

ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Archdiocese of Birmingham

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Banbury

Policy for Religious Education

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Banbury, we believe that every child is a unique creation made in the image and likeness of God, uniquely precious and uniquely gifted. We believe that every child is **"called by name"** with a special service or gift to bring to the world and that we are entrusted with the development, nurture and safeguarding of every aspect of our pupils - spiritual, academic.

We want our children to move on from St Joseph's with a deep sense of their duty and responsibility to others. Through our teaching, reflection on the Gospel values and promotion of virtues we endeavour to instill in our pupils a "habit of mind and action which genuinely serves the common good" (Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster).

We believe that:

- if we nurture gratitude in our pupils, they will practise generosity;
- if we nurture attentiveness in our pupils, they will practise discernment, make good decisions in their lives and accept responsibility for their actions;
- if we nurture compassion and love in our pupils, they will treat others with respect and they will learn to empathise with those who suffer poverty, injustice or violence;
- if we nurture faith and hope in our pupils, they will have the confidence to contribute positively to the communities in which they live and inspire others to be hopeful for the future;
- if we nurture eloquence and truthfulness in our pupils, they will be honest and respectful in their relationships with others;
- if we nurture wisdom and a desire to learn in our pupils, they will use their gifts and skills for the benefit of others and will contribute positively to others' lives;
- if we nurture curiosity in our pupils and engage them actively in their learning, they will become lifelong learners who are tolerant and respectful of difference and diversity;
- if we nurture a strong conscience in our pupils, they will have the confidence to lead by example, reflecting God's love to others and striving for harmony and equality in the communities around them.

Our aims:

- to instill in every child and every adult in the school an awareness that they are loved by God;
- to provide children and staff with awareness, knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and its beliefs;
- to support and encourage spiritual development;
- to help children to explore and express their sense of awe and wonder at God's creation;
- to promote and encourage the sacramental life of Christian families and to promote amongst all the spirit of love and service in both the school and wider communities;
- to promote and encourage an intelligent appreciation and understanding of religious questions in general and a sympathetic awareness of other religious beliefs and practices.

How we achieve these aims:

1. Scheme of work

RE is allocated 10% of curriculum time, as required by the Bishops' Conference. This does not include prayer, assemblies, hymn practice, Christmas plays, circle time or PHSCE lesson. Attendance at Mass may be considered as the equivalent of thirty minutes of RE once in any week. There are two RE lessons per week, and these take place on different days.

At St Joseph's School we follow the diocesan programme of study *Learning and Growing as the People of God*. It provides the core of spiritual and doctrinal teaching of the Catholic Church, as proclaimed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Teaching methods and activities are appropriate to the age and development of the children. Following the strategy from Nursery/Reception through to year 6 ensures that there is both continuity and progression.

2. Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The Long Term Plan for each year is drawn up by the RE coordinator in accordance with school term dates, elements of the liturgical year and the parish timetable for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Medium and Short Term Planning is the responsibility of the class teacher and is done on a unit by unit basis. This planning is saved on the school's computer system. The subject coordinator supports the planning of units or individual lessons as required or when requested to do so.

Work is marked according to the school's marking and feedback policy. Formative assessment is on-going in order to involve children in their own learning and enable teachers to ensure that children are receiving the support and challenge which they need to consolidate and extend their learning and understanding. Individual areas of the curriculum are assessed each year on a rolling

programme: liturgical year, scripture, sacraments, living as Christians. Teachers assess the relevant units for each child in accordance with the diocesan guidelines.

Using the diocesan end of phase expectations, work from each unit of study is annotated for one focus child in each class for the purposes of moderation and tracking of progression. The subject coordinator collates and analyses the data from assessments to ascertain levels of progress for classes and for key groups in classes, key stages and across the whole school. In nursery and reception, the diocesan baseline assessment is carried out and this is used to inform subsequent planning and measure progress.

Parents are informed at parents' evenings and in end of year reports of their child's approach and progress in RE.

Teaching and Learning

Religious Education is a core subject and is taught to the whole class. Approaches may include whole class, group, partner or individual activities in a variety of forms. We aim to meet the needs of all pupils by using deep questioning and offering support and extension where appropriate. We recognise that children who are MA and G+T children in RE may not be the same as those in other subjects, and this is considered when designating tasks, which may include work in books such as written tasks, photographs annotated by children to explain what they show, art work. Drama and role play activities may also be used. Not all activities will produce a paper outcome, but we follow the diocesan guidelines that in KS1 there must be evidence of two activities per fortnight, and in KS2 three activities.

3. Links with other curriculum subjects

The message of Christ is at the centre of all we do and so whilst RE lessons are discrete lessons, a variety of other curriculum areas may support and enhance the learning. This may particularly be the case in terms of art, music, ICT and literacy through speaking, listening and writing. That said, we acknowledge that, even when taught through a different curriculum area, RE lessons must maintain a Religious Education focus and objective.

4. Multicultural Education

We encourage children to show respect for other Christian traditions and for other faiths. Where appropriate, the beliefs of others are discussed and children who belong to different faith groups are encouraged to share their own knowledge and experience. This may be the case during specific lessons, or during specific seasons and festivals.

5. Resources

RE resources are stored in the library and the resources room. An audit of resources takes place regularly so that they can be supplemented or refreshed.

Sacramental Preparation

The strategy ensures that the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are introduced and studied at the appropriate ages, in years three and six. Learning through the strategy is supplemented when needed by sessions led by the RE coordinator. Parents are encouraged to be proactive in their children's preparation. Children are presented to the parish during a commitment rite at Sunday Mass at the start of the period of sacramental preparation. Support is offered to children who are in year 4 or above and who wish to prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All pupils at St Joseph's School are treated equally as individuals, regardless of gender, race or religious background. The tasks set are chosen to suit the ability of each child, and no child is excluded from RE lessons on the ground of special educational or behavioural need.

Links with parents and the community

Every effort is made to promote and sustain strong links between home, school and parish. Parents bring their children to the Rite of Presentation to the parish at the start of the period of sacramental preparation. Throughout the year, parents are encouraged to attend school assemblies and Masses and we ensure that they are kept informed of parish Masses and services especially during key liturgical periods such as Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter.

The charity work undertaken by the children is important in terms of our community links. We support the Banbury foodbank in our local community, the Father Hudson Society as part of our diocesan community and CAFOD to support our brothers and sisters overseas. St Joseph's School also responds to need as it arises, such as in cases of natural disasters.

Role of the RE coordinator

The RE coordinator is responsible for:

- working with the Head Teacher to promote the Catholic ethos of the school;
- facilitating the delivery of an effective and rigorous RE curriculum;
- working with other senior leaders to monitor teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies;
- organising moderation of work;
- identifying strengths and areas for development as part of the self-evaluation process;
- organising and leading in-house staff training and development;
- identifying the training needs of staff so that they can teach effective RE;
- supporting and advising colleagues on the planning and teaching of RE
- ensuring that children are appropriately prepared for the sacraments

- liaising with the Head Teacher, Governing Body, parents and the diocesan education service on matters relating to RE;
- auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.

Health and Safety

As with all areas of the curriculum, health and safety matters are considered when organising lessons and visits. This may include practical activities, lighting of candles, food safety if tasting foods etc.

Visits are organised by the class teacher in conjunction with the educational visits coordinator. The relevant form is completed and submitted to the head teacher for approval. Risk assessments are carried out in advance of the visit.

Reviewed: September 2019

Review Date:

Headteacher: Clare P Smith

Chair of Academy Committee: Angela Briggs