



Religious Education Policy

2023 - 2024

Rationale of Religious Education *'Growing, loving and learning in the arms of St. Mary's.'*

The St Mary's family grow closer to God through praying, learning from the Gospels and from the inspiration of the life of Our Lady. We are encouraged to follow the Golden Rule, *'treat others, as you would want to be treated'* (Matthew 7:12) and *'feed the hungry and help those in trouble'* (Isaiah 58:10). Our school is a place where the entire community is greeted with love and trust, which guides all that we do – *a place where we all put our faith in action.*

Curriculum Intent

In order to deliver, promote and inspire the highest quality education we are committed to developing our own unique curriculum, based on the following shared principles **BREW**.

Beliefs – our teaching is rooted in Gospel Values, to ensure every child's journey into adulthood is a journey of faith, where their choices in life are informed by their beliefs. Our teachings help children to understand the faith that makes them who they are.

Rights - preparing the child to take an active and responsible role in striving for social justice. A safe place whereby important RSHE and British Values are promoted. All learners, including the most disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, are provided with the knowledge and skills to participate in lessons with their peers.

Environment – to know that God has given us the responsibility to act as stewards of his creation, that we must all act now to preserve God's world.

Wellbeing – a broad and balanced education, committed to nurturing the whole person through developing their physical, moral, spiritual and intellectual talents. The school establishes itself as a centre for the entire community, a place for extended services for pupils and families.

Curriculum Implementation

Religious Education is a core subject within St Mary's Catholic Primary School and is therefore at the heart of our whole curriculum. As required by the Bishops' Conference, RE is allocated 10% of the curriculum as a discrete subject, but will also form part of other curriculum areas within our school.

During key times within the Liturgical Year, the RE curriculum may take more time within the curriculum, in order to allow children to be fully immersed in and reflective of the time within the Catholic Church, as a Catholic school. This will also support children, families and staff on their faithful journey.

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is part of the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. As part of this diocese, we follow the scheme for Religious Education in Catholic Schools called, 'Come and See'. This scheme lays out the steps to be taken in RE at each stage within Primary School. Through using this scheme, along with the catechism, directory and ethos inspired within our school, teachers ensure the children learn and grow with continuity and progression throughout the school.

As part of the scheme, the children learn about what it is to live as Christians today, how the Church is organised from global to parish level and also the opportunities which exist for them to participate in the life of the Church. Throughout the year the children also learn about the Liturgical Seasons and have opportunities to link learning to prayer and reflection.

Religious Education is taught through the process of Explore, Reveal, 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 Religious Education Curriculum Directory.

As the Directory states:

'Teaching in Religious Educationshould 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.'

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of our pupils. An emphasis is placed on each child being able to understand the RE content that is being taught and not always on the English skills required to record their understanding. Artwork, creative page spreads, prayers, poems, drawings, annotated pictures, drama, hymns, liturgical dance and non-chronological reports are encouraged to vary the way the children record their understanding in RE.

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate access to the Religious Education programme. The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Curriculum Impact

Our teaching will:

- extend children's knowledge and understanding of religions and beliefs
- develop religious vocabulary and interpret religious symbolism in a variety of forms
- reflect on questions of meaning, offering their own thoughtful and informed insights into religious and secular world-views
- explore ultimate questions of beliefs and values in relation to a range of contemporary issues in an ever-changing society

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.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out using the Age-Related Standards in Religious Education (3-19) interim document agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a record of pupils' progress using insight data tracking.
- Following guidance from the Diocese, all children should be working at the expected standard unless they require significant support to understand and complete the task. From September 2020 all schools have been advised not to assess any child as working at greater depth
- A child working at the expected standard, above the expected standard and below the expected standard is selected in each class.

- An in - house moderation of pupils' books is held each term.
- A moderation proforma is completed by staff and attached to the pupils' books.
- Pupils' books are presented for Diocesan Moderation at the RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the summer term, as directed by the Diocesan Department for Education.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is sought from: pupil voice, pupil's books, learning walks and lesson observations. From this multi layered approach, action can be taken to further develop the RE curriculum.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors.
- Termly feedback through staff INSET is used to ensure staff are up to date with diocesan and school expectations.

SEND Access

All children at St. Mary's are taught RE as a class or a year group. Quality first teaching enables the majority of our children to access the RE curriculum. When planning, teachers are asked to consider a variety of ways to record children's understanding. Children with SEND should not be assessed in RE based on their ability to record. As a diocese, we believe that all children are working at the expected standard unless they require significant support to understand the RE standard being taught.

Religious Education - 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 2012 – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ – the 'Come and See' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese.

Other Religions

As part of the RE curriculum, teaching and learning of other denominations and faiths take place. We recognise the diverse and multicultural communities within our school community, as well as nationally and throughout the world. Therefore, at St. Mary's school, we aim to provide children with a rounded education where we develop children's understanding of other faiths. To ensure this, key events and festivals within the world faith's calendar maybe taught throughout the school.

Judaism and Islam are specifically taught from Early Years to Year 6 following the programme of study in 'Come and See'. The 10% weekly allocation for RE is used to allow time in the curriculum to teach other faiths. Each year group focuses on a certain aspect of the faith to provide progress year on year, and to develop a growing respect for other religions and to develop a more spiritual understanding of the diverse culture and faith within our world.

RSHE

At St. Mary's we have been trialling the use the Ten Ten 'Life to the Full' resources recommended by the Diocese to supplement our own unique curriculum, based on the following shared principles **BREW**; Beliefs, Rights, Environment and Wellbeing.

Management of the Subject

Gemma Smith, the Co-ordinator has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by *Gemma Smith* and updated annually.