

Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Primary School

Policy for Religious Education



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Introduction and Mission

Catholic schools are established to be part of the Church's mission, placing Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people's lives. At Our Lady of the Wayside, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life and we strive to ensure that our pupils are educated in the beliefs and devotional practices of the Catholic Church. This is reflected in our school mission statement:

'Learning and growing together, rooted in Christ'

At Our lady of the Wayside we manifest a Catholic ethos which is evident and open to be experienced by all who enter the school. We strive to promote Gospel values and ensure that the teachings of the Catholic Church are an integral part of our mission. We provide a religious education which studies the mysteries of God and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. In delivering the curriculum we recognise the uniqueness of each child and respect the value, dignity, and individuality of each one, celebrating diversity and learning the values of mutual respect, individual liberty, and tolerance.

Within our school, great emphasis is given to Religious Education. Prayer and Liturgy, the celebration of the Mass and preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist and Confirmation are given great importance. Every effort is made to live by and promote the teaching of Our Lord and his Church concerning faith and moral living.

We attach great importance to forging strong relationships within the school community and recognise that the partnership, which exists between school, home, and parish, must be nurtured if we are to grow and develop as a living and worshipping community and truly provide a Christ centred environment for the children in our care.

Aims and purposes of Religious Education at Our Lady of the Wayside

- To develop an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each individual child's life and to encourage a personal response to that presence.
- To allow each child to develop their conscience and make sound moral judgements based on commitment to following Christ.
- To enable each child to learn and develop their full potential according to their abilities and adopt attitudes of care and respect for each other.
- To develop within our school a respect for the dignity of each human being and provide children with the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the diverse nature of our society.
- To promote sacramental life of Christian families and to encourage parents to take an active part in the preparation of their children for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- To foster school-parish links to ensure that our children remain exposed and committed to the Catholic faith beyond the realms of the school curriculum into the wider community.

How we meet our Aims

We work together to meet these aims through:

- a) Following the Diocesan Scheme of work- 'Learning and Growing as the People of God'
- b) Sacramental Education and preparation

- c) Prayer and Liturgy
- d) Gospel Values education and promotion
- e) British Values
- f) Catholic Virtues education and promotion
- g) Promotion of the 'We Are All Saints... Children's Charter
- h) Personal Daily Witness

Religious Education Entitlement and Provision

Religious Education in our school is an integral part of our ethos, aims and relationships, as Christian values and virtues permeate all aspects of the curriculum and all relationships.

RE is a core subject and is allocated 10% of Curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference. The 10% relates to 'curriculum time', which is the time allocated for the taught curriculum of Religious Education. This 10% is provided each and every week of the school year. It does not include time committed to activities such as assemblies, hymn practice, PSHE, RSHE, preparation and attendance at Mass etc. Consideration is given to the time of day allocated to RE i.e. it is taught in the mornings and the afternoons. RE is taught over at least two lessons and is not taught in a single block. In EYFS, there is a minimum of two discrete input sessions each week. Continuous provision is linked to the theme of the lesson and the strategy, 'Learning and Growing' as the People of God' is taught in its entirety.

Religious Education Scheme of Work

School follows the Diocesan strategy for Religious Education, 'Living and Growing as the People of God.' The strategy covers the following four areas:

1. Revelation: teaching about God's self-revelation
2. Church: about the Communion of life in Christ
3. Celebration: about living the Christian Mystery in worship and prayer
4. Life in Christ: about the search for holiness and truth

Observations, monitoring and assessment validations are implemented by the RE Coordinator to ensure that the scheme is closely adhered to. The children are taught through four phases; Early Phase, Lower Phase Middle Phase and Upper Phase. All work corresponds to the children's age. Opportunities for cross curricular work are fully endorsed. Such opportunities include; ICT, Art and English.

In addition to Diocesan Curriculum Strategy, Learning and Growing as the People of God, pupils will:

- Follow the 'Ten Ten' Scheme as part of the school's delivery of Relationships and Sex Education.
- Experience the Catholic Schools Profile by focusing on two paired virtues each half-term in line with the Diocesan plan.
- Be taught Catholic Social Teaching through the entire curriculum
- Learn about the school Mission
- Celebrate and learn the liturgical traditions of the Catholic Church through, for example, saying the Rosary, May procession, the Stations of the Cross.

Planning

Long-term Planning

The Long-term Plan indicates which units are to be taught, when and for how long. This is the responsibility of the RE Subject Leader. A template is provided by the Diocesan Education Service each year.

Medium-term Planning

Medium term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher and is completed on a unit by unit basis according to the long-term plan.

Short-term Planning

Short-term planning (weekly planning) is the responsibility of the class teacher and is completed on a weekly basis.

Assessment and Monitoring

Marking and Feedback

Marking in RE is based on the quality of RE work produced in pupils' books against the assessment criteria stipulated in the diocesan scheme "Learning and Growing as the People of God" and linked to the skills identified in the Age-Related Standards. In line with school marking and feedback policy all work begins with a WALT (We are Learning to) statement; which is double ticked in green pen if it has been achieved by the child in the lesson. Children will know what they have done well in the lesson as evidence will be ticked with a green pen. Misconceptions will be indicated with pink pen. Teachers will only add a comment when they feel it is appropriate e.g. to clarify an element of a child's learning a little further or to pose a reflective question to deepen a child's knowledge and understanding.

Summative Assessment

End of Unit assessments are carried out by class teachers three times a year. The focus for assessment follows a four year rolling programme based on the following themes: The Liturgical Year, Scripture, The Sacraments and Living as Christians. The assessment schedule identifies which units are to be assessed by each year group and are used in conjunction with the relevant class record sheets. These assessments are completed based upon a 'best-fit' approach with judgements made from a range of work activities done throughout the unit and not on a single assessment 'test' activity. Teachers make an attainment assessment for each child at the end of each taught assessed unit (units are from the Learning and Growing as People of God scheme). These judgements are recorded on a RE assessment tracker. Teachers also make a judgement for all other units from the scheme and achievement judgements are reported for each child in termly report cards.

In addition, assessment judgements are also made against the Age Related Standards. There is no expectation that every child in each class should be assessed against the Age Related Standards. Focus children are selected for each class and tracked. RE teachers assess pieces of work throughout the year (at least one piece per unit) against the Age Related Standards (National) for the relevant phase using the appropriate template (3-5, 5-7, 7-9, 9-11). At the end of the academic year an overall assessment judgment is made for each of the focus children. Evidence of the Age Related Standards is kept by retaining a sample of books. A selection of work samples are moderated each year.

The RE Coordinator reviews and analyses attainment and progress judgements in order to identify trends, patterns and possible underachievement – including achievement for groups of pupils. This work is shared

and discussed with staff and governors. Where appropriate, action is taken which includes support for staff and further monitoring.

Reception Assessment (Base Line)

In line with Diocese's recommendations, Reception aged children are assessed at the beginning and at the end of the Reception year. We include additional questions to ensure the base line meets the needs of our pupils. It is used to find out what children's prior religious knowledge, vocabulary and experience is.

The Catholic Curriculum

Spiritual Development

We join the pupils on the spiritual quest we all have, to recognise God in all the circumstances of our lives and to help them respond to that invitation/meeting. By encouraging their belief in God, as revealed in Jesus and that He is the author of life, beauty, goodness, and truth, we support and help the pupils promote a proper care of self and one another. Care and respect for the created world is also encouraged. This can be supported by Catholic Social Teaching themes and through our daily Christian meditation.

Prayer

We encourage our children to take part and experience many different forms of prayer.

- All classrooms have attractive prayer areas that include liturgical images, artefacts, school, and class prayers. These are updated in accordance with the Liturgical Year and children are encouraged to have an input in each display.
- All assemblies and prayer services have a religious prayer focus.
- The children are provided with a variety of prayer experiences and are encouraged to pray thoughtfully and with respect.
- Children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through daily participation in morning prayers, grace before and after meals and prayer at the end of the day. They also have opportunities to participate and lead prayers. Pupils are encouraged to know they can pray at any time or in any place, including during hymn practice and meditation.
- Our prayer garden provides a wonderful outdoor environment for prayer and reflection.
- There are opportunities in acts of worship where the children can talk to Jesus in their own words. The teacher encourages prayers that are relevant e.g. thanksgiving prayers, concerns for others, prayers for guidance and protection. Staff are sensitive to the feelings of pupils. It is also possible to offer up a prayer to Jesus to listen to the prayers in our hearts that have not been spoken.
- Our children plan and lead prayer sessions for their peers. They also take part in evaluating each other's prayer services.
- Staff pray together before every meeting.

We also work hard to include families in the prayer life of our school. We do this by:

- Encouraging parents and families to attend Masses, prayer services and other acts of prayer and liturgy
- Sending prayer bags home for all year groups containing liturgical materials.

Moral Development

We teach morality in light of our Catholic beliefs. Morality flows from the faith as a response to God's gracious work of creation. Religious education is, therefore, an essential foundation for moral education in

the school. Pupils learn about Catholic morality both by being taught what the Church teaches and by the attitude and actions of their teachers. Teachers in Catholic Schools regard their work as a vocation. They present the love and wisdom of God to their pupils by the way that they live as well as by what they say. They seek their task and privilege as that of passing on the living Christ to their pupils. We can help pupils to develop morally through the love and message of Jesus. This message is summed up in the word "love" and is at the heart of the Gospel. Love is not an empty concept but rather it is a challenging way of life. Jesus shows us the way to love through the commandments, the beatitudes, and the virtues of courage, self-control, wisdom and justice, faith, hope, love and responsibility. These are the basis of the British Values of:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Morality is not presented simply as a set of rules or arbitrary commands, but as a call to personal growth in the light of our nature as images of God. By being responsible and by choosing rightly we believe that each person grows onto the kind of person he/she is intended to be, through his/her own free acts. We make ourselves into certain kinds of persons through what we choose. We believe that the good choices we make gradually transform us into people fit for heaven.

Social Development

Pupils are encouraged to examine their responsibilities and influences not only on the school community but also in their families, the parish community, and the local and wider community. They are encouraged to use their skills, talents, and gifts, whatever they are, for the good of others.

Cultural Development

Cultural diversity is welcomed and positively fostered in our school. Cultural development is not just to be developed within RE teaching as it involves the whole curriculum as well as the "hidden curriculum", staff and governor attitudes and the ethos of the school.

Vocational Development

Vocational development enables our pupils to have a profound understanding of what it means to have a vocation and to be able to joyfully offer their gifts in the service of others. It is vital that we provide the pupils with models of service and commitment; to learn from people of the past and people of the present who provide examples of lives inspired by and committed to following in Jesus' footsteps.

Catholic School Profile

We follow the Catholic School Pupil Profile which is rooted in Jesuit values. There are eight pairs of virtues which help children to lead better, happier, and more fulfilled lives. Each half term, we focus on one set of virtues and what they mean in our lives. The sets of virtues are:

- Curious and Active
- Intentional and Prophetic
- Grateful and Generous
- Attentive and Discerning

- Compassionate and Loving
- Faith-filled and Hopeful
- Eloquent and Truthful
- Learned and Wise

Catholic Social Teaching

We feel that it is important to consider the needs of our local community, and local charities are always welcome in the school to talk to the children about their work and to involve them in fundraising activities. At Harvest Time we collect food for local people in need, donating to OLW Parish SVP and Brushstrokes. Throughout the year, 'Food on Friday' donations are given to OLW SVP. We have fund raising events throughout the year to support the work of the Father Hudson Society, CAFOD, St Mary's Trust in India and other charities, some of which visit our school to speak to the children about their work. At Christmas time the children are involved in the 'Gift Giving Tree' project with OLW parish. Moreover, in our teaching, learning and other faith-related activities within school, Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is threaded throughout. CST is rooted in Scripture, formed by the wisdom of Church leaders, and influenced by grassroots movements. It is our moral compass, guiding us on how to live out our faith in the world. Our faith calls us to love God and to love our neighbours in every situation, especially our sisters and brothers living in poverty. Following in the footsteps of Christ, we hope to make present in our unjust and broken world, the justice, love, and peace of God. Modern Catholic social teaching is said to have originated in 1891 with the 11 encyclical letter, Rerum Novarum. Since then, a wealth of teaching continues to give new life to the Scriptures and shape the Church's response to our modern world. From these Catholic social teaching documents and encyclicals are derived seven core principles.

1. Dignity of the Human Person
2. Family and Community
3. Solidarity and the Common Good
4. Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
5. Rights and Responsibilities
6. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
7. Stewardship of God's Creation

Reporting to Parents

The children's parents are kept informed of their progress through termly Pupil Review Meetings and termly report cards. Parents are given information on the standards achieved and the progress made by their child. Information about what the child needs to do in order to improve in RE should be given as well as their effort and attitude towards RE. Teachers also comment on their knowledge of prayer as well as the way in which they participate in prayer and liturgy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All RE monitoring is in line with the whole school monitoring system. Monitoring takes the form of a multi-faceted approach including: Books evaluated by Headteacher /RE Lead, moderated lineally through each year group and external validation from other schools. Any moderation receives detailed feedback and reporting which feeds directly into Self Evaluation and action plans.

Resources

School has a bank of resources which are stored centrally in the Prayer Room and Staffroom.

Prayer Tables/RE Displays

Each class room has a designated prayer area. This is draped in cloth depicting the current liturgical colour. The Crucifix is displayed prominently. The area has specific prayers displayed for use during classroom worship. Children are encouraged to use this area as a main focus when praying singularly or together. Children of all ages are encouraged to write and prepare their own prayers usually focusing on the liturgical time of year.

Each classroom is expected to have at least one RE display which reflects either the current topic being taught, or the liturgical time of year.

Sacramental Preparation

Reconciliation and Holy Communion

- Our Lady of the Wayside School has devised its own sacramental programme tailored for the needs of children and community. This is very much focused on being a family programme and families are encouraged to be actively involved throughout the programme.
- There are three evening family sessions throughout the year for parents and children, these are followed by families sharing a meal together in the school hall.
- First Confessions are held on two Saturday mornings during Lent. Families gather in the school hall afterwards in celebration.
- First Holy Communion takes place on two Saturdays during the liturgical season of Easter. In partnership with family wishes, first communicants are allocated one of four celebrations.
- The programme formal finishes on Pentecost Sunday where families join with OLW Parish in celebration. Refreshments are served in the school hall afterwards.

Sacrament of Confirmation

- The Y6 teachers prepare the children for the Sacrament of Confirmation actively supported by the parish, their parents and their sponsors.
- The formal programme of preparation commences with a Saturday afternoon of prayer and reflection. This is led by staff from the Kenelm Youth Trust.
- During the programme school arranges for Confirmation candidates to visit St Chad's Cathedral. As part of their visit they learn about the history of the Cathedral and celebrate Mass.

Deacon Sean Loone (OLW Parish Deacon) visits school on a weekly basis to work with the children preparing to receive Sacraments.

Other Faiths and Religions

Our Lady of the Wayside School recognises the importance of children having an appreciation of other faiths from different cultures. There are regular opportunities dedicated to learning about an aspect of a different faith and culture throughout the year.

Children have opportunities for school visits where the emphasis is to raise their awareness of where different people worship. Teachers from St Peter's Secondary Catholic School teach the children about another faith to deepen their understanding. While remaining true to their Christian faith, the children are encouraged to acknowledge, respect and value other faith traditions and to establish good relationships with members of other faiths without prejudice. Visitors of other faiths are encouraged to come into school to teach the children about a different faith. The children are also encouraged to recognise and value the international and multicultural nature of the Catholic Church including British Values of tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Equal Opportunities and SEND

The fair and equal treatment of all individuals irrelevant of race, creed, disability, or gender, are integral to the Gospels' Revelations and the Church's message and is central to our school mission. All children are given equal access to the Religious Education curriculum, promoting their understanding to their full potential. A variety of teaching and learning strategies are employed to try to meet all children's different needs.

Continuing Professional Development.

CPD is implemented through INSET, staff meetings and phase meetings. The RE Coordinator leads and feeds back from attended cluster meetings or implements information and training regarding current themes, changes and requirements. The RE Coordinator attends regular meetings led by the Diocese. New teaching staff also attend courses provided by the Diocese. The focus of training is to facilitate best practice in the teaching and learning of RE.

Links with Parents and the Parish

Celebrations and events related to the Catholic Life of our school are shared in school newsletters and published on the school website. Parents, families, and parishioners are regularly invited to join the school community for weekly Mass and other celebrations. Parents of children in Sacramental year groups are also invited to Sacramental Meetings and Commitment Masses as part of the Sacramental Preparation Programme. Children in each class can take home a Prayer Bag, promoting opportunities for children and their families to talk and pray together.

Governing Body

RE is always a key part of the School Improvement Plan and is reported upon termly as part of the Headteacher's Report to Governors. In addition, the RE Subject Leader reports back to the Catholic Education Committee. Governors are also invited to join with other members of the whole school community in the celebration of Mass. One member of the governing body has the role of RE Link Governor, this is currently Deacon Sean Loon, who meets regularly with the Head Teacher and RE Subject Leader and is a member of the Catholic Life and Education Committee which meets on a termly basis.

The Role of the Religious Education Leader

The Role of the Religious Education Leader is outlined in the job description.

Health and Safety

All relevant risk assessments for visits are carried out, overseen, and stored by the Head teacher. Staff should note:

- When using candles, it is important that children must never be left alone with lit candles or allowed to light them or blow them out.
- Consideration given to children with asthma when using incense and scented candles

Legal Right of Withdrawal

It is a parents'/guardians' legal right to withdraw their child from RE and Prayer and Liturgy. Further information can be obtained from the school.

Mrs Enstone – Headteacher.

Mrs Ashcroft – RE Lead

Mr Sean Loone – RE Link Governor

Reviewed April 2024