

Approved by:	Curriculum and Pupil Committee	Date: 5/2/2020
Signature:		
Based on:	Developed in school	
Last reviewed on:	Feb 2020	
Next review due by:	Spring 2023	



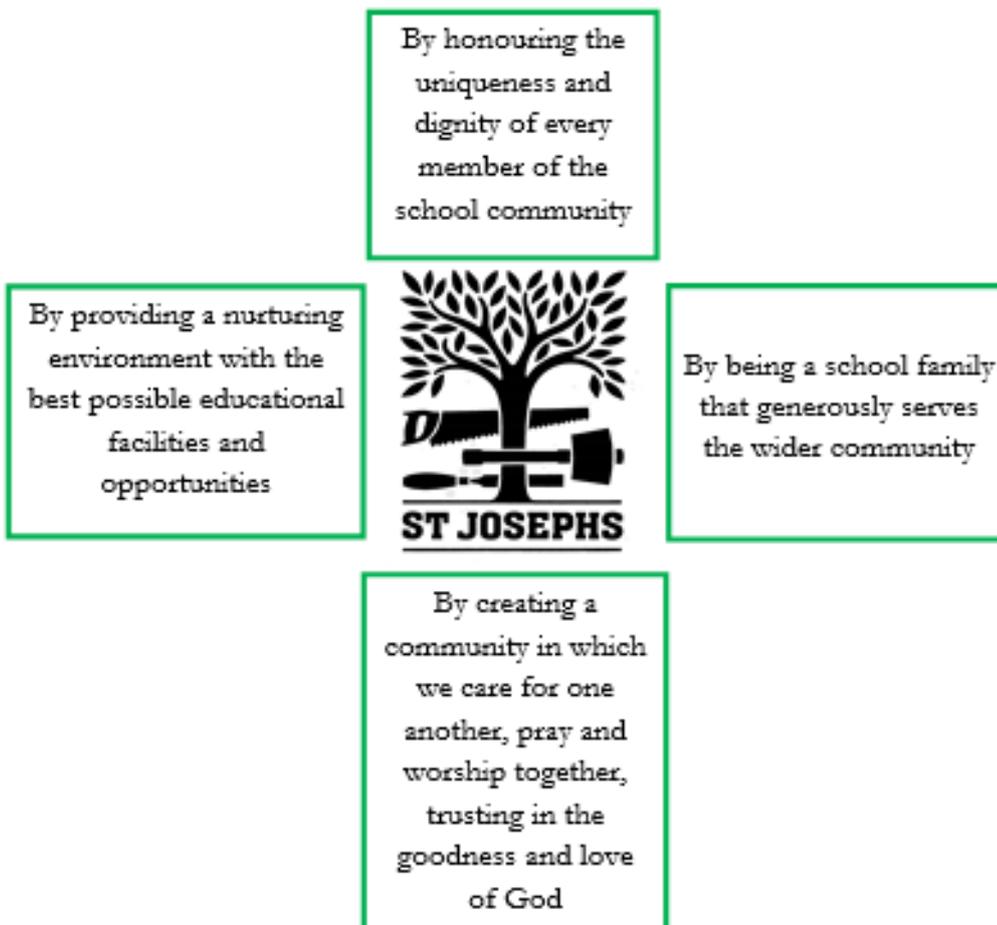
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Oxford

Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement

*“Let us protect with love all that God has given us”
(Pope Francis 19.03.2013)*

At St Joseph's we are committed to educating and caring for children in the light of the Catholic Faith in Jesus Christ.



With God as the centre of our school community and St Joseph as our example and protector, we will strive to use the tools, our talents, that we have been given to grow in the way of Jesus by loving, caring and doing our best.

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Rationale

With God as the centre of our school community and St. Joseph as our example and protector and striving to use the tools that we have been given to grow in the way of Jesus by loving, caring and doing our best, we "believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for, and subsequently shape the school curriculum and offer living experience of the life of faith in its practical experience." (Bishops of England and Wales 1998)

Purposes

At St Joseph's Primary School, we strive

- to ensure that each child develops a personal relationship with God. We enable all children to develop a sound knowledge of the Catholic faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding.
- to develop knowledge and understanding of the mysteries and beliefs which Catholics hold;
- to develop an awareness and understanding of the impact of faith in their daily lives;
- to encourage, study, investigation and reflection;
- to develop appropriate skills: for example,
 - ability to respond to what they heard;
 - to acquire knowledge and organise it effectively;
 - to make informed judgements;
 - to think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically;
- to foster appropriate attitudes: for example,
 - respect for truth;
 - respect for the views of others;
 - compassion.

The outcome will be religiously literate young people.

Guidelines

At St Joseph's Primary School:

- Religious Education counts for 10% of the total curriculum time, as recommended by the Diocesan Director of Education.
- We strive to help the children to know God and experience the Christian life of His community.
- We acknowledge that the children's development in faith in a loving God begins with the love and care of the family and we strive to form a partnership of education in faith between home, parish and school. We try to support parents, who "are the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith." (Rite of Baptism)
- We do our best to create a community which fosters Christian relationships based on the gospel values of truth, holiness, justice, love, forgiveness, healing and peace.
- We endeavour to make sure that our school is a place where the beliefs and values of the Roman Catholic tradition are taught, learned and lived in daily practice so that prayer, worship and liturgy are appropriate and meaningful experiences which further the spiritual development of each individual.
- We aim to ensure that the curriculum provides a Catholic, Christian context in which children can grow in understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values. **F**

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- With Christ as the basis of its existence, the school endeavours to respect the uniqueness and needs of the individual children, teachers and all other people who are involved in the school community.

The scheme of work

- We base our long term overview and detailed short term planning on the Birmingham Archdiocese Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education in Catholic Primary Schools: "Learning and Growing as the People of God." It lays out clearly the steps to be taken in RE at each stage of every term in the Foundation and Primary Years.
 - RE is taught as a discrete subject. Coverage consists of a minimum of at least two RE lessons per week. This does not include Prayer, Assemblies, Christmas Plays, Circle Time, PSHE and Hymn Practice. However, Mass "may be considered the equivalent of half an hour of RE, but only once in any week." (Communicating Christ)
 - We teach Religious Education to all children in the school, including those in Foundation.
 - The topics studied in Religious Education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.
 - The Scheme of Work for RE We base our long term overview and detailed short term planning on the Birmingham Archdiocese Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education in Catholic Primary Schools: "Learning and Growing as the People of God". It lays out clearly the steps to be taken in RE at each stage of every term in the Foundation and Primary Years.
 - We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Planning

- The long term plan indicates which units are to be taught and for how long. This plan is reviewed annually.
- Medium term planning is completed on a unit by unit basis according to the long term plan.
- Short term planning is completed on a weekly basis and is stored on the shared drive.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Children are assessed regularly using a variety of strategies: informal and formal observation, peer and group assessment, discussions, sampling, self-assessment and assessment through specific tasks.
 - All recorded pieces of work are marked in line with school marking policy and pupils are encouraged to respond to questions set and comments made by the teacher.
 - The Monitoring and Assessment Focus follows a four year rolling programme.
 - Particular assessment sheets are completed where all children are assessed against key learning objectives.
 - The document "Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools" is used to enable teachers to make accurate judgments on pupils' achievement.
 - A **sample of children's books** are stored by the RE Co-ordinator. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is, in RE, in each year group in relation to Diocesan expectations.
 - All Assessment sheets for each strand can be found on the shared drive. Monitoring.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

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- The monitoring of the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching in RE is the responsibility of the RE Co-ordinator.

Sacramental Preparation

- Sacramental Preparation for the first celebrations of Communion and Reconciliation begin in the Foundation year and deepen and develop throughout KS1.
 - Children receive these Sacraments for the first time in the Spring and Summer terms of Year 3. Some children receive these Sacraments later. Parents are informed at the beginning of Year 3 about when and how to enrol their children in their parish Sacramental Preparation.
 - The teaching of the Sacrament of Confirmation is part of the teaching in Years 5 and 6. Parents are informed at the beginning of Year 6 about when and how to enrol their children in their parish Sacramental Preparation.

Prayer and Collective Worship

- We see worship as an integral part of our school life.
 - We see that making the time to celebrate enables the children to acknowledge the value of the experiences they have explored.
 - In worship, we proclaim God and respond in prayer.
 - As a community which seeks to ground its busy life in God, we acknowledge the need to plan some of our prayer life very deliberately.
 - The children are helped to discover various forms of prayer, formal and informal, private and communal.
 - All staff pray with the children and visitors are encouraged to do likewise because it is through praying with adults that the children learn to pray.
 - A copy of the formal prayers used in the school is to be found in each classroom.
 - Children are encouraged to pray by themselves, especially in the morning and evening, and after receiving communion.
 - An Act of Worship is held every morning, before/after lunch and at the end of the school day. Acts of Worship are whole school, groups of classes or single classes.

*"No Christian community is built up which does not grow from and hinge on the celebration of the most Holy Eucharist."
(Vatican II, Presbyterarum Ordinis)*

- We recognise that the Eucharist is the high point of the sacramental system and we purposely develop the children's knowledge of and participation in it.
- We celebrate Mass with the local community regularly and on Holy Days of Obligation.
- On other occasions for particular events e.g. Saints' days, End of School year it is celebrated in school.
- Seasonal liturgies and harvest, Advent Service, assemblies are planned and discussed at the beginning of each school year.
- Penitential Services are arranged in school during Advent and Lent when there is an opportunity for individual confession.
- When possible, Staff In-service Training Days begin with staff attending mass at one of the Parish Churches or a parish priest is invited to celebrate mass for them in school.

Legal Right

- Legal Right Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from Religious Education lessons and acts of worship.

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The RE Co-ordinator

- The RE Co-ordinator is also responsible for:
 - supporting colleagues in the teaching of RE;
 - being informed about current developments in the subject;
 - providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school;
 - arranging for staff training or Inset;
 - giving regular summary reports in which strengths and weaknesses in the subject are evaluated and areas for further improvement are identified.
- The RE Co-ordinator has specially allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the children's work and for visiting classes to observe the teaching of RE. This process of review also helps to determine priorities for the SIP.

The RE Co-ordinator

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them.

- Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development.
 - We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.
 - Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. We use their experience at religious festivals such as Easter, Diwali, and Passover to develop their religious thinking.
- We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.
 - Children:
 - carry out research into religious topics;
 - discuss religious and moral issues using computers and working individually or in groups;
 - sometimes they prepare presentations and share these with other members of the school in assemblies;
 - lead assemblies and prayer services.
 - We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:
 - setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
 - setting tasks of increasing difficulty (not all children expected to complete all tasks);
 - grouping the children by ability in the room and setting differentiated tasks;
 - providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
 - directing classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

Contribution of Religious Education to the teaching of other subjects

- Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by:
 - actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening;

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- using texts in Literacy lessons which have religious themes or content, which encourage discussion and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening;
- encouraging the children to write letters and record information in order to develop their writing ability.
- We use ICT where appropriate in Religious Education.
 - The children find, select and analyse information, using the Internet and network-based programs.
 - They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work to improve its presentation.
- Link Religious Education teaching to Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship
 - Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education.
 - We also promote the values and attitudes required for Citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility.
 - In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

- Through teaching Religious Education in our school, we provide opportunities for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
 - Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life.
 - We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions.
 - We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society.
 - Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Resources

- We have a variety of resources in our school to fully support the implementation of the RE strategy.
 - We keep resources for Religious Education in a central site appropriately labelled for easy access.
 - There are sets of Bibles for both Key Stages and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in Religious Education.
 - The school library has a good supply of RE topic books to support the children's individual research.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

- In line with school policy linked to Inclusion and Equal Opportunities, all children have access to the whole curriculum.
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School approaches Religious Education in the light of the Catholic Faith tradition. However, children of other faiths are accepted and welcomed into our community.
 - The parents of such children are made aware of our philosophy, aims and objectives but the faith of these children is respected.

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- We encourage them to share their background and beliefs with other children at appropriate times, aiming to encourage tolerance, respect and understanding between cultures and traditions represented in the country as a whole.

English as an Additional Language

- At St Joseph's Catholic Primary, we encourage all our children with English as an Additional Language to achieve the highest possible standards. We do this through taking account of:
 - each child's life experiences and needs.
 - awareness of when a child has particular learning and assessment requirements which are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language.
 - ensuring that when delivering the RE curriculum we ensure that we meet the full range of needs of those children who are learning English as an additional language. This is in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 and our equal opportunities policy.
 - knowing that the RE curriculum can create different language demands which we identify and address. (see EAL policy)

Teaching Religious Education to children with additional needs

- In our school we teach RE to all children, whatever the ability.
 - When teaching RE, we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties.
 - We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Links with the parents and the Community

- We are aware of the important role which parents have in the education of their children and acknowledge them as the first teachers of their child in the ways of the Faith.
 - Parents are invited to the weekly 'Showing Assembly' and celebrations such as the Advent Service.
 - Parents receive termly curriculum information booklets outlining the content of the RE curriculum for that period of time.
- We serve three main parishes (St Anthony of Padua, Corpus Christi and Greyfriars) and strive to form a close relationship with each parish.
 - The role of our Parish Priests is very important and we endeavour to involve him not only in the liturgical life of the school but also in the pastoral care system and other areas where his talents and gifts may be used.
 - Preparation for the Sacraments is a partnership of school, home and Parish.
- Aware that our children leave in Year 6 to attend a wide variety of schools, a Retreat Day is organised for the Year 6 at the end of Term 5 and to make links with our local Roman Catholic Secondary School, this school is invited to organise a Retreat Day for Year 5 on the same day.
- Every three years a Catholic Ethos Day is planned so that some governors, staff, priests, children, and parishioners discuss a topic.

Health and Safety

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- All activities linked to Religious Education e.g. visits to the Church or other places of Worship are carried out in line with our Health and Safety and Educational Visits Policy.