



Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement :

'Love One Another As I Have Loved You' (John 13:33-34)

Agreed by Governors on 7th February 2017

Signed  Chair of Governors

Review date : February 2019

Safeguarding Statement:

'Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all children and expects all staff , parents and volunteers to share this commitment.'

Our Vision

As a Catholic school that puts Christ at the centre, we are committed to encouraging everyone to 'Be The Best They Can Be'

Ethos

We believe that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and we value the equality of all, reject discrimination of any kind, and welcome the diversity of different cultures.

This policy is informed by the `Religious Education Document for Catholic Schools Bishops Conference of England and Wales:

"Religious Education is regarded as the heart of the curriculum, enriching and informing all areas of learning with the light of the Gospel, teaching students to seek the truth which is of God in the whole of creation, in themselves and in others."

Our Values

- We value each child and want the best for every one of them
- We value our catholic faith and also encourage our families to follow their faith
- We value a sense of belonging to our school which embraces our catholic ethos of love and respect
- We value strong partnerships between home, school, parish and the local community
- We value high standards of behaviour; encouraging kindness, honesty, tolerance, trust and

fairness to others

1. Aims of Religious Education

Religious Education at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School is a very high priority in the school, not only as an important area of the curriculum, but as an essential part of the daily life of the school and its community. The main aims of Religious Education at the school are as follows:

- To give the children knowledge, understanding and experience of Catholic life and faith.
- To develop an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each individual child's life and to encourage a personal response to His presence.
- To allow each child to develop their conscience and make sound moral judgements based on a commitment to following Christ.
- To enable each child to learn and to develop their full potential according to their abilities and to adopt attitudes of care and respect for each other.

2. How we meet our stated aims

At Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School we meet our stated aims through:

- The Catholic ethos that permeates our daily life of our school
- The Diocesan scheme of work for each year group
- Sacramental Preparation
- Prayer Life and Collective Worship
- Catholic life of our school community

In order to achieve these aims, pupils will:

- Be taught the importance of a prayer life and have knowledge and some understanding of the formal prayers.
- Have the opportunity to take part in a daily acts of collective worship and Christian meditation
- Have the opportunity to take part in whole school masses or class masses.
- Have some knowledge and understanding of the moral, spiritual and doctrinal content set out in the variety of schemes of work used.
- Be provided with suitable preliminary education in relation to sexuality and family life of a kind appropriate to their age range and in full accord with Christian values and Catholic teaching.

- Be prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation.
- Have respect for and value every individual irrespective of colour, race and creed.
- Have some knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, particularly the Gospels.
- Have an openness to the wonder and awe of God's creation.
- Be able to reflect, think for themselves and make good choices.

3. Legal Right

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education; however parents and prospective parents need to be aware that Religious Education impacts on the rest of the curriculum and daily life within the school. Therefore it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

4. The Scheme of Work for RE

Entitlement

- At Our Lady's, pupils are taught in single year groups, ranging from Reception to Year 6. As directed by the Archbishops' recommendations 10% of the timetable or approximately 2.5 hours per week is allocated to Religious Education.
- Teachers within the school are left to organise their own curriculum time. Time for prayer is considered to be very important and is part of daily life in the school.
- Assemblies, Christian Meditation, Christmas Plays, Circle Time, PHSE, Citizenship and Hymn Practice are not to be included. However, Mass "may be considered the equivalent of half-an-hour of RE, but only once in any week."
- The school nursery admissions criteria is similar to that of the Rising Fives i.e Baptised Catholic children have priority.

Scheme of Work

At Our Lady's, we follow the Diocesan curriculum strategy provided by "Learning and Growing as the People of God" (An Overview is in the subject leader folder).

This provides the framework for RE teaching in Our Lady's from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

This strategy provides a systematic study and supports teachers short and long term planning.

Children are taught in single year groups following the recommended scheme for that year group. Teachers are encouraged to look at the overview of strands with particular emphasis on “**aims skills and vocabulary documentation**” for each year group included in the scheme. Teachers should be aware of the year above and below their own to allow for differentiation.

It aims to apply the skills learnt in other curriculum areas to R.E. particularly those learnt in English and PSHE.

Teachers are encouraged to look at different schemes, documents and resources to ensure a wide range of teaching strategies are used

Teachers should also refer to:

- SEND policy
- School policies for Prayer life and Collective worship
- Assessment policy
- Feedback Marking policy

Celebration of Feast days

Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of the significance of feast days and participate in masses and celebrations. They are asked to find out about particular saints and this is often influenced by school assemblies and events.

Multi-cultural aspects

At Our Lady's, we recognise the need to familiarise the children with other Christian traditions and non-Christian faiths, to encourage the children to foster attitudes of tolerance, respect and understanding for the beliefs and traditions of other faiths. While remaining true to their Christian faith, the children are encouraged to acknowledge with respect and trust, the value of other faith traditions, and to establish good relationships with members of other faiths without prejudice. The school has a multi-faith plan which gives the children understanding about other main world faiths and their associated cultures. We also have a multi – faith display board in the main corridor.

Planning

1. Long-term Planning

Long term planning is completed by the start of the academic year. This is shown in each year group's curriculum map.

2. Medium-term / Short-term Planning

At Our Lady's, we have adopted a detailed medium planning format which includes medium and short term together.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

At present recording takes place in the children's RE books, appropriate to tasks set out by the teachers. Formative assessment carried out by the class teacher is an integral part of their role and is used on a day-to day basis to inform future planning.

All teachers have a copy of `levels of attainment in Religious Education` relevant to the age group they are teaching. This should influence planning and assessment.

Written reports are given at the end of each academic year and parents are kept informed at regular parents meetings.

After assessment training an agreed record sheet has been presented to staff and they have been asked to set and assess tasks at appropriate times during the teaching of "Programmes of study"

The Religious Education curriculum is monitored through:

- Analysis and feedback of planning (½ term and term plans)
- Observations of assemblies, masses and celebrations
- Photographs of children's work, hall and classroom displays
- Learning walks by school leaders and governors
- Book trawls by subject leader and SLT
- Moderation exercises undertaken by whole staff and led by subject leader (ongoing process)

Teaching RE

The staff at Our Lady's are regularly up-dated on new developments and areas for improvement, planning developments and teaching strategies through INSET training led by the R.E subject leader or Diocesan consultant and staff meetings.

Relevant courses attended by the RE subject leader, Headteacher and staff to develop skills and knowledge of the subject.

Children are taught in single mixed ability year groups. RE is taught by qualified teachers with the support of a subject leader.

All classes are also supported by teaching assistants.

Resources

Each class has resources, relevant to the age of the children. Every class has access to a set of age related bibles.

Books, dvds, pictures and posters are also kept under the RE section of the resource area.

5. Sacramental Preparation

Each child is encouraged in the development of a deeper more personal faith in Christ through participation in the sacraments and the sacramental life of the school.

Depth and balance within the programme are ensured by giving emphasis to the doctrinal, sacramental, experimental, moral and spiritual response aspects, of the Catholic faith.

At Our Lady's, resources are in place to help teachers to plan for the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. These are constantly being reviewed and replaced by appropriate material.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Year 3 children receive the sacrament of Reconciliation in the Autumn term. The children are prepared by their class teacher using the Diocesan RE strategy with some additional materials compiled by school. The sacrament itself takes place in church with the children and their families present. A short reflective service takes place before the children receive the sacrament on an individual basis from Fr Louis. Following reception of the sacrament, the children and their families have some quiet moments of prayer.

The Sacrament of the Eucharist

Children in Year 2 attend a mass of Enrolment in the Autumn term. The First Holy Communion programme takes place over 2 years . Year 3 receive the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in the month of May. The children are prepared by their teacher using the Diocesan RE strategy. Throughout the course of the year, there are two meetings with parents as part of the preparation programme. First Holy Communion takes in addition to normal Sunday mass, thus enabling the children to have an intimate experience and to be able to gather on the altar around Fr. Louis during the mass. These masses are well supported by the school choir and the whole parish. The annual May Procession takes place during the following week and the Year 3 lead the procession in their First Holy Communion clothes.

The Sacrament of Confirmation

Confirmation is a Sacrament of Initiation and the link between Baptism and Confirmation should be made clear. Their teaching is taken from the Diocesan RE strategy with frequent visits from Fr. Louis , some pastoral and some teaching. The importance of communal/parish celebration should be observed, with the candidates for Confirmation being presented at an enrolment Mass in the Parish. Parents and parish should be involved in preparation as much as possible. The Confirmation preparation starts in the summer term of Year 5. Year 6 receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, dependent upon the time allocated to us by the Diocese but frequently in the Autumn term. Two meetings are held with parents as part of the preparation programme. The Confirmation Mass itself is very well supported by the children's families, the parish and the school choir.

6. Prayer and Collective Worship

Throughout Early Years, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through practise and participation in morning, before and after lunch, and home time prayers.

At appropriate stages in the RE programme each class participates in prayerful reflection and prayer services based on topics outlined in the scheme of work. Each child is encouraged to develop personal prayers according to their own experiences.

Each classroom must have a prayer table and religious focus area. These should contain symbolic artefacts and cloths in the correct liturgical colour.

The children are encouraged to take active participation in religious celebrations. These are planned in advance by priest, head teacher and RE subject leader, so they may be included in teachers planning.

School and class masses

As the mass is the centre of the liturgical worship in the Catholic Church, it has an established place in the life of the school. A timetable for each term is planned by the Head teacher, parish priest to include Commitment / Enrolment masses and Parish links. The children are involved in planning and the celebration of mass. Separate Invitations are extended to family and friends to participate.

Every Tuesday morning a class from school attends mass at 9.15am. The children lead the welcome, the readings, bidding prayers and offertory. Each class attends mass in our parish church on a rolling programme, several masses led by the children are held throughout the year:

- Start of academic year Mass
- Welcome mass for Reception children and their parents led by Year 6 prayer friends
- Reconciliation commitment mass for Year 3
- Whole school All Saints' mass
- First Holy Communion enrolment mass for Year 2 children

- Confirmation commitment mass
- Whole school end of autumn term mass
- Whole school Christmas mass
- Whole school mass to celebrate the New Year
- Confirmation for Year 6
- Whole school Ash Wednesday mass
- End of spring term mass
- Start of summer term mass
- Ascension mass
- Whole school feast of St Peter and Paul mass
- First Holy Communion masses
- Whole school Leavers' mass independently organised by Year 6
- Whole school Thanksgiving mass of the school year

Prayer Services

Prayer services are held on a regular basis within classrooms as part of the children's Religious Education programme and collective worship.

Children should be encouraged to prepare and lead the prayer service.

Older children volunteer and lead prayer services in their own and other classrooms

Assemblies

Monday morning assemblies are usually liturgical in nature and are taken by the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher or a member of SLT.

Friday assemblies are Celebration assemblies or class led assemblies but always begin and end with prayer and hymn singing.

The whole school attend the above assemblies.

There is Key Stage assembly on alternate Thursday mornings

Each class presents an assembly to parents, grandparents and friends at least once a year based on a theme from their Religious Education programme.

Special Liturgical celebrations

Foundation Stage & KS1 perform a Christmas play over two days in the school hall. This reflects the story of the Nativity. Parents, families and parishioners are invited.

Key stage 2 pupils are involved in the presentation of the passion, the death and the resurrection of Jesus. This is presented to the whole school and parents. It is a deeply moving and spiritual experience for all and is used as a teaching tool during Holy Week.

7. SEND and Equal Opportunities

All children have the right to access the whole curriculum. Each teacher should be aware of the learning needs of the pupils in their care, and plan work appropriately. Children with special educational needs will be catered for through differentiated lessons, to either consolidate or extend fact and concepts taught. Further advice is also given by the SENCO and learning support service, where appropriate.

All children at Our Lady's are treated equally as individuals, regardless of gender, race and religious background, within a caring atmosphere of Christian love, Non-Catholic children are given equal access to the RE programme and are encouraged to develop a sense of their own spirituality and awareness of God in their lives.

8. Links with the Parents and Community

Every effort is made to ensure the vital links between home, school, and the parish community are established and sustained. The parents are invited to attend meetings with the Parish Priest, Head teacher, subject leader and class teachers before preparation to receive the Sacrament is begun.

For all three Sacraments, it is vital that the parents /carers attend both the Commitment Masses and the actual celebration with their child. Throughout the school year parents are invited to attend Class Masses and Assemblies. They are asked to support the R.E. programme of our school and to encourage the children to participate in personal and formal prayer at home.

Throughout the school year, parents are invited to attend class and school masses, all assemblies and celebrations, and are asked to support the RE programme by encouraging the children's prayer life at home, through learning formal prayers, encouraging the children in personal prayer, and home work, supporting aspects of lessons taught in school.

Parental support is invaluable in fostering the children's relationship with God, and it is hoped that they are given every opportunity to do this.

Children from the Foundation Stage through to Year 6 are asked to prepare at least one parish mass, as part of their liturgy work in school.

It is hoped that this will encourage a strong parish / school / home link. Our aim is to encourage family participation in all sacramental preparation, making the mass a centre for this celebration.

9. The Role of the Religious Education Subject Leader

The Religious Education subject leader is the key teacher at Our Lady's who provides an overview of the subject for the senior leadership team, staff and governors.

The subject leader:

- Develops the subject and offers advice.
- Attends subject courses and leads INSET training.
- Reviews and evaluate the quality of provision of the subject making a significant contribution to school self evaluation
- Manages subject based resources.

10. Health and Safety

Every effort is made to ensure the health and safety of children particularly when walking to and from Church and when using candles and appropriate symbols and religious artefacts (See Health and Safety Policy).

11. Link Governor

Developments in RE and the Catholic life of the school is reported at each meeting of the full governing body and at appropriate sub-committee meetings. Mary Harte is the named link governor for RE and works closely with the subject leader.

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