



# ENGLISH MARTYRS' CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY



**Date of issue: Pentecost 2019**

**Date of review: Pentecost 2022**

At English Martyrs' we support children to enable them to reach their full potential, thereby empowering them to be caring individuals, capable of critical independent thought. RE is our core subject.

## **Guiding Rationale**

In lessons, children are taught a systematic presentation (the basics and principles) of the Catholic Faith. Teaching is realistic, has achievable aims and relates to the children's lives, both inside and outside of school. As teachers, we are aware of the diversity of backgrounds, family relationships and faith experiences of our pupils and are sensitive in the way we approach discussions based on these themes.

The outcome of religious education is: "Religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life." (Religious Education Curriculum Directory 1996)

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To foster a love of God through knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith from scripture and doctrine.
- To encourage the development of a personal relationship with God.
- To help our children be aware of and respect other faiths.
- To encourage children to study, investigate and reflect.
- To develop thinking and listening skills.
- To develop respect for truth and for the views of others.

## **Home/School/Parish Partnership**

- We believe that the school alone cannot undertake a child's religious education. Religious education begins at home usually at Baptism; the parents are the child's first teachers and support the child with his/her first

religious experiences. The school works in partnership with parents and parish to enrich the lives of our children.

- We send home an RE newsletter each term to inform parents about the forthcoming RE topics and through our monthly school newsletters and half termly class newsletters we notify parents of Masses and Liturgies both in the school and the parish.
- Our school regularly supports parish events and fund raising.
- Our school attends Saint Francis of Assisi church, The Assumption church and St John's church throughout the year (once a term if possible), through various liturgical events.
- Masses are prepared in school and members from our three parishes are invited. In addition, Our Key Stage Two Classes are encouraged to attend Mass throughout the year. Throughout each year, the children have opportunities to prepare readings, hymns, bidding prayers and the offertory procession.

## RE Programme

### Come and See

We follow the '**Come and See**' programme, as adopted by the diocese, using the whole school, two-year cycle of topics. '**Come and See**' is an invitation to explore and a promise of life for everyone. In response to the question; '*Where do you live?*' which was asked by the disciples, Jesus invited them to; '**Come and See.**' (John 1:39) The disciples went with Jesus '*and spent the rest of the day with him*'. The invitation to **Come and See** is open to all and is there, even if the question has not been spoken. Three topics are studied each term, with each topic lasting approximately four weeks. Children in KS1 will receive two hours of RE lessons, whilst children in KS2 receive two and a half hours.

### Teaching and Learning in RE

- A range of teaching strategies and learning methodologies are employed depending on the needs and abilities of the children and the nature of the activities being undertaken.
- Work is differentiated in terms of activity or outcome according to the needs and abilities of the children. Approaches include whole class teaching, group activities and individual work. Children have opportunities to work individually as well as co-operatively and collaboratively, developing their own knowledge and expertise, as well as sharing their experiences with others.
- Throughout the course of a RE topic, which usually lasts four weeks, children have the opportunity to develop their understanding across AT1, AT2 and AT3.
  - **AT1 – Learning about religion/knowledge (Head)** – Children will develop their knowledge of beliefs, teachings and sources; celebration and ritual; social and moral practices and way of life. It includes the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis and evaluation of Catholic Christianity, including how the church relates to other Christian denominations, other religions and world views.
  - **AT2 – Learning from religion/scripture and living out faith (Heart)** - Children will engage in their own and others' beliefs and values, as well as engaging with questions of meaning and purpose. AT2 involves the reflection on their own experiences in the light of learning about religion. It develops children's skills of application, interpretation, evaluation and expression of what they learn about religion. It gives children the opportunity to respond and encounter Jesus.
  - **AT3 – Wonder and reflection moments (Cloud)** – Children will be encouraged to wonder and reflect upon what they've learnt/studied in RE.
- All work involves thought provoking reflection and discussion, encouraging the children to develop their moral and spiritual consciences.
- Teachers are encouraged to make cross - curricular links when planning RE, incorporating opportunities for ICT and extended writing where appropriate.
- Pre- and post-learning is used where appropriate to ensure learning is well paced and pitched
- Additional to the curriculum RE children will learn a Scripture Story. A schedule for this teaching and learning is written and provided by RE SLT. A mixture of Old and New Testament stories are used in order to

strengthen children's Biblical knowledge, developing their understanding of scripture references and links. These stories are explored further in collective worship.

## **Other Faiths**

- For two weeks of each school year, pupils study other faiths. The whole school focus is on one particular faith for one week.
- All children study Judaism at a level appropriate to their age. In addition children will learn about a variety of festivals from other faiths.
- Where possible, people from other faiths are invited into school to talk to children and celebrate their faith.
- The school will seek opportunities to learn about other faith festivals and 'special days' e.g. Diwali, Eid.
- The school will encourage pupils from other faith background to celebrate their own faiths through special collective worships

## **Assessment and Record Keeping**

- It is impossible to assess the level of a child's personal faith and it should not be attempted. However, we are able to assess a child's knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes that have been taught in RE. Since the beginning of September 2018, we have moved away from levels, using the Diocese End of Year Expectation documents to assess children. Their knowledge and understanding can be demonstrated through discussion with the child, through written work and through general day to day work such as role plays and drama.
- A formal assessment task – produced by the diocese - is given to each of the pupils once a term and the work is placed into the RE moderation folder. The results are collected in by the RE coordinator each term.
- The teachers enter a teacher assessed level on Insight. This data is then tracked and summarised by the RE and SLT.
- Pupil progress meetings take place twice a year to set targets and intervention groups.
- Every September a baseline assessment is carried out by the Reception class teacher to find out what religious knowledge, what religious vocabulary and what religious experience the children already have upon entering school in the Foundation Stage.
- Marking is undertaken in accordance with school marking policy. However, it is essential that all the Key Words for each topic be corrected so that children can learn and use these words effectively.
- Written comments should be: affirming, encouraging, thought provoking and challenging. Above all, they should be sensitive to the children's needs and be made in relation to the learning intention of the lesson (and level descriptors).
- Comments relating to RE are made for each pupil on their annual report. The reports comment on progress, whilst also providing children with a target for which to focus on in future learning.

## **Monitoring**

- In order to monitor RE teaching and learning, the RE SLT collect RE planning throughout the school once a term. Criteria for monitoring and any resulting targets for improvement are shared with staff at the first available staff meeting.
- The RE SLT observe RE teaching at least once a year, across the whole school. Any common points for improvements are shared at the first available staff meeting and individual feedback on observations is given to teachers.
- The RE SLT and class teachers carry out a work scrutiny and pupil conferencing activity at least once a year and report their findings at the first available staff meeting.

## **Equal opportunities and Inclusion**

- A central message of the Catholic faith is: 'God loves each and every one of us equally'. This is regardless of cultural background, faith, gender or academic ability. It is therefore vital that we recognise and cater for the

individual needs of children, acknowledging that all children have different gifts and talents and that these should be celebrated.

- Learning tasks should be matched to the abilities of the children to enable them to achieve success, helping them to develop to their full potential and to develop a positive self-image.
- We aim to ensure that resources do not reinforce any kind of stereotypes and that they do reflect our Mission Statement.
- It is important that the children are provided with images, which reflect the multi cultural society in which we live; enhancing their awareness and knowledge of other faiths and cultures, whilst respecting the rights of the individual at all times. This is essential in preparing children to take their place in a multi-cultural society.

### **Display and Prayer Focus**

- Classroom RE displays are changed often they should reflect the Liturgical Year and be linked to one of the recent topics taught.
- Each class has a prayer area to stimulate and facilitate reflection and prayer, linked with the topic and the liturgical season.
- A display in the central prayer area in the school entrance hall is changed according to the liturgical year, or it highlights particular issues or themes from the Come and See topic.
- Other displays around the school celebrate RE work done in each Year or Key Stage group.
- Each class will have their own RE Portfolio, displayed on their RE display/in their prayer corner. The purpose of the RE Portfolio is for the teacher and children to collate and display different pieces of RE, Collective Worship and Catholic Life evidence. In UKS2, children are encouraged to take ownership of the RE Portfolio, deciding as and when different pieces of work should go in it.

### **Resources**

- Each class has the relevant Come and See folder, all other resources are kept in the RE cupboard
- Bibles are stored in the classrooms, UKS2 Gallery and Learning zone; other RE and Other Faiths books are also available from the library.
- Resources for our Other Faiths topics are pooled into Resource Boxes which are reviewed and updated annually.

Signed: ..... (Chair of Governors)

Date: .....

Signed: .....(Headteacher)

Date: .....