

St. George & St. Martin's Catholic Academy
Policy for Religious Education

1. Aims of Religious Education at St. George & St. Martin's –

We grow in understanding and faith to be the best we can be.
We learn about a world outside of our school.
We love one another as Jesus taught us through the Gospels.
We are united in all that we do.
We play together, caring for each other.
We pray that we can become closer to God.
We want peace in our school, community and world.

(School Mission Statement)

2. How we meet our stated aims

To achieve the aims of the school set out in the Mission Statement, the school will:

- i) Follow the Diocesan Scheme of Work, 'Learning and Growing as the People of God'. This provides the core of spiritual and doctrinal teaching of the Catholic Church.
- ii) Prepare children to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation.
- iii) Provide opportunities for prayer and collective worship.

3. Legal Right

Parents have the legal right to withdraw children from all or part of the religious education and collective worship provided. If parents take up this option, they should make their own arrangements for the child during this period.

4. The Scheme of Work for RE

i) Entitlement

RE is allocated 10% of Curriculum time as required by the Bishops Conference. Prayer, Liturgies, Assemblies, Christmas Plays, Circle Time, PHSE, Citizenship and Hymn Practise are not to be included in this time. However, Mass "May be considered the equivalent of half-an-hour of RE, but only once in any week." (Communicating Christ)

RE is taught in at least 2 lessons per week and is not taught in a single block or in daily half hour sessions. Holy Week is the exception as this can be taught as a 'block'.

RE in the Foundation Stage is taught as a discreet subject.

ii) Scheme of Work

The Catholic RE Scheme of Work 'Living and Growing as the People of God', prepared by the Archdiocese of Birmingham, is followed throughout the school. By following this strategy, continuity and progression – which are intrinsic elements of the programme, - are ensured, from the Foundation Stage, through to Year 6. (See Appendix 1 for an overview of the Archdiocese Scheme of Work)

This scheme is supplemented by work on the saints and stories from the Old and New Testaments, Circle Time sessions and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSCHE) including SEAL material.

Relationships and Family Life Education

This is taught in all classes in the summer term, and is delivered specifically through the beliefs of the Catholic Church, via the 'Journey in Love' Scheme of Work (Oldham) for years 1 – 6. See RSE policy

Multicultural Education

All pupils learn about other religions and cultures and are encouraged to show respect and acknowledgment for the beliefs of others through open discussion and shared experiences. This is reflected through the involvement of parents and members of the community who sometimes come in to share with the pupils their experiences of their culture and faiths. Non Catholic children take an active part in the RE curriculum, including Sacramental preparation and Collective Worship. .

We recognise the need to familiarise the children with other Christian traditions and non-Christian faiths, and to encourage the children to foster attitudes of tolerance, respect and understanding for beliefs and traditions of other faiths. While remaining true to their Christian faith, the children are encouraged to acknowledge with respect the truth and value of other faith traditions and to establish good relationships with members of other faiths without prejudice. The children are also encouraged to recognise and value the international and multicultural nature of the Catholic Church. (See Equality Policy)

iii) Planning

Long Term Planning

At the beginning of each year, each class teacher completes a long term plan to indicate which units are to be taught., when and for how long The RE-Coordinator collates all the long term plans into a whole school long term plan. This plan needs to be reviewed annually.

Medium Planning

Medium and short term planning is taken directly from the Archdiocese Scheme of Work which comprises of a book for each year group. The books for each year group contain material for each of the units. Each unit is introduced by some background information and an idea of the prior knowledge that the children should have. The particular skills that will be involved, as well as the vocabulary to be used in the unit are also explained.

Each unit is a medium term plan, and teachers decide which parts will be taught, and which teaching strategies used.

Short term plans

Class teachers plan the lessons for each week, these give more detail about what is taught and identifies teaching strategies. The teacher caters for different ability groups and learning styles as well as providing time for children to work in their peer groups; this is also indicated on the short term plan (Appendix 2)

There should be a copy of Long Term, Medium Term and weekly plans in each year groups planning file.

iv) Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment

- Assessment for RE is carried out in line with the schools own assessment policy for all core subjects. Individual children's progress is tracked using the diocesan level descriptors in class assessment files. This information is used to inform subsequent teaching and learning.

- Staff work collaboratively half termly to moderate levelled work. From this, planning has been adapted to ensure coverage of all Attainment Targets in line with the Diocesan levelling document.
- The Re-Coordinator collates all moderated pieces of work for a school assessment portfolio.
- Class teachers monitor children's progress in RE during the year through the use of RE matrices which indicate children's levels in RE. These are shared as a staff and the RE co-ordinator collects and monitors these as well as reporting back to SLT.

Baseline Assessments

In Foundation Stage, the teachers conduct a Nursery Baseline Assessment on pupils entering and leaving the classes, this is then forwarded to the RE Co-ordinator.

v) Teaching and Learning of RE

The Archdiocese Scheme of Work, 'Living and Growing as the People of God' is followed throughout the school. The RE Co-ordinator scrutinises the planning and assessment, conducts lesson observations and book trawls to ensure that the scheme is closely adhered to.

Teachers are encouraged to use a range of strategies in their teaching and planning is colour coded to ensure that different learning styles are catered for. Teachers ensure that work is challenging and stimulating. Activities are differentiated to cater different ability groups teachers ensure that children have opportunities to work in differing ability groups.

Support for SEN children is also indicated on planning.

vi) Links with other Curriculum areas

Teachers are encouraged to make cross curricular links wherever possible in their planning. The Scheme of Work 'Living and Growing as the People of God' highlight links to other curriculum areas such as music, drama, geography and history. Topic Medium Term plans also encourages cross curricular links in developing children's faith through the phrase 'How will this topic develop the children as Catholics?' Opportunities for sustained pieces of writing should also be made. Children are encouraged to use ICT to research relevant topics or Saints and to use suitable programs such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint to present their work.

vii) Resources

All classes have access to appropriate books and audio/visual resources to deliver RE. Resources are located centrally in the Key Stage 2 building. Prompt return of resources ensures their availability across the school and caters for differentiated provision.

The Re-Coordinator has an inventory of resources within the school.

5. Sacramental Preparation

Preparing the children for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation each year are the responsibility of the school, supported by parents and the Parish Priest. Parents attend several meetings and a series of Sunday Family Masses are planned in preparation to receive the Sacraments.

In addition to the work on Sacraments in the Year 3 scheme of work, each child follows the 'I Belong' scheme. Parents of children in Year 3 are involved in the preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion by supporting their child when work from the programme is taken home. The Sacrament of Reconciliation usually takes place during Lent, and First Holy Communion in May or June.

In Year 6, children are prepared by their teacher for the Sacrament of Confirmation, usually in the Summer term.

7. Prayer and Collective Worship

The development of a significant prayer life within the school is essential to the growth of both the children's and the staff's personal relationship with God. A range of opportunities for prayer are provided every day. Children join in communal prayer during class prayer time, assemblies, masses and in the various liturgies celebrated in school. They also write their own prayers and share these with others.

All classrooms and shared areas have an RE focus area. These are colour co-ordinated to the churches liturgical cycle. The displays are changed regularly, and different focuses introduced, which may provoke thought, discussion and prayer, and inspire wonder and awe in the children.

Each term the RE Co-ordinator compiles a whole school Collective Worship Programme; this encompasses the breadth of shared collective worship within the school and includes: weekly whole school assemblies (Monday and Friday), key stage assemblies and hymn practises throughout the term. All teachers share the lead in planning and conducting key stage assemblies. The Collective Worship Programme also includes 'Prayer of the Month' which focuses the school on learning and revising traditional prayers throughout the year.

See also Collective Worship Policy and Traditional Prayer Policy.

During the seasons of Advent and Lent a specific liturgy programme is devised where the school come together in worship more regularly. A programme of masses is also planned with the Parish Priest consisting of whole school, key stage masses and class masses. All year groups are encouraged to participate in singing, prayers, readings, psalms, bidding prayers and the Offertory Procession. Masses are planned for Holy Days of Obligation and the school celebrates the feasts days of St. George (23rd April) and St. Martin (11th November).

8. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At St. George & St. Martin's School we teach RE to all children, of all abilities. Through our RE teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting learning opportunities and responding to each child's different needs.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning RE and work hard to meet the needs of those children with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language to ensure all pupils make good progress. (See Equality Policy)

9. Links with the Parents and the Community

Parents are invited to Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic celebrations. Through the programmes for Sacramental preparation they are invited to meetings in school and to family masses. Parents are also invited to help in school. Pre School children and parents are invited to attend PALs from the Spring term where they get to know some staff and the school. The school works closely with the Parish, the Parish Priest is a welcome visitor to our school and often attends assemblies.

The school and Parish often share celebrations together. Every year the Parish are invited to become prayer partners for the Confirmadi in Year 6, and have the chance to meet up at Sacramental Masses. Recently, the school has begun to visit a local day care centre for the elderly to share aspects of our school life with them.

10. The Role of the RE Co-ordinator

Responsibilities

- Provide leadership and direction for Religious Education in the school, including Sacramental preparation and Collective Worship.
- Liaise with the Parish Priest, and other key parishioners regarding Masses, services, Sacraments, and other significant events within the church calendar, where the school are involved.
- Plan a Collective Worship Programme for assemblies, masses, hymn practises and liturgies on a termly basis.
- Support, guide and motivate those teaching RE
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning through lesson observations, book and planning trawls.
- Secure high standards of teaching and learning
- Identify priorities and targets for RE and contribute to the school development plan
- Plan opportunities for INSET and moderation meetings (assessment)

10. Health and Safety

Candles and Matches

Candles, when used for collective worship and RE lessons, must be kept well out of the way of children. Matches should also be stored in a safe place, out of the reach of children and not accessible to them. Matches should be kept in the Head Teacher’s office and in the RE Co-ordinators classroom. Children should never be sent to collect matches.

Procedure for going to Church

Children must always be accompanied by staff and must not be allowed to remain in church unaccompanied.

11. Link Governor

- The Link Governor for RE is Cath Kelsall
- The Link Governor for Catholic Life is Lisa Harrison

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years

Agreed by Staff on.....

Agreed by Governors on