

st simon's



***'Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.'***

## **Religious Education Policy**

Approved by the Teaching and Learning Committee on 22nd February 2021

Ratified by the Full Governing Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.

To be reviewed in Spring 2024.

The purpose of Religious Education at St Simon's Catholic Primary School is to assist in the fulfilment of the school's Vision and Mission statement. It is our aim that each child will STRIVE to be the very best that he/she can be to reach his/her full potential, which will be realised both for the glory of God and the service of others.

The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human — that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation — is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.

For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step by step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.<sup>2</sup>

Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

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<sup>1</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

<sup>2</sup> *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000, p. 8-9  
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The outcome of Religious Education is 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>3</sup>

### **The Aims of Religious Education**

- To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- to enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- to present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- to raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- to develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- to stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- to enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- to bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.<sup>4</sup>

### **Curriculum time allocation:**

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Collective Worship. At Foundation Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 this is 2 hours spread over each week and at Key Stage 2 this is 2 ½ hours spread over per week.

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<sup>3</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

<sup>4</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

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## **Programme of Study**

'The Way, the Truth and The Life' programme is used as required by the Diocese to fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ.

There is a newsletter on the website each half term outlining the content that is to be taught in order that they may better support their child and the school.

## **Process**

Our starting point in Religious Education is **Revelation**. God is always the initiator in the history of our creation and redemption; it is his revealing of himself that makes classroom religious education possible.

From revelation we move onto **Church**; we consider how revelation gives life to the Church. The Church is the bearer of God's revelation and the means by which human beings live out their response to revelation, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

From here we focus on two aspects of the Church's response to God's revelation; **Celebration** – the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and **Life in Christ** – the moral life and the pursuit of holiness.

Attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential.<sup>5</sup>

## **Methodology**

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<sup>5</sup> *The Way, the Truth & the Life, Teacher Book 4*, CTS, 2004, p. 4

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Teaching in Religious Education should help pupils be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible. It 'serves in the examination and acceptance of the truths which are contained in the deposit of Revelation.'<sup>6</sup>

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils:

- class, small group and individual discussion
- creative play, movement and drama
- storytelling, writing, poetry and singing
- painting and drawing
- reflections and celebrations/worship

### **Sacramental Preparation**

Every year group is involved in Sacramental preparation and relevant work is retained in Sacramental exercise books which begin in Foundation Stage 2. Additional work is done in Year 3, the year in which children normally make their First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion. We work closely with the parish and with our sister school, St Peter's, to prepare children for First Sacraments.

### **ICT**

Opportunities to use ICT as a tool for teaching and to aid children's learning will be identified in planning. ICT skills are applied and developed through RE.

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

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<sup>6</sup> *Briefing*, 26 May 1994, quoting *General Directory for Catechesis*, 74b

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- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress.
- The school portfolio of pupils' work contains samples of work from each teacher for each assessed topic covering a range of abilities.
- In - house standardisation meetings is held regularly.
- The school portfolio of assessed samples of work is available for inspection.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning takes place as part of whole school self evaluation.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

### **Other Faiths**

*"When we approach other faiths we do so in the spirit of 'walking on holy ground'. As Catholics we are committed to respecting other faiths as arenas in which God is at work. This requires of us not only an absence of prejudice, so often based on stereotypes and ignorance, but also an evident reverence for the beliefs and practices of that faith. In fact, through our study of other faiths it is hoped we will gather understanding and enlightenment for our spiritual journey."*

*Archbishop Vincent Nichols Archbishop of Westminster  
March 2007*

At St Simon's Catholic Primary School we recognise major festivals of world religions as part of our cultural education. In addition, two weeks are set aside each year for the study of other faiths, specifically Judaism and Islam as Abrahamic, monotheistic religions. Pupils study Islam and Judaism for one week each. The dates of these study weeks are agreed annually.

**The Religious Education Subject Leader will always be a member of the Senior Leadership Team and is responsible for:**

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- working with the headteacher on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- organising and maintaining the school portfolio of pupils' work.
- organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- 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 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, the Diocesan Education Service on matters relating to Religious Education.
- auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.

Mrs Jayne Clarke, Deputy Headteacher, has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of, and training in, curriculum Religious Education.

Mrs Rachel Crisp, Headteacher, has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of, and training in, Worship and Sacraments.

### **The Role of the Religious Education Governor**

At St Simon's Catholic Primary the RE Governor, Mrs Froggat will provide the link between the governing body, appropriate committees, staff, parish and Diocese.

#### **The RE Governor will:**

- meet with the RE Leader and Headteacher each term to become better informed and discuss the implementation of agreed actions and progress towards targets;

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- monitor and evaluate, with the headteacher, the impact of the Mission Statement on the Catholic life of the school;
- review information from assessment statistics in order to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of standards;
- observe, by agreement with teaching and other staff, lessons or other activities in order to gain an understanding of teaching and learning strategies and resources available;
- participate in the liturgical life of the school;
- be familiar with information from other sources e.g Diocese, Teachers' Enterprise in Religious Education ([www.tere.org](http://www.tere.org))
- provide reports to the full Governing Body.

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