



# Our Religious Education Policy



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

*What would Jesus do?*



*Do what Jesus did!!*



*Our Mission:*

*To make good choices in all areas of our lives, using Jesus as our role model.*

## 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.

## Intent

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.

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*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.

## Implementation

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. 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.

Pre learning – The pupils reflect upon the big questions on a pre- learning sheet which is revisited throughout the unit as they acquire new knowledge.

### 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.

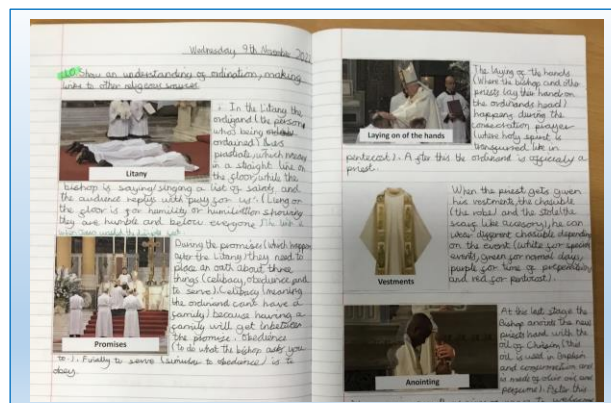
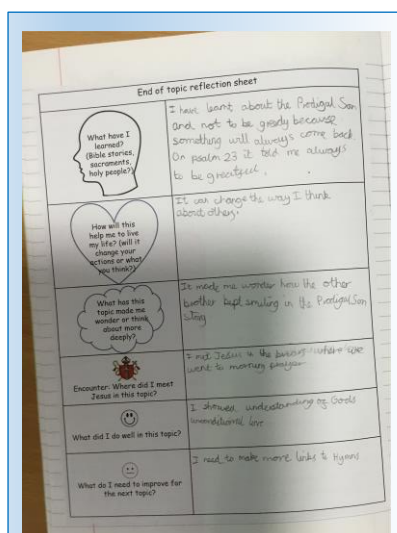
*“Religious Education learns from evangelisation and catechesis that learning and growth involve active participation and response. For this reason, personal experience plays a significant part in the exploration, discovery and assimilation of the saving truth of God’s revelation.”* Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012

## 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.

Throughout all sessions of Religious Education, teachers will use Teach Like a Champion techniques and teaching strategies.

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.



# Feedback

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

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

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

# Reporting

Parents will receive verbal reports of progress twice a year in the Advent and the Lent Term and a written report from their child's class teacher in the Pentecost Term.

The RE Leader will report to the governors of Sacred Heart once a year.

