

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Chiswick

"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"



May 2024

Dr R Santa

Chair of Governors

REC Lead– Miss L Scannell

Head of Faith Life – Miss E Keane and Miss L Scannell

Governor with responsibility for Religious Education – Canon M Dunne

School Chaplain – Fr Daniel Daley

Next Review Date: May 2026

INTRODUCTION

Mission and Witness

At St Mary's, it is our aim to nurture and develop the potential in each person to the full, in the knowledge and belief of Christ as our inspiration and guide. We believe that His teachings are central to our mission as a school and as a faith community. We endeavour to foster an ethos at our school where we experience the true meaning of being a baptised member of the Church and each member of our community at St Mary's has a fundamental role to play. Religious Education underpins our whole philosophy of education and is the starting point for our Mission Statement. *'Living and learning, inspired by our faith.'*

INTENT

Religious Education at St Mary's School will:

- Lead the children to live an active faith
- Enable the children to enter into a personal relationship with God our father through prayer, worship and reflection
- Develop a deeper understanding of their faith using higher order religious questions
- Strengthen children's knowledge of Catholic values and virtues including kindness and friendship, solidarity and justice, equality and peace
- Nurture in children the ability to live out Jesus' teaching in their daily lives, including the Gospel values
- Encourage the formation of socially responsible Catholic citizens, informed by the core principles of Catholic Social Teaching
- Fully support and involve parents in the religious education of their children, through prayer and worship, liturgies and preparation for Sacraments.

IMPLEMENTATION

The RE Curriculum at St Mary's reinforces the **beliefs** and **values** that are at the heart of our school. The core of our curriculum and reference for our policy and practice in the teaching of RE is the '**Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools**' which was revised by the Bishops' Conference in 2012 and provides a clear framework.

To support this, we utilise our main scheme 'The Way, The Truth and the Life'. Emphasis is placed on the teaching of scripture and to support this, the use of bibles is very much encouraged, particularly in KS2. To support the teaching of Catholic Social Teaching, the school uses the scheme, 'Rooted in Love'

We follow the Church's Liturgical year celebrating important times, e.g. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Holy days and feast days.

The curriculum is broadly set out into four areas of study:

1. **Revelation:** Story, Scripture, Memory and Tradition of the Church

The purpose of this area of study is to help our pupils:

- to explore the importance of story in the human quest for meaning;
- to understand the role of Christian Scriptures as expressions of the ways in which humanity strives to understand the nature of God and the nature of human persons;
- to reflect upon the personal and community response to God invited by Scripture;
- to explore the sacred writings of other faith communities.

2. Church: Community of Believers, Pilgrim People of God

The purpose of this area of study is to help our pupils;

- to reflect on the human experience of belonging to community at various levels;
- to reflect on the belief that, as people created in the image of a Triune God, Christians are called to be that community which is the Church.
- to develop a knowledge and understanding of people and roles in the Church and understand that the Church is a witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ;
- to explore the relationship between the Catholic Church and other denominations and faiths.

3. Celebration: Ritual, Prayer, Sacraments, Worship, Liturgy

The purpose of this area of study is to help our pupils;

- to explore the meaning of celebration which marks the growth and development of every human being;
- to understand that spiritual growth and development is rooted in the Church's sacramental life which is expressed in sign and symbol throughout the Liturgical year;
- to reflect on the place of prayer in the life of the Catholic community and of individual Christians;
- to develop a knowledge and understanding of prayer in other faiths.

4. Life in Christ: Lifestyle, Morality, Values, Attitudes

The purpose of this area of study is to help our pupils;

- to explore the values which underpin beliefs and actions in the human family;
- to understand the following of Christ as a call to holiness/wholeness of life;
- to reflect on the values which Christ expressed in his life and teaching;
- to explore the values and way of life of other world faiths.

OTHER FAITHS

We recognise the importance of teaching the children to value and respect the beliefs and traditions of other faiths. We teach two Other Faiths Weeks during the school year. During the first of these, we focus on Judaism and during the second, we focus alternately on Islamism, Sikhism and Hinduism.

In addition, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learn about other religions through 'Understanding the World' through looking at people and communities.

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

We use the Ten:Ten scheme 'Life to the Full' as a resource for the teaching of RSE (Relationships and Sex Education)

CURRICULUM TIME

Religious education is at the centre of the daily life of the school. In line with the Bishops' Conference recommendations, a minimum ten per cent of teaching time is allocated to RE each week, this does not include Collective Worship. Other subject areas, such as drama, art and literacy, complement the RE curriculum.

RE is brought into other areas of the curriculum wherever possible, including thematic approach to events such as Arts Week. RE is effectively brought into other areas of the curriculum such as Music, Art, Geography, Science, school trips and specialist days.

MARKING

In line with the school's marking policy, the marking of children's work should always be positive, supportive, sensitive to the child's level of attainment and deepen the children's learning and reflections. The feedback from the teacher will also encourage children to reflect upon how their learning is linked to their daily lives.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers plan units of work with due regard for the standards and skills for Primary Religious Education and ensure that pupils are provided with opportunities to record their learning and show that they are working at the expected standard for their age and / or ability.

Assessment of Religious Education at our school is designed to assist our children's learning and to enable them to strive for a feeling of confidence and success in their understanding of the Catholic faith. Progress is monitored through discussion, questioning, posing problems and giving opportunities to present their knowledge to others in a variety of ways, e.g. class assemblies.

Assessments in RE take place at the beginning (via a KWL grid which is a learning tool where the pupils are asked to list what they know (K) about a particular topic, what they want to know (W), and at the end of the topic, what they have learnt (L)) and end of each unit of work (via a written assessment task), to allow the teacher to evaluate the child's prior knowledge and progress. Summative and formative assessment, together with the child's work and responses, enable teachers to make an informed judgement about a child's progress in RE using the Age-Related Standards. Levels of attainment are recorded termly on the school's tracking system.

MONITORING OF STANDARDS IN RE

Standards of teaching and learning in RE form part of the whole school monitoring schedule. Monitoring of standard is achieved through:

- Book Scrutiny
- Regular lesson observations and learning walks
- Work moderation and review of standards within cluster group
- Pupil and staff and parent feedback
- Diocesan Advisor visits
- Termly moderation for RE in school and annual Deanery moderation

All staff identify an objective for Catholic Life as a performance management target.

LEADERSHIP OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is the responsibility of the R.E. Coordinator and the Headteacher. Their role is to monitor and assess the RE curriculum and Catholic prayer and worship throughout the school to ensure continuity and progression. They also ensure that the aims and learning outcomes in the Curriculum Directory are identified and fulfilled. The linked governor for RE is Canon Michael Dunne, he has specific responsibility for RE and liaises closely with the staff of the school to fulfil their monitoring duties.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of governors

- Nominate an RE Governor to support and encourage the teaching of RE;
- Scrutinise reports on RE and the Catholic life of the school at Governing Body meetings.

Role of the Headteacher

- Appoint staff suitable and qualified to teach Religious Education;
- Provide appropriate resources and opportunities for training;
- Ensure that 10% of the curriculum is devoted to Religious Education;
- Oversee the Catholic Life of the School.

Role of the RE Co-ordinator

- Monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education;
- Supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education;
- Reviewing samples of work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject;
- Being informed about current developments in the subject;
- Providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school;
- Updating the R.E. development plan and policy;
- Encouraging the use of appropriate practice;
- Consulting with staff at all levels and ensuring that information is communicated to them;
- Leading staff in INSET;
- Maintaining and updating resources;
- Promoting the use of outside resources and opportunities;
- Continue to develop systems of best practice in assessment;
- Advising on, and leading Assemblies, Collective Acts of Worship and Liturgies;
- Planning and coordinating whole school masses;
- Planning and coordinating the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent and Lent;
- Co-ordinating the GIFT Team;
- Supporting the Catholic Social Teaching within the school.

Role of Class Teachers

- Be prepared to witness to what they teach;
- Understand that they share in the teaching office of the Church exercised in the person of the local bishop and enshrined in the trust deed of the school;
- Fulfil their professional responsibilities regarding all that develops and enhances the life of the Catholic school;
- Have high expectations of all their pupils;
- Take care continually to deepen their own knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.

ENVIRONMENT, DISPLAY AND PRESENTATION

The way in which we, as teachers, present teaching materials, displays and our classrooms in general can greatly affect the responsiveness and attitudes of children. At St Mary's we expect staff to ensure that:

- throughout the school, RE displays reflect the liturgical cycle and important patrons and events
- each classroom has an RE display board to reflect the current RE topic
- each classroom has an RE display board to reflect key topic vocabulary, a piece of Scripture or a short reflection on a passage from the Bible, with a frontline focus
- each classroom has a focal point for prayer and reflection
- each classroom has the Mission Statement displayed and referred to across the curriculum
- they have regard for the Health and Safety Policy, particularly when candles are lit.
- Across the school, there is a class book where children can record their 'big questions' where Fr Daniel, our local Parish Priest, is invited in to explore these big questions.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

Training opportunities for all staff are identified and planned for strategically to ensure progression and growth. Professional development of all staff includes termly INSET. There is an Induction programme for new staff with guidance and support on teaching in a Catholic school and a RE teacher's guide, which is shared with all teachers.

REVIEW

As a community, the spiritual life of the school is always evolving; The RE Coordinator undertakes regular termly monitoring of RE, reports to Governors and meets with our Deanery Advisor. Outcomes are used to plan training and development needs for the coming year and prioritise actions in our School Development Plan and is a target for all staff through objectives in Performance Management.