan strategy 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' appropriate to their year group. The School Library has a good supply of RE books and computer software to support the children's individual learning. There are Bibles for both Key Stages and a collection of prayer books, posters, crucifixes, rosary beads and other religious symbols and artefacts, which are used to support and enrich teaching in RE. Our resources are continually reviewed and updated.

## **RE Displays**

In order to highlight the importance of Religious Education and the Catholic ethos of the school, displays of a religious nature should be evident in each classroom throughout the year. Similarly such displays should be encouraged in corridors, and at appropriate times of the year, in the school entrance.

An RE / Prayer focus area forms an essential part of the classroom. This area should have the appropriate liturgical colour, a crucifix and a candle. Statues, artefacts and posters should be prominently displayed whenever possible and changed on a regular basis. Prayer areas are regularly monitored by the RE Subject Lead and the GIFT Team.

## **Links with Parents and the Parish**

Many opportunities arise to strengthen the partnership between the school, parents and parish:

- Invites are sent home for Whole School Masses. These are also advertised in the School newsletters and Parish bulletins

- Annual celebrations: Induction, Harvest and Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Thanksgiving Mass
- Sacraments of First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation
- Class-led Assemblies
- Involvement of parents as volunteers: supporting in the classroom, on trips, Christmas Fair, etc.
- School newsletters and website keeps parents informed and up to date with school matters
- Proactive partnership with health visitors, school nurse, Family Support Worker, education welfare officer, social services and police to support pupils and their families
- Mini-Vinnies have an active involvement in the community, e.g. litter picking, visiting the Residential Home, etc.
- Children in Y4, 5, 6 are trained as Altar Servers, serving in School and Parish Masses.
- Each class has a Prayer bags which are sent home weekly.
- Parents are invited to work with their child and participate in workshops throughout the year.
- Throughout the year, we offer 'Stay and Pray' sessions, where parents and families are invited to pray with their children in class.
- Children write prayers for sick Parishioners, which are given to Fr Mathew to be shared when administering Sacrament of the Sick.

### **The Role of the Religious Education Subject Lead**

- The RE Subject Lead leads the staff in developing their teaching of RE by example through good practice; by support and advice offered at staff meetings and in informal conversations; by ensuring that the resources needed are available to staff and children; suggesting cross curricular links; involving staff in-service with regard to planning, record keeping and assessment.
- The RE Subject Lead, with the support of staff, develops and extends the Catholic Ethos of the school in relation to Prayer and Liturgy, Scripture, Assemblies, CST, the Mission Statement and the general life of the school.
- The RE Subject Lead plays a significant role in strengthening the links between Home, School and Parish and endeavouring to build up a truly Christian Community united in the love of God and the teachings of Christ.
- The RE Subject Lead encourages the involvement of Parents, Governors, Staff and Parish Community in the preparation of children for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- Together with other members of staff, the RE Subject Leader organises displays and opportunities to celebrate children's achievements in RE.
- The RE Subject Lead organises the GIFT Team, a selection of children across KS2 who have particular roles within school, to carry out monitoring of liturgical areas throughout the school, leading lunchtime prayer groups, e.g. praying the Rosary during the months of October and May.

- The RE Subject Lead trains and supports new members of staff on how to deliver the RE Curriculum.
- The RE Subject Lead monitors and evaluates assessment and progress.

### **Link Governor**

The Governors play an active and integral part to the life of our School. Father Mathew is the School's RE Link Governor. The RE Subject Leader meets at least termly with the RE Link Governor to discuss the subject. In these meetings, they are informed of any changes, new initiatives, assessment and are also a part of the moderation process.

**Policy reviewed by:** Mrs Laura Jones (RE Subject Lead)

**Date:** November 2023

**Policy review date:** November 2025