

St. Joseph's RC Primary School

Religious Education Policy
October 2022

"I came so that
you may have life,
and have it to
the full."

– John 10:10



Faith

Respect

Confidence

Resilience

Empathy

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Religious Education Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary Mission Statement

'I came so that you may have life- and have it to the full' John 10:10

At St Joseph's we recognise the uniqueness of each child and provide opportunities and experiences so that they may challenge themselves and become the best that they can be.

We endeavour to raise the aspirations of our children and teach them how to become responsible and productive members of the community.

We encourage children to recognise their value and place in the world and teach them to reach out, through prayers and actions, to those in need.

St Joseph's is a happy and safe place in which to learn. We provide this environment knowing that children learn, grow and develop best when they are secure in their surroundings.

We do this under the safety of God's love and protection.

What is Religious Education?

Religious Education is:

- the spiritual development of each individual
- the communication of our Catholic beliefs and values
- an awareness of being members of God's loving family and belonging to the family of St. Joseph's school

Religious Education is a partnership between school, home and parish and our school promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. Another important aspect of Religious Education is to encourage Christian living within our school, our homes and in our community. Providing conditions in which all children will develop a greater love and knowledge of God, which grows from their experience of the love and kindness they receive from others. Prayer and worship help to develop a relationship with God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Why do we Teach Religious Education?

Through Religious Education, we aim to develop knowledge, concepts and attitudes in our pupils, which will enable them to grow in the understanding and love of God. St. Joseph's Primary is a

Roman Catholic School where the staff and children live and share the Catholic faith. The school's function in relation to Religious Education is to encourage the partnership between parish, home and school so that there is a deepening and growth in faith. Religious Education underpins our whole philosophy of education and is the starting point for our Mission Statement.

How do we Teach Religious Education?

In order to deliver 'The RE Curriculum Directory' we utilise as our main scheme the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education, which has been approved and recommended by the Diocese of Salford. 'The Way, The Truth and the Life' and 'Caritas in Action' are also available to teachers as they plan and develop their lessons.

We follow the Church's Liturgical year celebrating important times, e.g. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Holy days and feast days. Throughout the year assemblies are prepared and parents and parishioners are invited.

The staff work closely with the Parish Priest and catechists in preparation with the children at different stages during the Sacramental programme and attend the Parish celebrations. All staff are responsible for Religious Education which is taught daily in all classes, the Christian character of our school permeates across the curriculum and affects the ethos and environment of the school community.

The Religious Education curriculum occupies 10% of our time but it links into all other areas of the curriculum. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to teach Religious Education and show, by their example, Christian living in our school.

The school provides opportunities where staff, children, parents and parishioners experience and celebrate our faith by means of assemblies, class Masses, school liturgies and Nativity and Easter plays.

Equal Opportunities

We endeavour to give children equal access to all areas of education regardless of gender, race or disability. Whenever appropriate we present positive images of all cultures.

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

We provide an inclusive curriculum, which meets the needs of all pupils, where the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every learner matters. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Using a variety of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles

- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty to challenge and develop depth of thought and understanding
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child
- Providing Teaching assistants to encourage and support the work of identified individuals or groups of children.

Special Educational Needs

Appropriate assistance will be provided in a variety of ways including

- Using a range of learning styles
- Using pupil's ideas and motivations as a starting point for learning
- Adjusting the demand of the task as appropriate for the child.

Other Religions

We recognise and take the opportunity to learn about people of other religions, and the children learn about the celebrations for significant events eg. Diwali, Eid, Passover, as they occur. We share our planet with people who hold different beliefs or with people of no faith. We feel it is important to learn about others in order to be able to confidently share our own beliefs and still love and respect everyone.

The 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education allows us to explore religious questioning about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic faith and to explore links with the experiences of other faiths. We aim to promote an opening of the mind and heart in the search for truth about God, respect for people of other faiths and a willingness to recognise good wherever it exists, as they become familiar with the life of Jesus through the Gospels.

We arrange visits to other places of worship to support children's learning and understanding.

Curriculum links

The aims of the RE curriculum are actively and creatively promoted through other areas of the curriculum. This is not only in our approach but specifically by introducing religious aspects into lessons i.e. sacred music, religious art, how religion affected our history etc.

Teaching and Learning

Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Teaching and Learning in RE enables children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. Homework tasks based around the RE curriculum give children an opportunity to extend their thinking. We regularly visit our Parish church and participate in collective celebration events.

Assessment, monitoring, recording and reporting

- RE books are marked according to the school's Marking Policy. Where possible, feedback is given with the marking focus relating directly to the learning objective. This will highlight the strengths and the next steps for learning, extension to promote deeper thinking.
- All marking provides opportunities for the teachers to assess where the children are at and to inform their future planning.
- Teacher Assessment is continual throughout the year and will be as a result of a piece of work, a conversation, a reflection at a collective act of worship, answers given in class/group discussions or SMSC responses to all areas of the curriculum.
- Religious Education is assessed after each topic and recorded on assessment sheets. We work with the Diocese and cluster schools to assess standards, sharing books and assessments, to moderate, confirm and standardise levels of attainment.
- Each teacher records pupil attainment on Assessment sheets.
- Book scrutiny helps to identify areas of strength to celebrate and share and areas for development.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out every half term. Lesson observations, learning walks and book scrutinies are carried out by the RE subject Leader at least once each half term on the monitoring cycle.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in Parent Meetings and in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors annually.

Wider community

At St Joseph's RC Primary School we encourage parents to be involved by attending:

- School Celebration Masses and Family Masses.
- Weekly Reward assemblies and pupil led assemblies.
- Parents' Evenings in the Autumn and Summer terms.
- Sacramental Programme meetings and celebrations.
- Charity fundraising events
- Sports events
- Classroom activities
- World religion days

We also attend singing and musical concerts, especially around Christmas time, and at a local hospital.

The school choir also take part in the wonderful Christmas concerts at Manchester Cathedral, The Hidden Gem and Salford Cathedral.

Our website provides information for the Parish community and we work closely with our Parish Priest to be involved in Parish Celebrations.

We continue to explore opportunities for reflection, development and training of staff through Salford Diocese, invited speakers and our local Catholic schools cluster group.

Collective Worship

We believe that distinctive Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God in a wide variety of forms. We seek to ensure that collective worship is a learning experience as well as a spiritual encounter to which all can contribute and from which all will gain knowledge of prayer and scripture as well as their mission, as children of God, which will be developed and understood during collective worship.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there should be a daily act of Worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can either be a single act of Worship for all children, or separate acts of worship in groups.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from any act of worship if they so desire. The request must be made in writing to the Head teacher.

The Place of Collective Worship in our School.

Worship is more than just a legal requirement. It forms an integral part of school life and takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it.

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church
- Those for whom school may be their first or only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions
- Those from other faith backgrounds

The Aims of Collective Worship

We believe that collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the awesome mystery of God
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs

- To experience a sense of belonging and deepen community spirit
- To enrich religious experiences
- To ensure familiarity with prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To celebrate together the feasts of the Christian calendar
- To reinforce positive attitudes

Collective Worship at St Joseph's

- Daily class prayers at start, mid and end of day
- Weekly liturgical assembly led by senior leader
- Weekly hymn practice
- Weekly assembly, pupil led and based around the RE scheme of work. The whole class are involved in creating and delivering the assembly. (A different year group each week).
- Whole school Mass every half term
- Whole school Mass to celebrate special feast days
- Rotational class Mass every week
- Chaplaincy Team to lead prayer in whole school celebrations
- Chaplaincy Team members to lead prayers with Early Years and KS1.

When we gather as a group we do so respectfully and reverently. The assembly hall is quiet, with hymns playing or piano/guitar led by staff.

Children, staff and parents are given an opportunity for quiet reflection in a calm atmosphere. A candle is lit and we are encouraged to find peace in this part of the day.

Recording and Informing

- We keep an assembly file on the weekly assemblies
- We log any relevant material on our SMSC grid
- Parents are informed of celebration assemblies
- Parents are informed of Whole school Mass dates
- Classes record 'Big Questions' or prayers for loved ones in a variety of ways from prayer trees to Big Question books
- Class Collective Worship books are used to record end of topic, pupil lead, prayer and worship.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior and subject leaders monitor class and whole school assemblies. This means of assessment provides feedback to encourage staff to reflect upon the delivery of prayer and worship. Prayer and Worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. Discussions

and sharing good practice in staff meetings allows us to continue to move forward by sharing successes and developing new methods to assist and facilitate children in their spiritual and moral growth and development.

Management of RE

Mrs T Hayes is the Subject Leader and has responsibility for managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. She is assisted by Mrs M Harris, the Deputy Headteacher and Mrs R. Hince, Headteacher.