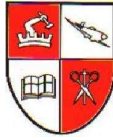


St Gerard's Catholic Primary School



Religious Education & Collective Worship Policy 2020-2022

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



St Gerard's Catholic Primary School Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship Policy

Mission Statement

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

Religious Education Curriculum Intent

The RE Curriculum will:

- seek to help each person to live and grow in community in a way that reflects human dignity and purpose;
- make a significant contribution to the child's self-understanding as a human being, capable of responding in integrity and freedom to the invitation of God and the challenges of life;
- promote a gradual opening of mind and heart in the search for truth about God, respect for people of other faiths and none and a willingness to recognise goodness wherever it exists.

The RE programme will provide a comprehensive and systematic study of Christianity so that the children and young people will be enabled to:

- grow in knowledge of and openness to the mystery of God;
- become familiar with the person, life and teachings of Jesus, who as Saviour and Lord reveals both the Face of God and the fullness of what it means to be human;
- grow in experience, knowledge and understanding of the Church, her life and teachings, her significance in the world today, and her concerns for peace and justice; prepare for, participate in and appreciate Personal and Liturgical Prayer and Worship;
- develop a moral and ethical awareness as they reflect on the human condition and on their own lives and the lives of others in the light of the Christian message;
- avail of opportunities to foster their spiritual development;

Through sound teaching, which reflects children's and young people's capacity for learning and growing, the Catholic School's Religious Education will:

- be informed by a range of teaching styles and a whole variety of ways in which children learn, and will enable teachers to select from or devise appropriate learning experiences;
- affirm all pupils' value and worth, build on their own experiences of living relationships and contribute to the development of positive Self-esteem;
- provide opportunities for pupils to recognise, appreciate and develop their own talents and skills;

- promote the development of independence and autonomy in children and young people so that they are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own learning and are enabled to make ever more full and informed responses and choices in relation to God, Faith and service of others.

Implementation

To fulfill our aims and objectives we use the Diocesan Scheme of Work, 'Learning and Growing as the People of God,' the Diocesan Curriculum Mapping for RE, and the Diocesan Levels of Attainment in RE. We also incorporate materials from a variety of other sources and programmes.

The programme is followed throughout the school from Nursery through to Year 6. It provides the core of the spiritual and doctrinal teaching of the Church. It is tightly structured and carefully balanced, drawing on Guidelines on Religious Education from the Bishops Conference 2000 and other recent research into the development of religious and moral judgements. It is based on the proven educational principle of reinforcement, evident at each teaching level. The content and teaching methods take into consideration the children's age and capacity to learn, the doctrine throughout stressing the central truths of the Catholic Faith.

In EYFS and Key Stage 1, the programme commences by aiming to develop self-awareness leading the child, through his/her experiences and environment to God our Loving Father. As the child moves to Key Stage 2, that self-awareness is developed into an awareness of others and the community in which the child lives. Involvement in the Parish community is emphasised.

Towards the end of the Primary School, this same awareness of being a responsible member of the Community of God - the Church - encapsulates a more living and personal Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It promotes an appreciation of human dignity and the acquisition of values such as truth, beauty, justice and love. It fosters respect for other traditions, values and beliefs within the context of mutual understanding. It raises pupils' awareness of the Gospel values of justice in economic, political, cultural, racial and religious systems. It raises an awareness of God's presence in all of his creation.

This programme incorporates clear guidelines on how to communicate the doctrine outlined in the text. It suggests activities, provides teaching on how to pray, lead penitential services etc. and enables the teacher to approach the main feasts of the Church with meaning and joy. It also gives specific preparation programmes for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. This programme ensures continuity and progression.

Process

The process for delivering the RE programme is clearly expressed in the long and medium term planning. The long-term plan is the responsibility of the RE Subject Leader, indicating which units are to be taught, when and for how long. This plan is reviewed annually. We have adopted a detailed medium term planning format which combines the medium and short-term together. This planning is the responsibility of the Class Teacher and should be completed on a unit by unit basis according to the long-term plan using the Diocesan planning template. This process enables the development of knowledge, understanding of religion and reflection on meaning. Planning is regularly monitored by the RE Subject Leader and is stored on the School's shared drive in the planning folder.

RE is allocated 10% of Curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Each class will take part in two explicit RE lessons per week. RE is not taught either in a single block or in daily half-hour sessions. Prayer, Assemblies, Christmas Plays, Circle Time, PHSE, Citizenship and 'Songs of Praise' are

not to be included in this 10% Curriculum time, however Mass, 'may be considered the equivalent of half-an-hour of RE, but only once in any week.' (*Communicating Christ*).

RE is also taught in a cross-curricular way in addition to explicit subject teaching. When a thematic approach is adopted, RE is effectively brought into other areas of the curriculum, including: Science, Art and Computing.

The Programmes of Study offer a firm framework for teachers but also gives opportunities for discussion of various ways of presenting the units of work in the manner most suited to each class. Staff endeavour to ensure that all children have equal access to the RE Curriculum and plan so that the activities are differentiated to meet the needs of the individual children. The teaching of RE takes place in the classroom through a selection of differentiated activities including storytelling, role-play, painting, discussion, reading and independent research.

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. Each class has a Class Saint; additional work as well as a classroom display is completed around this Saint and their feast day is celebrated within the class.

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Vocational and Cultural Development

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 understating 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.

A separate policy has been adopted to support Relationships and Sexual Education (RSE).

Record Keeping, Assessment and Evaluation

Recording of children's work takes many forms – photographic, recorded, pictorial, written, wall displays, assemblies, etc. Wall displays can be seen in each classroom around the focus of the liturgical year and centered on the prayer area. Display themes in the School Hall correspond either to the Liturgical Cycle or represent the work done across the school.

Nursery children compile their work in individual 'Wonderful Work' folders and record whole class evidence in the Catholic Life 'big book.' Children in Reception to Year 6 record their work in an RE exercise book throughout the year. Each class records any additional evidence in their 'Catholic Life and Collective Worship folder,' displayed in their prayer area.

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 Focus Mark Questions (FMQs) which will direct their thinking further. 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.

Both Nursery and Reception children are assessed on entry using the Diocesan Baseline Assessment. This assessment is then repeated in the Summer Term in order to show progress made throughout the year. Children are assessed on the Levels of Attainment in RE each term. The Monitoring and Assessment Focus follows a four year rolling programme, (The Liturgical Year, Scripture, The Sacraments or Living as Christians including Prayer). The Diocese will select the strand of RE for monitoring and assessment for all schools to follow. Teachers of RE are provided with a schedule of which three end of unit assessments are to be completed during the year. Teachers of RE should complete the end of unit assessment sheets (Excel Record Sheets) for each child in their class. Evidence of standards is kept by retaining RE exercise books (1 per band) for each class, which are regularly monitored and moderated by the RE Subject Leader.

A focus child is selected for each class. Class Teachers assess pieces of work throughout the year (at least one piece per unit) against the Age Related Standards (National) 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 meeting times 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.

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.

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, these are centrally stored in the RE Resource area, to augment those in the classrooms. 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 we use to enrich teaching in RE.

Our resources are continually reviewed and updated.

We recognise that people are our greatest resource and that teachers 'take the place of Christ,' in relation to the children's education in the Catholic Faith. Therefore, we work to promote respect, love, understanding, compassion, kindness, dedication and personal growth. St. Gerard's has at least one retreat day each year for the whole staff. It is in these that we are able to renew our vocation and strengthen our own Faith.

Sacramental Preparation

The Sacraments are a celebration of the presence of Christ permeating every moment of our lives. Growing in understanding of the Sacraments is a complex interaction of a variety of experiences and celebrations in which the children take part during the years they spend in school.

In the preparation programmes for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation parents have a very vital and important role in supporting their children. We aim to enable parents, our Parish Priest and teachers to work closely in unison. 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. Parishioners support the preparation through prayer, support and

interest. Parents are asked to take their children to Mass on Sunday and those who do not do so are continually encouraged to begin again.

Year 3 is the first year when children follow a more specific course of instruction in preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Parents are asked to take part in the preparation alongside their children.

Year 6 are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Parents are again involved in the preparation. During this time, meetings are held in the School to inform the parents of the process of preparation and to enable them to give more help and support to their children.

During the preparation for the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation, 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.

Prayer and Collective Worship

The prayer life of the school is a gift of the Holy Spirit who lives in each baptised person. Therefore, education in ways of praying is an intrinsic aspect of the religious formation of children. In order to achieve this aim, our children are guided to explore meditation, reflection on the Word of God, listening to music, formal prayer, etc. Individual, as well as group ways of praying are experienced in formal and informal settings.

Each day begins and ends with a meaningful and appropriate time of prayer and prayer is always said before and after lunchtime. Each classroom has a focal point for prayer decorated with children's work and religious artefacts. It is the Class Teacher's responsibility to change these prayer areas to reflect the liturgical season.

Each class takes time during the week for more personalised prayer. In Upper KS2 children use 'Pray As You Go,' a daily Ignation prayer session, which enables the children and staff to grow a closer relationship with God and to be aware of His presence in their lives. They are encouraged to reflect on the Word of God at the end of this prayer session, by recording in their individual prayer books.

Collective Worship is a gathering of all or some of the school community, which aims to foster the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all those present. Prayer and Collective Worship will take place in the form of a Whole School Assembly in the School Hall on Mondays, led by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

Whole School Masses are celebrated every Friday. Each class takes it in turn to lead the Mass, preparing the readings, prayers of intercession, offertory and hymns. Once a year, each class will have the opportunity to celebrate Mass more intimately in their classroom.

Whole School Masses are also held on Holy days of Obligation and at other significant times of the year such as St. Gerard's Feast Day and Year 6 Leavers'. Parents, Parishioners and Governors are invited to take part in all School Masses.

We encourage the children to prepare and lead in acts of worship. The Spiritual Council lead groups of children in prayer at significant times in the liturgical year, e.g. when praying the Rosary in October.

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 an end of term assembly for the whole school.

School and Community

Parents and Parishioners are invited to participate in School Masses and Assemblies.

We try to develop in the children a sense of care and concern towards other people in the community. We do this by involving the children in charity fundraising events throughout the year, including our Sponsored Lenten events, the Father Hudson's Appeal and the Rwanda Appeal.

Through these and other activities, the children become aware of the needs of other people both near and far and develop sensitivity, generosity and a sense of responsibility towards their neighbours.

The Role of the RE Subject Leader

The RE Subject Leader 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 Leader, with the support of staff develops and extends the Catholic Ethos of the school in relation to Worship, Prayer, Scripture, Assemblies, the Mission Statement and the general life of the school.

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 Leader plays a significant role.

To encourage 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.

To organise the Spiritual Council, 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.

To deliver training to new members of staff on how to deliver the RE Curriculum.

To review assessment and progress, RE Curriculum, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school.

RE Link Governor

The Governors play an active and integral part to the life of our School. Mrs Margaret McConnell 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 Leader)

Date: July 2020

Policy review date: July 2022