

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement

*At St Francis of Assisi,
we believe god is at the heart of our school.*

As a school community,

We work together to provide

A caring, stimulating and nurturing environment,

Where every child can discover their true potential

And grow close to Christ.

*As pupils and staff we encourage in each other a love of
learning.*

This is a place where we can all belong

And where diversity and difference is celebrated.

We rejoice in each others' uniqueness

And respect the dignity and beauty of each individual.

*Using our gifts and talents we will actively seek to make a real
difference*

By caring for one another and caring for our world.

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

In our Catholic school Christ and the Gospel values are at the centre of all our teaching therefore we recognise and value the sacredness of each individual in our community

As a Catholic school, the main vehicle for the delivery of the Mission Statement is through the teaching of Religious Education and the celebration of our Catholic Faith tradition within our school and parish community.

Aims

- To create a Christian community where the Gospel values are evident in all aspects of its life, and to help pupils come to an understanding of these through experiencing and celebrating their faith.
- To nurture pupils' spirituality and to help pupils to know and appreciate the spiritual and religious aspects of life as expressed in the Catholic faith through the sacraments and their participation in them, particularly Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- To develop an open minded, reflective and enquiring response to the children's own environment and to those of others in the wider global community.
- To explore the relationships between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations and world faiths, so that pupils develop respect and knowledge of other religious traditions and cultures.
- To challenge and ask basic questions about human existence through various sources, so that they deepen their personal faith, commitment and respect for others.
- To develop religious and scriptural knowledge and to teach children to pray reverently and participate in worship.
- To develop a knowledge and understanding of people, signs, symbols and their roles in the Church.
- To encourage an awareness of their moral responsibilities to people in their own community and the world around them, thereby helping each child to develop a sense of dignity, valuing themselves and others.
- To develop a respect for God's world and responsibility for it.

Ethos

We understand that these aims will only be achieved in an environment where everyone perceives themselves to be valued, loved and are learning to value each other.

Programme

The programme used in the school as the core of its RE provision is Come and See. Other sources will be used to supplement this as deemed appropriate.

Provision

In accordance with the Bishops of England and Wales recommendation our policy is that at least 10% of the timetable will be allocated to Religious Education. Two hours and 25 minutes for KS1 and two hours 30 minutes for KS2.

WORSHIP – see Collective Worship Policy.

See Appendix III – Strategies to develop prayer

MULTICULTURAL/MULTIFAITH SOCIETY

The Scripture traditions of other faiths should be respected and children should be given an awareness and appreciation of the writings, which are considered sacred by people of other cultures and faiths. This should be done gradually at appropriate stages of their development. The study of two other faith traditions will be undertaken each year Judaism and Islam.

LINKS WITH PARISH

Our links with the parish are mainly through the Mass. Our parish Priest Father Simon also visits school to deliver the Sacrament of Reconciliation to those children who wish to participate during Lent and Advent. The children will also visit the parish church to examine it in more detail regarding its symbolism when applicable to fit in with the various aspects of the 'Come and See. RE programme.'

Children learn about certain Sacraments at different times in accordance with the 'Come and See' programme. First Holy Communion, though wholly parish based is supported in school with representatives of the teaching staff attending the parishes we serve. We encourage the children to participate in charitable events for organisations such as Cafod, The Catholic Children's society, The Good Shepherd Appeal, Children in Need, Oxfam etc. Children learn about the wider community through the study of other world faiths. We study Judaism each autumn and another faith in the summer term. Children look at other faiths and discover the similarities with their own.

RECORD –KEEPING AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment in Religious Education cannot, and should not, assess the faith development of children. Learning about religion and learning from religion are assessed through the Come and See topics. Only the knowledge they have acquired can be assessed.

This is achieved through discussions with individuals, by observations made in large group situations and by marking written work.

It is important that a clear class record is kept of the topics explored and of the levels achieved in both attainment targets.

At the beginning of each topic children should be made aware of targets and then these are assessed at the end of each unit of work through personal and teacher evaluations. Each topic will be formally assessed using the levels of attainment. At the end of every year a best fit level is awarded to each pupil.

GIFTED, TALENTED AND MORE ABLE CHILDREN

The policy is written in the light of whole-school policy. We intend to work with the support of the SENCO to offer a wide range of appropriate, challenging and engaging learning opportunities to those students identified as gifted, talented or more able in RE. This intention is to be seen in the light of our general commitment to matching work to pupils' needs.

Definitions

More able and talented pupils in RE are those who can easily and quickly apply the specific skills and processes of RE, and who demonstrate high levels of understanding, insight, maturity and achievement. We will use the learning outcomes specified in the 'Come and See' syllabus to identify such pupils.

A very small number of pupils are gifted in RE, such pupils may best be identified by teachers using their professional judgement to weigh the evidence of spiritual, moral, social or cultural development in a pupils' RE work, or through other evidence. Giftedness in RE might be evident from work produced in the classroom, assembly or from activity beyond the formal curriculum of the school.

Identification

Strategies for identifying the more able, gifted and talented children in RE

- The normal processes of classroom teaching and assessment along with this policy to develop strategies for identifying gifted and talented pupils.
- There is some correlation, though not a necessary link, between talented pupils' general attainment and RE.
- Some pupils have particular aptitude for RE through their family culture or their experience of religion and spirituality beyond the school.
- Talented students may show characteristics such as: particular interest or enjoyment of RE; high levels of creativity in RE; particular aptitude for raising and addressing problems or questions in RE; a fast pace in tackling work in RE;
- Exceptional usage of religious language; confidence and expertise in discussing religious issues. These and other signs of talent will help teachers in identifying such pupils.

Extending the provision of challenging learning opportunities

We will use strategies for developing the learning opportunities offered to the more able, gifted and talented children in RE, including:

- Raising expectations of achievement among staff, through sharing examples of the best work done by the most able pupils.
- Building up our resources for extension reading in each unit of the curriculum.
- Making more and better provision for enriching the language of religion and spirituality used by the talented pupil.
- Setting extension tasks based on fundamental or ultimate questions in relation to each unit of the curriculum.
- Using tasks from beyond the particular key stage to provide a challenge to the most able.
- Recognising and praising work which shows religious depth, profundity or particular features of excellence.
- Structuring classroom groups to enable the most able pupils to work together at the highest levels on suitable occasions.
- Enabling some talented pupils to tackle challenging work with older pupils in RE
- Using self-assessment techniques to raise pupils' awareness of their own achievements.

MONITORING

Religious Education will be monitored by:

- the Head and the subject leader checking medium-term planning;
- classroom observations by the subject leader and Head
- the subject leader monitoring pupils' R.E. books
- agreement trials to moderate assessment
- teaching and learning meeting with the Head

- the subject leader monitoring Collective Worship and assemblies
- the subject leader visiting classes and advising on focal areas.

EVALUATION

Religious Education will be evaluated by:

- the knowledge and understanding of the teachers towards R.E
- pupil enjoyment of the subject
- the knowledge and understanding of the pupil
- the behaviour of the pupils towards others
- delivery of the subject
- informed planning
- appropriate assessment and recording using levels of attainment
- Scrutiny of pupils books each half term

RE DISPLAY

Each class has a dedicated area in the classroom for prayer and reflection. There is a prayer focus and display both in the reception area and the school hall. Prayer corners are interactive and they reflect the current Come and See topic. The colours should reflect the liturgical year: purple during Advent and Lent and green at other times – splashes of colour should be used to denote other important events i.e. white for Pentecost.

PRAYER CORNERS

All prayer corners must have the following:

Crucifix, an appropriate bible for your year group, a candle, key words for the current R.E. topic and a class prayer book

You must also display an interactive focal area to enable the children to use the prayer corner in lessons for spontaneous prayer

The prayer corner is draped with the correct liturgical colour. Prayer corners must be ready by the end of the first week of each term.

Lesson Procedures

Reflections must take place at the beginning and end of every R.E. lesson. (2-3 minutes)

Beginning

Children must be offered a way into their R.E. lesson and given an opportunity to distance themselves from their previous activity. It does not have to relate to the lesson they are about to do. Examples: Close your eyes and think about one thing that happened in the playground that made you happy. Talk to God and thank him for your friends/Think about one thing you were proud of in your last activity. How can you make yourself and your teacher proud during your next lesson?

End

The reflection at the end of the lesson must be linked to the lesson

Have a focal point for the children to look at: Picture, candle, flower, etc

Read out a prayer, poem or short scripture

Play a piece of music and children to close their eyes

After a few minutes give the children something in particular to think about

Invite children to write their reflection on a post-it and place on prayer corner if they wish

APPENDIX 1

END OF KEY STAGE OBJECTIVES – CONCEPTS, SKILLS & ATTITUDES

By the end of key stage 1 each child will have had experiences which will have given him/her the opportunity to:

- Know that stories have messages about life
- Know elements of key stories in the life of Jesus including the Nativity, the events of Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost
- Know that people belong to different groups
- Know the Church as the family of God, which is called to offer praise to God and serve people
- Know that there are people with different roles in the Catholic Church
- Know that each person is unique and has responsibilities towards God's World
- Begin to understand the difference between right and wrong and the consequences of choice
- Know that Jesus taught people the love of God and one another through his teaching and example
- Know about special occasions in life and that Christians celebrate certain days, particularly Sundays, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.
- Know some elements of the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Reconciliation and understand that these are central to the lives of Christians
- Know some traditional prayers and know that they can communicate with God in their own way.

By the end of Key Stage 2 each child will have had experiences which will have given him/her the opportunity to:

- Know that there are different kinds of writing that help people to reflect on life
- Know the basic structure of the Bible and something of its historical background; and begin to understand that the Bible tells the story of God and the chosen people, and be able to tell the stories of some key people
- Know about the Trinity and the key features of the life and teaching of Jesus
- Know that other faiths have their sacred books
- Begin to understand that belonging to groups brings rights and responsibilities
- Know something of the daily life of the parish and its place in the diocese and the universal Church; and know about significant local and national figures in the life of the Church
- Know that the Church guided by the Holy Spirit continues the work of Jesus
- Know about significant figures in the life and history of other world faiths
- Know that each person made in the image and likeness of God, has special qualities and gifts; and begin to appreciate God's gifts in others and creation
- Begin to understand how people can strengthen or damage their relationship with one another and the world
- Begin to appreciate important Christian values as shown in the life of Jesus and know that Jesus came to help people to change and the save them from their sinfulness
- Know that people celebrate special events in ways which give meaning to their lives, and know the main seasons and feasts of the Liturgical Year
- Know the names of the Sacraments and the essential rites and meaning of the Sacraments of Initiation and Reconciliation, and begin to understand the main features and pattern of the Celebration of the Eucharist
- Begin to understand the nature of prayer, and elements of liturgical and other traditional prayers

- Know that society and other world faiths have different ways of celebration
- Know about relevant traditions and customs of the Church
- Know about certain religious artefacts and their significance
- Begin to understand the concept of ministry as it relates to them and to others within the Church
- Know about some basic Church doctrine
- To know about the lives of particular saints especially Mary

Concepts

- Creation
- Family
- Community
- Symbol
- Faith
- Good and Evil
- Forgiveness
- Resurrection
- Celebration
- Reconciliation
- Gospel
- Love
- Commitment
- Wisdom
- Right judgement
- Joy

Skills

- Investigation
- Communication
- Observation
- Organisation and study
- Social
- Empathy
- Reflection
- Questioning
- Listening
- Critical analysis
- Interpretation
- Evaluation

Attitudes

- Co-operation
- Commitment
- Self-confidence
- Honesty
- Curiosity
- Tolerance
- Awe and wonder
- Sensitivity
- Reverence
- Respect
- Understanding

APPENDIX II

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

Class liturgy
KS1 and KS2 liturgy
Christmas liturgy
Carol Concerts
Christmas service
Ash Wednesday
Stations of the Cross
Holy Week Liturgies
Easter liturgy
Dressing of the cross
Reconciliation
Mass in school, class or Church
Harvest Festival
CAFOD Family Fast Days
Fairtrade Liturgies
May Liturgy
May Procession

Care should be taken that a variety of different children participate in each celebration. Children can be actively involved in preparing for worship and liturgy by:

- Allowing them to decide on the form and content
- Choosing the readings
- Praying in their own words in their own way
- Arranging the classroom, hall or focused display
- Welcoming visitors – preparing invitations
- Performing music, drama dance etc
- Bringing gifts, dressing up.
- Preparing a Gospel reflection

APPENDIX III

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYING WITH CHILDREN

It is important for children to be silent before God, to listen to him. They need to be familiar with the gestures of prayer. Time and thought should be given to create atmosphere and setting.

To help children develop a sense of prayer it is important to have places of quiet and reflection. This is developed within the classroom with an attractive focal area set aside with a candle and selection of appropriate books, key words and Bible references. This extends to communal areas such as the main display in the hall, the Rosary Garden, the Sacramental Garden and the prayer focus area in the library.

Each day should begin and end with prayer. However, prayer should occur at any time and any place in the midst of their everyday work. Care should be taken that it does not fall into a dull meaningless routine.

STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP PRAYER

Help them appreciate the language line by line or phrase by phrase;

Use gestures, music drama;

Share them in small group situations;

Rewrite them in their own words;

Use simplified texts such as H Richards "The Our Father for Children" and "The Hail Mary for Children".

Write their own.

It is important to:

Enable pupils and teachers to relax, to use their breathing to help them relax

Make the best possible use of silence

Make the best possible use of music

Lead the children in a meaningful experience of traditional prayers

Lead the children to feel free to pray with openness and spontaneity

Have the courage, as adults to share with the children

Always respect their right to listen and be silent

Ensure that our prayer reflects the essence of our lives, joy and sorrow, a sense of belonging, a feeling of loneliness, celebration and peace, anger and upset

Introduce the children to traditional meditation techniques – stilling exercises, use of mantra rhythmic prayer

Prayer boxes and books

APPENDIX IV

In the school children will come into contact with Scripture through the curriculum mainly in RE, worship and assembly. There are many opportunities to present pupils with the rich vein of fundamental truth that Scripture contains. However, if children are to be taught to know, value and understand the Bible, it is essential that the teacher also values it and has some understanding of the texts, which will be used.

GUIDELINES FOR USING THE BIBLE WITH CHILDREN

- In sharing Scripture with children there needs to be sensitivity to the age, experience and stage of development of each child
- It is important that we understand the meaning of the passage and do not communicate misunderstood concepts about God - Father, son and Spirit – and the meaning of our human lives
- Bible translations should be selected which are easily understood by the children while remaining faithful to the context and meaning of the passage in scripture
- Pupils should be introduced to the person of Jesus in ways which they can understand so that they may gradually appreciate the significance of his life and death in our own lives
- Children should be encouraged to discover and explore something of their experiences through scripture, which depict characters, and events with which they can empathise.
- Children should gradually be introduced to the literary forms found in the Bible (prayer, psalms, poetry, myth, allegory, prose, parable) and help them to appreciate the context in which they were written.
- Children should be helped to see how the Bible is respected and revered by all Christians.
- By the end of KS2 all children should be able to locate parts of the scriptures from Bible references

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Shareen Murphy