

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspiring everyone to **REACH** through Faith, Hope, Love

At St Joseph's, we strive for academic excellence through encouraging resilience, empathy, aspiration and challenge. We have high expectations for ALL so that we can be 'The best we can be.' With Faith, Hope and Love at the heart of our school family, our children feel safe, secure and supported.



## Policy for Religious Education

Our ethos is one that nurtures education through recognition and celebration of all children's experiences and achievements, whatever the context. Each child is unique and made in the likeness of God. Every child should succeed at their own level and be praised for this success

**Subject Leader: WD'Arcy**

**Link Governor: Syd Gwyer**

**Approved by: FGB**

**Approved on: 17/10/19**

**Review Date: Autumn 2022**

**Other relevant policies: Collective worship, PSHE, Relationships and Sex Education**

## **1. Philosophy of Religious Education**

- 1.1 The Catholic nature of our school is central to our philosophy and informs every aspect of the life of the school. The schools Mission Statement reflects the values that all within the school community share.
- 1.2 Catholic schools play a vital role in providing support in our community and an environment which is caring yet challenging, where children are able to witness and learn about how gospel values may be lived in today's world. St Joseph's recognises the fundamental importance of good religious education in the life of each child and the central role the school plays in this.
- 1.3 Each child is an individual and all staff look to assess how near a child is to meeting their potential. Every child is unique and made in the likeness of God. Every child should succeed at their own level and be praised for this success.
- 1.4 Through the Holy Spirit we strive to provide opportunities for a balanced education through which our belief is integrated, so that children may develop to their full potential academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally, creatively and socially. We aim to educate children in the teachings and practices of the Church and provide them with opportunities to explore, discover and build on their own Christian faith in a community which is safe and supportive. We believe that it is important to encourage every child to develop a living faith that involves a relationship with God that is real and personal. Religious Education therefore not only involves teaching and learning in a lesson but is also something that is integrated into every aspect of our school life, shaping our curriculum and the way we interact with one another.
- 1.5 Fundamental to the religious life of the school is the example Jesus gave us in his loving relationships with others. At St Joseph's all members of our school community will endeavour to treat each person, child and adult alike, with respect, and encourage the development of happy and harmonious relationships.
- 1.6 The RE scheme based on God Matters aims to include and meet the targets set out in the Curriculum Directory - Revelation, The Church, Celebration, Life in Christ - for Foundation Stage(FS), Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) and enable children to develop investigation, interpretation, communication, criticism, affective and social, and evaluation skills.
- 1.7 St Joseph's School believes in the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum and aims to promote knowledge and understanding of other religions and religious practices. Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism are all covered during 'Other Faiths' focus weeks during the year. This gives children time to focus on two specific religions per school year.
- 1.8 As a school, we support many charities, such as CAFOD, Mission Together and Gloucester Foodbank, along with other local, national and international charities.

## **2. General Principles**

- 2.1 Religious education is a right and will be provided for each child within the school.

- 2.2 The religious education provided will be in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and rooted in Scripture. The use of scripture should be a priority encouraging children to know key stories and people in FS and KS1 and developing understanding through reflection and empathy in KS2. FS and KS1 should focus on Biblical stories and the teaching of basic prayers and doctrine. In KS2 there should also be teaching about Jesus as a Jew and all the background and traditions that he would have lived by.
- 2.3 The religious education provided will be at a level appropriate to the age and the spiritual and intellectual development of the child.
- 2.4 Religious education will be taught as a core subject, which is carefully planned and appropriately recorded. Continuity and progression will be maintained through planning, monitoring and assessment. The RE scheme is based on 'God Matters' and modified at times to fit in with specific liturgical celebrations and feast days. As a core subject RE should have 10% of curriculum time each week (approx. 2½ hours, including collective worship, assembly and prayer time based on the topics being covered in God Matters).
- 2.5 Religious education will be stimulating and challenging, with high expectations made of the child. A cross curricular approach is encouraged with use being made of computing, discussion, drama, creative writing, artwork, music, dance, maps etc. RE is an integral part of all that we do.
- 2.6 Religious education is intended to deepen the child's knowledge and understanding, and to develop concepts, attitudes and values which will help each child to form a personal relationship with God through faith, while recognising that ultimately faith cannot be imposed upon any child.
- 2.7 Those teaching religious education will be aware of and sensitive to the fact that children come from a variety of faith environments, some from practising Catholic families, others from non-practising families, and others from families of other Christian or non-Christian beliefs. Children will be encouraged to respect others whose beliefs are different from their own and to develop their own knowledge and understanding of those faiths.
- 2.8 Each class should have a regular RE display focused on the unit of work currently being studied.
- 2.9 This religious education policy takes account of the statutory requirements governing religious education and worship in schools. The school's Mission Statement provides the foundation for the religious education policy.
- 2.10 All classes will have a focused area in the classroom for reflection and prayer relating to the unit of work or the liturgical calendar.

### **3. Content**

- 3.1 The religious education provided for each child will include teaching, at a level appropriate to the child's age and understanding, about:
  - 3.1.1 the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the Gospels.
  - 3.1.2 the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.
  - 3.1.3 major events, people, stories and themes of the Bible

- 3.1.4 the lives and examples of important saints and notable people from church history.
- 3.1.5 important spiritual and theological concepts.
- 3.1.6 prayer and worship, the Mass and the Sacraments.
- 3.1.7 significant feasts and seasons in the liturgical year.
- 3.1.8 personal morality in the light of the teaching of Christ and the Church.

3.2 Full details of the content of religious education in the school will be found in the scheme of work and in accordance with the RE Curriculum Directory.

## **4. Planning, Assessment, Reporting**

- 4.1 Teachers will assess children in each school Assessment window. Each teacher has a spreadsheet for their class with the assessment outcomes for each child. Every teacher keeps a record of where their children are, depending on a child's knowledge.
- 4.2 At each Assessment window every teacher will give the RE Subject Leader an overall level for every child (Working Towards ARE, Age Related Outcomes and Greater Depth). The RE Subject Leader will analyse data.
- 4.3 Children are made aware of the important vocabulary needed for each unit in the RE curriculum through displays in their classrooms. These are frequently referred to during RE lessons.
- 4.4 Children are aware of their own attainment through the opportunity to choose their own task and level of challenge. Tasks are presented in "Think", "Develop" and "Reflect."

## **5. Prayer**

- 5.1 St Joseph's aims to encourage each child to develop a personal relationship with God through prayer. The school aims to make prayer, worship and liturgy real educational and personal experiences, and to contribute successfully to the development of the spiritual and prayer life of each individual in the school community. Active participation is encouraged.
- 5.2 Children will be given opportunities to pray, and to develop their understanding of prayer, in a number of ways:
  - 5.2.1 by participating in daily prayer, reflection and/or meditation within the classroom, often in response to the 'God Matters' theme being explored
  - 5.2.2 by participating in prayer as a whole school together at assemblies.
  - 5.2.3 by being taught the words of commonly used prayers, and exploring their meanings.
  - 5.2.4 by studying the words of psalms and exemplary prayers.
  - 5.2.5 by writing and saying their own prayers, and sharing these with their class.
  - 5.2.6 by contributing to and participating in school and class Masses and other liturgical celebrations.
  - 5.2.7 by teaching and discussion of the nature of prayer, and providing personal experiences of prayer.
  - 5.2.8 by learning hymns and using them as a form of worship.

5.2.9 by leading prayer sessions in their classrooms

## **6. The classroom teacher will:**

- 6.1 Prepare plans in line with the scheme and policy.
- 6.2 Assess the work and progress of the pupils based on the teaching of scripture and Doctrine and the children's personal response to that.
- 6.3 Share assessment data with the RE Co-ordinator.
- 6.4 Report to parents on progress of pupils in terms of a written report and interviews at parent meetings.

## **7. The RE Leader will:**

- 7.1 Ensure that the policy and scheme are implemented correctly and reviewed regularly. Maintain effective links with teachers, parents, governors, clergy, cluster schools and the Diocesan centre.
- 7.2 Use staff meetings to keep the staff informed of developments regarding RE.
- 7.3 Prepare, promote and monitor the effective teaching and assessment of RE.
- 7.4 Maintain and build up resources to support the God Matters and Journey in Love Schemes of Work.
- 7.5 Administer the RE budget wisely and effectively so EYFS, KS 1 and KS2 are catered for. Ensure that each Year group teaches other faiths to promote knowledge, awareness and understanding.
- 7.6 Monitor the progress of pupils in RE across the school and share findings with staff and Governing Body.
- 7.7 Provide training and development for staff and Governors including keeping up to date with diocesan documentation e.g. People of Hope and RE Curriculum Directory. Work with the Governing Body to effect school improvement.
- 7.8 Send home regular RE newsletters to parents to share teaching and learning expectations for each unit and ways in which parents can help at home.

## **8. Home/school/parish links**

8.1 The Parish Priest from St. Dominic's in Dursley and St. Joseph's in Nympsfield celebrates Mass on a weekly basis and whole school Mass on important occasions. Each class attends Mass at least once per term.

## **9 Equal Opportunities**

9.1 Planning should account for the age and ability of the pupils so that all children have full access to RE. Differentiated materials and help will be provided for children with Special Educational Needs and those for whom English is an Additional Language. Teachers will also use ways other than reading and writing as a way of teaching, for example role play or art.

9.2 All children will have an equal opportunity to contribute to and participate in Masses, liturgies and assemblies.