



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM

**Sacred Heart Catholic
Primary School**



'To grow in Wisdom and in Grace'

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Policy for Religious Education

Introduction

Sacred Heart School was founded by, and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with Canon Law and the teachings of the Catholic Church and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and in particular:

- Religious Education is to be in accordance with teachings, doctrines and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church
- Religious worship is to be in accordance with rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church; and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ

Aims

Our aims are:

- To nurture our children in the Catholic Faith
- To acknowledge, respect and learn about other faiths
- To provide a living example of Gospel Values in our relationships with one another
- To teach the children a range of values and virtues that can be used in the pupils' spiritual, moral, vocational, social and cultural development.
- To provide a high quality education where each child develops to his/her full potential and acquires the knowledge, skills and personal qualities to become useful, responsible, respectful and happy members of society

How we meet our Aims

In order to achieve these aims, RE is presented through the following strands:

- A) The RE Programme of Study including Multi Cultural Education
- B) Religious Practice
- C) Sacramental Preparation
- D) Pastoral Care, Behaviour and Discipline
- E) Links with other Curriculum Areas

A The RE Programme

RE is allocated 10% of the curriculum in line with the expectations of the Archdiocese.

Collective worship does not constitute teaching curriculum time; likewise hymn practices are not part of the allocated 10% Mass, however, can be included as part of RE curriculum time. The directive from the Archdiocese is that Mass “may be considered the equivalent of half an hour of RE but only once in any week”.
(Communicating Christ)

Learning and Growing as the People of God

Sacred Heart Catholic School follows the model curriculum strategy published by the Archdiocese of Birmingham in response to the Catechism, the Curriculum Directory and as a continuation of the Curriculum Mapping.

The structure of the Strategy is designed to deliver the elements of the Curriculum Directory in a systematic and progressive order. The common themes delivered annually are those based on the Liturgical Year. Other elements such as the Sacraments and Scriptural Knowledge are delivered annually but each year group has a different emphasis and focus and therefore each year group does not study each sacrament or the same scriptural passages.

How we plan Religious Education

The Long Term Planning is contained within the Programme of Study for each year group. The RE Department provides a long term plan in accordance with school term dates and the RE Subject Leader allocates each unit to specific dates throughout the year.

Medium Term Planning is the responsibility of the class teacher and is done on a unit by unit basis.

Short Term Planning is recorded on a separate RE planning sheet.

How we Assess, Record and Report

The assessment of individual pupils in RE is the responsibility of the class teacher. Teachers report to parents via consultations in the Autumn and Spring Terms and by a written report at the end of the school year. School follows the RE Department’s guidance with regard to assessment against national standards.

Class teachers make use of ‘unit markers’ at the beginning and end of every unit of work. This allows them to understand the children’s prior knowledge about an area of study and to gauge progress once the unit of work is completed.

A formal programme of assessments has been devised focusing on one of the 4 strands on a rolling programme over 4 years. As a result, comparisons across the whole school can be made; progression by year groups can be monitored. Assessment sheets have been provided for each year group and have been taken from the RE Live website. Every year one child per class is selected and their work is moderated at various points throughout the year against the end of phase expectations set out in the National Standards. The work is moderated during consultation meetings between Class Teacher and RE Subject Leader. There is a 3 year cycle for choosing the child based on ability group- LA/A/MA).

The monitoring of assessment is the responsibility of the RE Subject Leader who also

- Supports colleagues in their teaching by keeping them informed about current developments in RE and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- Purchases and organises resources;
- Uses specially allocated regular subject leader time to review evidence of children's work and to observe RE lessons across the school;
- Sets whole school themed targets for each academic year;
- Gives the Governors an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in RE and indicates any areas for improvement;
- Works with the parish priest to organise whole school/parish masses and celebrations as well as sacramental programmes. Masses are celebrated both in Church and the school hall;
- Liaise with other RE Subject Leaders in cluster schools and with the Primary Advisor for RE.

How we teach Religious Education

Religious Education is taught to the whole class. The class teacher, in his/her planning will decide the most appropriate approach for the lesson. The work is to be differentiated according to ability of the children and to the nature of the task being undertaken. The children may be offered opportunities to work individually, with partners or as part of a group. We have developed a system called the 'Three Hearts Challenge' which offers the opportunity for children to all access the same learning objective but in three clearly differentiated ways. We encourage the children to try to choose their own level, having reflected on their prior knowledge and level of understanding. We encourage the children to try to challenge themselves.

Religious Education seeks to develop social and emotional skills as well as those of knowledge and understanding. It also seeks to develop a range of skills which can be used in other areas of the curriculum such as skills in thinking, investigating, interpreting, communicating and evaluating.

Multicultural Education

The RE Strategy contains information about other faiths in various year groups. The class teachers use this information and if appropriate may call upon the experience of the children in the class who practice this faith to give further explanation of how they practice their faith. Each year, the whole school plans to teach the children about three other faiths; one per term. During this time, children are offered the opportunity to learn about other faiths in more detail. One of our main aims in doing this is to acknowledge, respect and learn about other faiths.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the RE curriculum, regardless of religion, gender, culture or special educational needs. Full participation in all aspects of RE is expected.

We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

With regards to the sacramental preparation in Years 3 and 6, all children follow the units of work in the Strategy and extra support is provided for those who will be receiving the Sacraments.

B Religious Practices

Prayer, worship and liturgical celebration are central to our Catholic tradition. It is of prime importance, however, that sound educational and pastoral principles determine the ways in which these are extended in the school community. It is the task of the school... to promote and develop as appreciation of and a more active participation in prayer, worship and liturgy.

(Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of a Catholic School)

It is through the observance of and participation in acts of prayer, worship and celebration of the Liturgy that the child has the opportunity to express his/her faith and to develop a relationship with God. School, for many of our pupils is their first, sustained experience of the Catholic tradition. Thus, we provide a range of opportunities where Catholic faith can be practised.

- Formal prayer: morning, afternoon, at mealtimes
- Reflective prayer in the form of guided meditations
- Collective Prayer in the form of assemblies: whole school, Class-led once a year by each year group
- Celebration of Mass: We regularly celebrate mass, both in school and at Sacred Heart church. Masses may be whole school, key stage or individual class masses. The themes of the mass are linked with the liturgical year, the RE curriculum as well as the values and virtues from the catholic Schools Pupil Profile.
- Observance of feasts and the Church calendar
- Regular hymn practices
- Involvement in Parish and Community Celebrations: Christmas Carol Service in church, the receiving of Sacraments within Sunday Parish Masses, Church Fete, leading RE.
- We encourage those who attend Mass at Sacred Heart Church to become altar servers both for parish and school masses.

- Children are provided with Mass orders of service to help them join in with the Mass responses.

C Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist currently takes place in Year Three. In addition to the Strategy which is followed by all pupils, the school provides extra resources and sessions for the Catholic children to enable parents to take an active part in their children's preparation for these sacraments

The parents are asked to commit to the Parish Programme of Preparation. They are invited to attend evening meetings during the year where they meet with the parish priest, Father Paul Fitzpatrick.

The sacrament of reconciliation takes place during Lent and The Eucharist in the summer term.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation takes place in Year Six. The school uses the 'YouCat' for the Confirmandi alongside the Strategy which is followed by all pupils. The parents are invited to attend meetings at the start of the preparation at church with Father Paul.

D Pastoral Care, Behaviour and Discipline

"Our aim in Christian moral education is to help the children grow into mature Christians who will live for the Father in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit" (Veritas)

Please refer to the relevant policies

Involvement with parents and the parish community

The parents are positively encouraged to involve themselves with the religious life of the school. They are invited to attend all school masses and Friday assemblies. Sacramental preparation work is sent home so that parents can have an active involvement with work being done in school.

The school encourages children to attend Sunday Mass and to be more actively involved by altar serving.

The Masses the children attend are split between being celebrated in church and school. For Masses celebrated in school, the parishioners are invited to attend.

E Links with other Curriculum Areas

Religious Education has close links with other curriculum areas. Many of the skills

that are developed in RE are transferable to other subjects. Research and referencing skills are used in all subjects and varied writing skills in English can also be found in RE.

As an academic subject, RE has close links with History, Geography and Art. ICT is used for research, presentation and word processing.

Health and Safety

All children gather together in the school ahead of weakling down to church. Children walk together, often with the older children helping to act as chaperones for the youngest classes.

We tend to use battery operated candles but where candles with wicks are used, any matches kept in classrooms must be locked away securely. The teacher is responsible for lighting candles for worship focus and ensuring that lit candles are used safely and extinguished correctly.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of R.E across the school.

All classrooms have teacher copies of "Learning and Growing as the People of God".

Each class also has a collection of artefacts to support prayer and meditation. Each classroom also has a designated RE area/table, covered by the appropriate coloured liturgical cloth which is a focus for prayer.

Each class also selects a class patron saint- these are clearly displayed on the internal doors of each classroom as well as on the front of the children's' RE books. Access to the Internet is available both through the classroom smartboards and laptops.