ENGLISH MARTYRS' CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY



Approved by:	Gemma Ellis	**Date:**	2023
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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 the foundations 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.

Using the Religious Education Directory and in utilising the NRCDES resources:
"We want to tell the story of our faith. We are going to accompany young people on a journey of learning, growth and exploration with a curriculum that is centred on Christ and filled with Joy. Our curriculum will be open, diverse and accessible to all regardless of where we start from. It will be ambitious, challenging and engaging, built to allow young people and staff the freedom to explore a living and active faith made real in the everyday life of their community.

We are going to ask big questions, and we are going to listen, with assessment approaches that allow young people the opportunity for heartfelt and authentic expression. We are going to understand how to live a life inspired by the Gospels and Catholic Social Teaching to allow young people to see faith at work in the world.

Our curriculum is not simply about imparting knowledge, but about educating and forming the whole person to feel, think and live."

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 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 fundraising.
- Our school attends St Francis of Assisi church, Long Eaton, The Assumption church, Beeston and St John's church, Stapleford 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 at St Francis throughout the year. Throughout each year, the children have opportunities to prepare readings, hymns, bidding prayers and the offertory procession.

RE Programme

We are now in the third year of following the Religious Education Directory programme of study. Through the guidance of "To Know You More Clearly", each year group studies one topic per term. These topics include:

- Creation and Covenant – exploring the revelation of Christian belief
- Prophecy and Promise – understanding the teachings of the prophets
- Galilee to Jerusalem – learning about the life of Jesus and the Kingdom of God
- Desert to Garden – studying the season of Lent.
- To the ends of the Earth – exploring the events that follow the resurrection.
- Dialogue and Encounter – learn how Christians work together with people of different religion.

Children are given opportunities to explore the following:

- Scripture
- Religious people
- Catholic Social Teachings
- Religious experiences
- Sacraments
- The Liturgical calendar
- Catholic values and beliefs

All children will take part in two and half hours of RE per week.

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 scaffolded where needed to ensure all pupils can access the learning. Additional approaches within lessons 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 six weeks, children have the opportunity to develop their skills through “Ways of Knowing”: Understand, Discern and Respond. The ways of knowing describe the skills that pupils develop as they progress through the religious education curriculum. For each age phase, we describe the aim of each way of knowing, the skills that are required to develop them, the driver words that indicate progress through them, and generic progression indicators.
- All work involves thought provoking reflection and discussion, encouraging the children to develop their moral and spiritual consciences. Learning is thought about through knowledge lenses: Hear, Believe, See, Celebrate, Live and Dialogue.
- Teachers are encouraged to make links when planning RE, incorporating opportunities for links between topics in and out of year groups.
- Pre- and post-learning is used where appropriate to ensure learning is well paced and pitched

Other Faiths

- At the end of the year, each year group will take study how Christians work together with people of other faith. This is through the topic ‘Dialogue and Encounter’
- All children study this at a level appropriate to their age:
  EYFS Encountering Traditional Clothing and Stories
  Year 1 Encountering Special Days and Ritual
  Year 2 Encountering Prayer Traditions
  Year 3 Encountering Places of Worship
  Year 4 Encountering Holy Books
  Year 5 Encountering Beliefs and Festivals
  Year 6 Encountering Values and Belonging

- 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 and we do this each lesson and record this in feedback books, with a feedback slide beginning each RE lesson to tackle misconceptions and challenge learning.
- After each unit of work, pupils are assessed against the progression for “Ways of Knowing” and pupils are given next steps for the following unit of work. These are shared in the pupil books.
- Termly, teachers enter a teacher assessed level on Insight using the SRS Assessment Framework. This data is then tracked and discussed by SLT. Yearly in the Pentecost term, teachers make a summative assessment based on the year group expectatations.
- 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.
- Feedback is undertaken in accordance with school feedback 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.
- Feedback should be affirming, encouraging, thought provoking and challenging. Above all, it should be sensitive to the children’s needs and be made in relation to the learning intention of the lesson
- 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 Lead follows a half termly monitoring schedule and feedback for any resulting next steps for improvement are shared with staff at the first available staff meeting.
- The RE Lead 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 Lead and SLT monitor RE lessons with the Trust school improvement team at least once a year and written feedback is shared with staff.
- The RE Lead uses regular staff meetings to share key messages with staff and to moderate work across year groups.
- Year group teachers attend Trust moderation twice annually to complete work scrutinies and share good practice.

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 are carefully planned to enable children 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 built upon over the year and show how each branch of learning links to the overarching year group theme. This allows children to begin to make links between the branches of learning.
- 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.
- 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.