

Religious Education Policy



“Excellence, Enrichment, Enjoyment”

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1. Policy aims

In this policy, the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about Religious Education. We acknowledge that parents are the first and best educators of their children and that our school works in partnership with them.

The school recognises the dignity of every human person because they are a child of God. Equality of opportunity for every person is therefore paramount and precludes all forms of discrimination on grounds of colour, gender, race, social class or ability.

The school aims to nurture the spiritual, intellectual and physical growth of each pupil through a holistic approach, which takes due note of the needs of every child, while, at the same time, striving for excellence in all aspects of education in a secure environment.

2. Principles of Religious Education

Saint Michael Catholic Primary School & Nursery, in partnership with the Parish and Parents, will provide quality Catholic Education. Through the love of God, we will foster individual pupils, spiritually, culturally and academically, by encouraging each child to strive for personal achievement and an awareness that their contribution is necessary for the good of the community. Religious education informs and permeates all aspects of school life.

3. Aims and Objectives

Religious Education plays a central and vital part in the life of faith of a Catholic school. Religious Education is the foundation of the entire educational process. Its primary purpose is the step by step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The Aims and Objectives of Religious Education are:

- To promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life, through the teaching of the life of Christ, the teachings of the Church and the central beliefs that Catholics hold, in a manner that encourages investigation and reflection by pupils.
- To promote an atmosphere where the Gospel values of loving service are made explicit and are enlightened by the faith of the school community.
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection by all pupils
- To develop appropriate skills for their age: the ability to listen, to think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically; to acquire knowledge and organise thought; communication skills; to investigate; to interpret; to develop socially; to be able to evaluate.
- To foster appropriate attitudes for their age: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, right judgement, courage, reverence, awe and wonder.
- To foster appropriate attitudes- respect for truth and the views of others, awareness of spiritual and moral responsibility, of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and the values of living in a multicultural and multi-faith society.
- To affirm each person in their sense of belonging to the whole body of Christ.

These are achieved by means that are both explicit and implicit. Often it is the 'messages' given in more informal ways that are more powerful and lasting and which convey each individual's worth and unique value.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Together with the Head teacher the RE Coordinator (Cian Higgins) has responsibility for ensuring;

- That the Catholic life of the school is sustained
- That the Christian aims of the school are supported in the faith journey of pupils
- That the allocated RE budget is managed effectively and necessary resources and CPD are provided
- That RE is moderated and assessed to ensure the required standards and objectives are fully covered.
- That the RE Catholic Self-Evaluation Document (CSED) is regularly updated and shared with staff and Governors.
- Equality/Racism monitoring and promoting of school ethos

5. Inclusion

Knowledge and understanding in RE needs to address the differing abilities of pupils as in any other subject, this is evident in planning. Pupils with learning difficulties in many other formal areas of the curriculum are often able to contribute on an equal basis in learning the principles of faith. Through differentiation, opportunities are provided for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. All children's work is valued whether written, oral or pictorial and is viewed as a celebration of their religious development.

6. Curriculum Time Allocation

Religious Education is a core subject; it is a rigorous academic discipline with the same commitment as other core subjects. The time allocation for Religious Education within the curriculum is 10%, excluding assembly. Collective Worship/Celebrations of the Word take place every day in some form outside of RE lesson time.

7. Organisation and planning

RE Teaching

Teachers use the Religious Education Directory as the basis for all planning and assessment and these are linked to various programs, including sequences of learning created by the RECs in the Ascension Catholic Academy Trust (ACAT), *Day by Day*, *Magister* etc. These resources are used as a base for planning and teaching throughout the school and provide a full and comprehensive delivery of Religious Education.

All pupils across the school will learn about World Faiths, in accordance with the model curriculum of the RED.

Some elements of RE are also taught through PSHE lessons and are covered through the Ten Ten resource 'Life to the Full' (see RSE policy).

Children's learning is celebrated not only through recorded work but also through displays, opportunities for creativity, Masses, Assemblies and individual awards. The covers of RE books are decorated with a religious symbol and have a special cover to denote their value.

Catholic Social Teaching

At Saint Michael's, we follow 'Rooted in Love' from Caritas Westminster. We focus on a different theme every half term:

- Autumn 1- Care of Creation
- Autumn 2- Preferential Option for the Poor
- Spring 1- Solidarity and Peace
- Spring 2- Community and Participation
- Summer 1- Dignity of Workers
- Summer 2- Human Dignity

In Foundation Stage, we use 'Caritas in Action' to plan our teaching for every half term.

We aim to make links to the themes of Catholic Social Teaching throughout our teaching.

8. Assessment and Marking

The children are encouraged to self-assess their own work at the end of lessons and at the end of each unit in a way which is appropriate to their age range.

At the end of each half term unit, Teachers will make an overall judgement, using their own knowledge of the child and all of the work completed during the unit. Teachers use the RED outcomes to give each child an age expected standard level. Each teacher has the responsibility for maintaining records each half term on the children in their class in line with other core subjects. Assessment are then moderated across the school and at Deanery and Diocesan level. The school portfolio contains samples of work from each teacher for each assessed unit across a range of abilities.

RE, in line with the other core subjects, is assessed and analysed each term as part of pupil progress and attainment recording grids and meetings. (see policy)

All RE work is marked in accordance with the school marking policy (see policy). Work is marked in relation to RE Learning Objectives. Key religious terminology and concepts must be corrected if necessary. 'Next step' comments encourage pupils to reflect, analyse and deepen their understanding through effective next steps.

9. Home/School/Parish

The school recognises that it cannot teach our children without the cooperation of the parents and parish. The parents/guardians are the first educators and they are in partnership with the teachers, who offer their professional skills and training to support parents in the task of teaching the Catholic faith.

We work hard to forge strong links with the parish. We liaise with clergy and catechists and invite parishioners to join our worships whenever possible. The Parish priest visits school regularly and leads staff and pupil worship on a regular basis. The Church is part of the pupils learning environment and is utilised frequently by all year groups.

We do not lead in Sacramental Preparation within our curriculum but we support the Parish and Catechists who work with our pupils and others from the Parish, preparing for the Sacraments, through use of our newsletter, facilities when required and a celebratory Mass for those making their First Holy Communion.

10. The Wider Community

At Saint Michael's, we recognise the need to enable children to work beyond the school and into the wider community. We aim to:

- Develop a sense of personal responsibility for others
- Identify means by which children can become further involved with the local community, Parish, Diocese, National and Global Organisations.

The school supports a variety of charities throughout the year.

11. World Faiths

Pupils and Parents not of the Catholic faith are encouraged at all times to be part of the school community by involvement in all aspects of RE and Worship.

12. Resources

RE has a central resource area including a wide variety of different materials to support the teaching and learning of RE and delivery of Worship. We have a range of multicultural resources to aid the teaching of worldwide Christianity and world religions. Each class has RE reference books and Bibles to assist with independent research.

RE is well resourced through an annual budget and allocated funding for staff CPD. Staff are asked to complete two CPD courses every year, one of which must be RE.

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13. Monitoring arrangements

- Lesson visits and observations take place during the academic year.

- Moderation sessions take place each term.
- RE data is analysed at Pupil Progress Meetings
- Diocesan visits - once a term
- SLT- Learning Walks

14. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- RSE policy
- Marking Policy
- Assessment Policy
- SEN Policy
- EYFS policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy