



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Signed _____ (Headteacher) Date _____

Signed _____ (Chair of Governors) Date _____

October 2019

Date of next review _____



Our Mission Statement

‘What would Jesus do? Do what Jesus did!’

Our Mission is to make good choices in all areas of our lives, using Jesus as our role model.

Inclusion Statement

The Governors are committed to `inclusion` in education: this involves minimizing barriers to learning and participation.

We believe that each child is unique and has unique needs *‘belief in the individual leads Catholic schools to have the duty to care for the poor and to educate those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged’* Catholic Bishops’ Conference May 2014.

Equal Opportunity Statement

The Governors and Staff at Sacred Heart believe that all people are entitled to equal opportunities, respect and consideration regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, disability or personal circumstances.

Therefore, we are opposed to any form of prejudice or discrimination which denies people this equality. This principle applies to both adults and children in our school.

Rationale

In the life and faith of the Catholic School, Religious Education plays a vital and central part. At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education. 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 therefore, have the right to receive an overall Religious 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. (1 Peter 3:15) Religious Education is then the core subject in a Catholic school.

Catholic Schools have a distinctive nature of education – Catholic Bishops’ Conference 2014

We also recognise that our children come from a range of backgrounds, beliefs and abilities and that our teaching of Religious Education will reflect this.

Sacred Heart is committed to inclusion and equal opportunities, regardless of race, gender, disability and special needs.

Aims and Objectives

The Catholic vision of education promotes the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God. This vision inspires and encourages the beliefs and values which are lived out in the daily life of the Catholic school.

Within this vision, religious education is very much a journey of formation, involving every member of the school community, together with a pupil’s family and parish community. It is in this context that the three



elements of religious education, catechesis and evangelisation, co-exist, providing mutual support and reinforcement.

For all children Religious Education is a subject in its own right in the school's curriculum. It is a rigorous academic discipline, and as such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. For those already engaged in the journey of faith, religious education will be catechesis, and for some children and young people religious education will be evangelisation, as the first opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel.

Curriculum religious education in Catholic schools aims to promote:

- knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life;
- knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose.
- skills required to engage in examination of and 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: for example, 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: for example, respect for truth; respect for the views of others; awareness of the spiritual, of moral responsibility, of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and especially the challenge of living in a multicultural, multifaith society.

Religious Education in the Classroom

Since the whole curriculum in Catholic schools is based on the values of the Gospel (and the link between faith and life, as expressed by the "Come and See") and because we see all education as revealing the mystery of God, we recognise two aspects of Religious Education in the school: -

- (a) Implicit, or unstructured Religious Education – those opportunities which arise in the course of the school day to lead pupils through curriculum content or through relationships to a "religious understanding" of their implications. It is the policy of this school to use such opportunities as they arise.
- (b) Explicit, or Curriculum Religious Education – those planned or timetabled periods of time given to a systematic and comprehensive study of Religious Education in the classroom. (It is the policy of this school to affirm that the primary purpose of R.E. teaching is the step by step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational) *"Catholic Bishops' Conference May 2000"*

It requires 10% of the length of the taught week for each Key Stage of Education.



Programmes of Study

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use the “Come and See” Programme, which reflects the subsequent ideas contained in both the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Curriculum Directory.

Other Faiths should be taught, in line with the thinking of the Church which appreciates the holiness and strengths of these other faiths which “often reflect a ray of that truth, which enlightens all people.” So, while living out our Christian faith we are called to listen in dialogue and be ready to learn from other faiths, many of whom are our neighbours. Formal teaching of other faiths takes place twice a year in the school year. One week is set aside for the discrete teaching of Judaism, during the Advent term. Each year the Year 3 children visit a local synagogue. A further week in the Pentecost term enables an additional faith to be studied. We rotate the faith chosen from Hinduism, Sikhism or Islam, as these are all local faith cultures our children live among. Year 5 children have the opportunity to visit a place of worship, as part of their studies. In EYFS other religious festivals throughout the year are celebrated. See “Come and See” scheme of work for further details.

Process of Teaching

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses the human search for meaning, God’s initiative in Revelation who comes to meet us and our response of faith. This pattern guides the structure of the programme and informs the process of each topic, opened up through; Explore, Reveal and Respond.

Explore

The teacher and the pupils’ parents helps them to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives – concerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of significance and value of the experiential events of everyday life. The ‘Explore’ focus is utilised as an opportunity for the family to support the child’s learning in RE, in the form of an initial homework task. This is then discussed in class, to celebrate all the children’s interpretations and experiences. (see RE books)

This will involve:

- Exploring experiences through story, music, drama, dance, art, etc
- Investigation
- Story telling
- Consideration of the *big* questions
- Discussion
- Becoming aware of the questions raised
- Reflecting on significance of these experiences.

Explore is set as homework and then discussed before or after the submission date. It is set for homework to encourage conversation about the topic at home.

“Religious Education learns from evangelisation and catechesis that learning and growth involve active participation and response. For this reason, personal experience plays a significant part in the exploration, discovery and assimilation of the saving truth of God’s revelation.”



Reveal

Reveal is the heart of the process. The teacher and the pupils together discover the Christian understanding of the mystery of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explore the mystery of human life as revealed in the person, life and gospel of Jesus Christ Christians. It will involve learning about Scripture, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians.

The process of delivery will involve:

- meeting new knowledge of religious education;
- developing an understanding of this new knowledge;
- reflecting on the wonder of the mystery;
- gathering information and collecting facts connected with this knowledge;
- researching, collating and classifying;
- becoming aware of the questions raised;
- working with problems and grappling with puzzling experiences;
- exploring experiences through story, music, drama, dance, art;
- exploring what leads to understanding and meaning;
- asking questions and discussing;
- exploring in creative and practical ways through drama, writing, poetry, song, dance, music, ICT and service of others;
- making links between Christian understanding and the shared life experience;
- valuing life experience;
- acknowledging and respecting difference(s);
- being open to new perspectives.

Respond

Remember is the first part of this section. The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. This new understanding will enable them to make a personal response in their daily lives. This part begins by reflecting on what the children wonder about. This is followed by providing the opportunity for the children to remember what they have understood and learnt.

This may be done through:

- creating a quiet, prayerful atmosphere for reflection
- looking at and thinking about the work done
- drawing attention to different aspects of this work
- sharing thoughts and feelings.

Rejoice is the second part of the section. There will be the opportunity to plan and take part in a celebration. It will be essential to involve the children in the choice of material to be used in the celebration.



At Sacred Heart, at the end of each topic we Respond and Encounter using a response sheet 'Head, Heart, Cloud'. The decision is made by the teacher or the pupil as to if these are completed individually, in a group or as a whole class.

Throughout the unit it is expected that 4- 6 pieces of work are completed in the pupils' books. Out of these, one must be a Scripture Detective activity, one an art/creative based and two quality written pieces. Expectations are made clear and can be found attached to this policy.



Assessment and Monitoring

The pupils are assessed against the Diocesan End of year Expectations. RE is taught in three strands AT1 'from the head' AT2 'from the heart' and AT3 'wonder and awe'. The driver words for each year group are as follows:

Year 1 – I can **recognise many**

Year 2 – I can **describe** and **retell**

Year 3 – I can make **some links** and **give some reasons**

Year 4 – I can make **many links** and **give many reasons**

Year 5 – I can make **most links** and **give many reasons**

Year 6 – I can **show some understanding**.

Using pupils' response, verbal and in books, at the end of each unit, assessment will be made as to whether the pupils are working towards expectations, working within expectations, working at expectation or working above expectations.

EYFS are assessed when they come into school, using the diocesan baseline assessment and again each term using the Driver words.

All pupils' achievements should be reported to the RE coordinator, Mr Matthew Cordes, via Eaz Mags and during pupil progress meetings, so interventions can be put in place for those who are not making sufficient progress.

Feedback

Feedback should be given in a timely manner and have an impact upon the pupils' learning. It is expected that written and verbal feedback is only given for the benefit of the pupils.

When using written feedback the appropriate driver words must be used to prompt deeper thinking and link to the End of Year Expectations.

High frequency spellings should be highlighted and key religious vocabulary should be corrected to age expectations.



The Role of the Religious Education Leader

1.0 Exercises Religious Leadership in the implementation of the Religious Education curriculum and developing the Catholic life of the school by:

- 1.1 Giving leadership to the Catholic identity, life and culture of the school within the evangelising Mission of the Church
- 1.2 Developing children and staff to be active participants and leaders in the planning and implementation of the liturgical and sacramental life of the school;
- 1.3 Facilitating the development and implementation of policy in relation to Religious Education;
- 1.4 Working with staff to ensure the integration of Catholic values in the curriculum, policies and procedures of the school;
- 1.5 Providing a vision for and articulating expectations regarding quality teaching and learning in Religious Education, including the promotion of attending diocesan curriculum days and attending diocesan moderation days;
- 1.6 Encouraging and supporting teachers in developing the religious environment of their classrooms;
- 1.7 Working with the Senior Leadership Team in the spiritual development of staff including regular staff prayer;
- 1.8 Giving leadership to and coordinating opportunities for the faith development of children, including prayer and retreats;
- 1.9 Liaising with the parish and communicating with parents concerning the Religious Education and the sacramental programs.

2.0 Exercises Leadership for Learning in developing policy, programs and pedagogies in Religious Education that enhance outcomes for students by:

- 2.1 Giving leadership to syllabus interpretation, programming, implementation practices, assessment and evaluation of the Religious Education curriculum in the school. This will include attendance at termly CMAT & diocesan moderation days;
- 2.2 Promoting the development and maintenance of a culture and school environment based on the foundation statements and key elements of the *Learning Framework* (CEO 2005), particularly in relation to Religious Education;
- 2.3 Facilitating the ongoing development of effective and contemporary pedagogy in Religious Education, including the effective use of assessment and evaluation data;
- 2.4 Supervising the implementation and teaching of the Religious Education curriculum, ensuring compliance with SACS Board, CEO and BOS requirements;
- 2.5 Contributing to improved teaching and learning in Religious Education by modeling good teaching practice and by facilitating continuing professional development in content and pedagogy;



- 2.6 Encouraging and facilitating appropriate forums for co-operative planning, the sharing of ideas and decision-making (Oscar Romero hub & OLoL CMAT);
 - 2.7 Coordinating the development and implementation of assessment and reporting procedures in Religious Education;
 - 2.8 Supporting Religious Education teachers in their relationships with children in classroom management.
- 3.0 Exercises Human Resources Leadership in support of workplace related processes by:**
- 3.1 Promoting and supporting the spirit, values and principles of *Workplace Realities in the Catholic School* (SACS Board 2002) and related practices;
 - 3.2 Taking responsibility for the induction, mentoring, performance management and overall leadership of RE teachers;
 - 3.3 Identifying and encouraging staff with leadership potential and taking initiatives, including delegation, to further develop this potential;
 - 3.4 Encouraging and supporting staff in gaining accreditation to teach Religious Education;
 - 3.5 Promoting teacher professionalism and encouraging positive staff morale by contributing to and initiating processes for team building.
- 4.0 Exercises Strategic Leadership in implementing the school's Strategic Leadership and Management Cycle and the School Review and Improvement process by:**
- 4.1 Collaborating with the SLT in developing a culture of continuous improvement and the development and implementation of school improvement initiatives;
 - 4.2 Giving leadership to aspects of the development, implementation and evaluation of relevant aspects of the Annual Development Plan and the development of the Annual Report;
 - 4.3 Promoting and supporting the role and involvement of parents and pastors in the life and practices of the school;
 - 4.4 Promoting the vision, mission and image of the school with an emphasis on its Catholic life and Religious Education program in the community.
- 5.0 Exercises Organisational Leadership to support effective and efficient administration of the school by:**
- 5.1 Overtly supporting and implementing school and system policies;
 - 5.2 Establishing and maintaining effective lines of communication and follow-up processes that support the information needs of the Leadership Team, colleagues, and members of the school community;
 - 5.3 Managing a budget within funds allocated;
 - 5.4 Promoting and facilitating the use of RE Online and available Religious Education resources;



5.5 Facilitating the forward planning of and provision for the organisation of Religious Education resources;

5.6 Collaborating with the SLT in aspects of school organization and administration.

6.0 The Personal Dimensions of Leadership are exercised in the development of relationships and community by:

6.1 Giving witness to the teachings of the Gospel and to Catholic values in personal interactions and in carrying out the day to day duties of the position;

6.2 Taking a leadership role in creating an environment that is welcoming, hospitable, life-giving and just;

6.3 Facilitating collaborative processes that build relationships and promote shared commitment, partnership and a sense of achievement;

6.4 Facilitating the appropriate involvement of all groups of stakeholders in decisionmaking processes;

6.5 Continuing to develop personal, professional and leadership capabilities in the six Foundations with priority given to scripture, theology, spirituality and Religious Education.

POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WORSHIP

See Collective Worship Policy

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored by the Religious Education Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the Governors and whole staff every year.