



St Mary's Catholic First School

Policy for Religious Education

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY for ST MARY'S CATHOLIC FIRST SCHOOL in the DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH

Mission Statement

Together we will:

- promote a catholic ethos of caring and forgiveness;
- nurture the intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and physical development of each person;
- be free to express ourselves in a safe environment;
- share in the life of our family, school and community.

“Nurturing today’s minds for tomorrow’s future, always remembering that God made me as I am.”

And never forgetting that: ‘God made me as I am’

Rationale of Religious Education

Teaching Religious Education is the main reason Catholic schools exist. The primary goal of Religious Education is to increase the knowledge and understanding of the Christian message for all pupils in Catholic schools. As such it will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

Education is integral to the Mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News.

'Every Catholic School is a place of encounter with the living God, who in Jesus Christ, reveals his transforming love and truth'. 1

Religious Education in a Catholic school is an academic discipline 'with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines'. As such it should be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

'Classroom Religious Education complements and is enhanced by the catechetical and worshipping life of the whole school community but is distinct from each of them'. 2

'Religious Education in Catholic schools is considered the core of the core curriculum. It is a discrete subject discipline as canonically and statutorily defined. The nature, purpose and scope of classroom Religious Education are defined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory'. 3

The centrality of classroom Religious Education in the curriculum is reflected in several ways in Catholic schools, including parity with other core curriculum subjects. Bishops have mandated that pupils are entitled to receive RE that constitutes 10% of the taught week.

The outcome of classroom 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'. 4

1 Pope Benedict

2 Circular letter on Religious Education in schools 2009

3 Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2012

4 Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops Conference of England and Wales, 2012

The aims of Religious Education as stated in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory are:

- To present engagingly a comprehensive content which 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 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 to 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.

Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2012

Religious Education – Curriculum Time Allocation

10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship or the teaching of RSE. *(Please refer to separate Plymouth Diocese RSE Policy)*

Programme of Study

To fulfil the aims of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and the four areas of study outlined in this document: Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ religious education is primarily taught through the 'Come and See' programme of work.

Process

Religious Education, in the Diocese of Plymouth, is taught through the process of Explore, Reveal and Respond. As outlined in both the RECD and Catechism of the Catholic Church; Explore, Reveal and Respond follows the pattern of the human **search** for meaning, God's initiative in **Revelation** and the **response** in faith.

"The special character of the Catholic school, the underlying reason for it, the reason why Catholic parents should prefer it, is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated into the education of the pupils." RECD 2012

Methodology

A variety of teaching and learning strategies and resources will be used by teachers, from across the curriculum, and adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of the pupils.

'Religious Education' makes use of a range of appropriate teaching methods, according to the age and ability of the pupils and that opens up for pupils the mystery of God's saving action in Jesus Christ' RECD.

Inclusion and Equality

All pupils in our school, regardless of ability, faith and background, will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme. We strive to do the best for all our pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender religion or sexual orientation or those who are disadvantaged.

'Children of all abilities benefit from ways of learning and knowing which are not necessarily reliant on cognitive ability, in particular, the learning of the heart'. RECD

Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

Parents have the right of withdrawal from RE for their children.

Other Religions

We dedicate at least one week throughout the year to the teaching of Judaism. In addition, we dedicate a further week during the year to the teaching of Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out using the interim 'Age-Related Standards in Religious Education (3-19) document agreed by the Bishops' Conference. Each child will be individually assessed against these standards

Please see attachment

- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress across time and evidence of informal/formal assessment in line with their school's assessment policy.
- Feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, will be personalized and tailored to challenge individual children to make at least expected progress.
- An in-school moderation of pupils' books and work, against the interim standards, is held at least once a term and appropriate CPD provided at all levels.
- Moderation of the termly formal diocesan assessment task will take place termly with RE Leads and the Diocesan RE Adviser at cluster level.
- Annually, usually in the summer term, a range of annotated pupils' books/work are presented for Diocesan Moderation at RE Leaders moderation meetings, as directed by the Diocesan RE Adviser. The moderation will be against the interim standards.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning work is in line with that of the other core subject areas and therefore include pupil voice, lesson observations and book scrutinies.
- During the time we are using the interim Age-Related Standards document progress and achievement will be tracked against these standards and recorded and tracked using SIMS before migrating to INSPIRE later in the year.
- The RE Lead will collect and collate termly data, use this for analysis and school development planning and send data annually to the Diocesan Education Service through the DDR (Diocesan Data return).
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of the academic year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors/Local Governing Body Governors at each Full Governing Body throughout the year.

Management of the Subject

Sinead Gannon is the RE Lead and has the responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery and training in Religious Education in line with other core subject areas. This role is carried out in line with the RE Leaders Job Description as per the Plymouth Diocese model.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the governor with responsibility for RE and Catholic Life, the RE Lead, Executive Headteacher and the Local Governing Board on an annual basis.