

**St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School**  
**a part of**  
**St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust**

**Religious Education Policy (incorporating Collective Worship)**

*Learn, love and respect through Jesus*

*This policy encompasses the Diocesan Policy for R.E (2012) and must be read in conjunction with all our other policies*

**1. Rationale of Religious Education:**

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, we understand Religious Education to be the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ.

At our school we believe:

- Religious Education to be ‘the core of the core curriculum’
- We are clear that the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects
- Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church
- That evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils

The whole Catholic school is part of the Church’s ministry to evangelise and catechise. Through the centuries, the Church has educated young people and adults as part of its life. The witness, by the staff and pupils, to belief in Jesus Christ and the Catholic way of life, is itself a teaching and learning experience. In school, Religious Education is, in the first instance, education in the Catholic faith; pupils learn about the Catholic tradition and from it.

*“Religious Education is central to the curriculum of the Catholic school and is at the heart of the philosophy of Catholic education. Religious Education has developed in a way that reflects the particular identity of our Catholic schools in England and Wales. It teaches about the faith in the context of a school which proclaims the Gospel, and invites the individual to respond to the message of Christ. As the individual responds to this invitation, growth in faith and knowledge helps the pupil to respond to the call to holiness and understand the fullness of what it is to be human. For some, then, Religious Education will also be received as evangelisation and for some, catechesis.”*

**2. The Aims of Religious Education**

- to promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life, of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose
- to promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice
- to foster the love of God through knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith from scripture and doctrine
- to develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions or value systems adhered to in the UK
- to encourage the development of a personal relationship with God and to be capable of reflecting on their own experiences, and of developing a personal response to the fundamental questions of life
- to have respect for other people’s views, and hence to celebrate diversity in society

Classroom Religious Education has its own content, methodology, assessment and culture. The broad areas it covers are God's self-revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ. It should be accorded the same status and taught with the same rigour as the core subjects of the National Curriculum. It is open to inspection and assessment by public examination and at Diocesan level. It is an important contributory factor to the passing on of the community's faith from one generation to the next.

Classroom Religious Education has as its outcome:

*"Religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life"*<sup>iii</sup>

## 2.1 Curriculum time allocation:

R.E. will be taught developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject and requires 10% of the length of the taught week at each stage of education. This does **not** include Collective Worship.

## 2.2 Programme of Study:

The classroom Religious Education curriculum is to be delivered in accordance with the general norms laid down by the Bishops' Conference: **Religious Education Curriculum Directory\* (3-19)** (2012) \*Currently being revised; **Statement on Religious Education** (2000) and any Diocesan guidelines.

Diocesan policy relating to schemes of work and programmes of study encourages individual schools to utilise whichever resources best suit the needs of the children within their schools.

To fulfil the aims of Religious Education and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - we adopt the '**I Am the Way the Truth and the Life**' religious programme and the Diocesan Units of Work but teachers are free to use a range of resources that best suit the pupils in their class.

## 2.3 Religious Education and Spirituality

We aim to help our pupils think, appreciate, question, struggle, suffer, wonder, love, reflect and work in a way that goes beyond themselves. Spiritual development is about the quest and love of what as a Catholic School, we believe that the human and divine are inseparable, all belongs to and comes from God our Creator through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, God builds on human nature.

We have the highest expectation of each member of the school community, since everyone is made in the image and likeness of God, they may rightly expect that as a Catholic School we will offer opportunities for spiritual, moral and personal development.

## 2.3 Other Faiths

- We explore a range of other faiths including; Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism and have an excellent range of resources to support the teaching of these faiths. Where possible we invite guest speakers from other faiths in to school to share first hand experiences. Our teaching of other faiths is carried out at all times in accordance with core British Values (please refer to our statement of British Values).

## 2.4 Methodology

- A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils. Teachers involve pupils in activities that enable them to reflect, discuss and think about and evaluate their moral and spiritual consciences. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning as pupils progress from EYFS to end of KS1 and KS2. We track this by highlighting the planned objectives on the Curriculum Directory sheets and referencing the Curriculum Directory on our planning.
- We teach RE to all children in the school, including those in EYFS.
- In EYFS, RE is often an integral part of the current theme. EYFS practitioners plan, monitor and assess implementing the EYFS Curriculum Guidance to enable them to meet the seventeen Early Learning Goals of the EYFS profile.

## **2.5 Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

In Primary schools, a new National Curriculum is in place that requires schools to assess using age-related expectations, rather than Levels of Attainment. For this reason, a document entitled Age-Related Standards (3-19) in Religious Education has been published. At present this is an interim document approved for use in Catholic Schools by The Department of Catholic Education and Formation of The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It will be revised in line with the New Catholic Curriculum Directory.

Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress.

- The new standards document contains a description of what is expected of almost all pupils by the time they reach the end of a particular age phase. Staff are currently exploring ways to use this document in the best way.
- RE books are the core measure of progress.
- An in - house moderation meeting is held every Term
- The R.E. co-ordinator will take samples of work from each class to external moderation sessions at both deanery and diocesan level.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and R.E. Coordinator. The R.E. Coordinator together with the Head Teacher will monitor staff performance, teaching and learning through lesson observations, work scrutiny and pupil interviews (during observations)
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Pupil Voice discussions surrounding RE and Catholic Life

Classroom Religious Education is to be inspected according to the new National Framework for the Inspection of Catholic Schools, Colleges and Academies which is coming into effect in September 2022. This replaces the 2019 inspection framework.

## **2.6 Collective Worship**

Collective Worship takes place in the Parish Church, in the main hall and individual classrooms.

- At our school Collective Worship is a spiritual and learning experience
- The Act of Worship is in accordance with the rites, practices and beliefs of the Catholic Church. Everybody participates in daily acts of worship.
- We deliver Collective Worship through Key Stage and Whole School Collective Worship / Assemblies lasting about 10 – 15 minutes
- We aim to explore pupils' own experience and develop pupils' leadership opportunities. Our Chaplaincy Team also help with the planning of acts of worship.
- We plan Collective Worship together with reference to the Church's liturgical season

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- During Collective Worship we offer opportunities to pupils, staff, parents / carers and visitors to worship God in a variety of ways.
- Holy Days of Obligation are shared with the Parish Priest where possible and children take an active part in writing prayers, readings and reflections and by taking the offertory.
- Mass is celebrated in accordance with the 'New English translation of the Roman Missal' although child friendly prayers and readings are used in agreement with the priest.

### 3. The Role of the Co-ordinator for Religious Education

#### The Religious Education Co-ordinator will be responsible for:

- Working with the SLT to monitor teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutiny.
- Organising and maintaining the school photo journal for R.E and planning whole school displays related to RE.
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings
- Attending external moderation.
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development
- Ensuring the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests
- Attending appropriate Diocesan training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and leading in-house staff training and development
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education
- Liaising with the Headteacher, Governors, parents and the Education Service on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.
- Monitoring the coverage of the Curriculum Directory in each Key Stage.

#### Policy review

This policy has been agreed and ratified by the Local Governing Body at their meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022

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<sup>i</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory (Bishops' Conference, 2012), p.3.

<sup>ii</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory (Bishops' Conference, 2012), p.6.