

St Marys Catholic Primary School

'Learning together in Faith and Love'

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

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Mission Statement

St Mary's is a vibrant two form entry Catholic Primary School in North Kensington with a strong sense of community. We are a school that welcomes all children from the ages of 3 to 11 years. Our school serves the Roman Catholic Parish of Our Lady of the Holy Souls, Kensal New Town and other local parishes.

The aims of our school are:

- To promote Christian values where children live, learn and celebrate the teaching of Christ.
- To provide a curriculum which is broad, balanced and meaningful and where children can experience enjoyment and fulfilment.
- To promote the highest standards of teaching and learning within the framework of the National Curriculum.
- To develop in each child a sense of achievement, value and self-worth and to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- To help our children acquire the skills of independent learning and make sufficiently rapid progress.
- To provide a safe and secure environment where children feel valued and where they respect help and care for each other.
- To involve parents in all aspects of their child's education and promote good home/school partnerships.
- To develop in our children awareness and respect for the different cultures and religions represented in society and their responsibility to the wider community.
- To foster the continuing development of staff, parents and Governors in serving the community.

St Mary's School Values

These are the values which will be explicitly taught, modelled and rewarded at St Mary's:

- **Kindness**
- **Respect**
- **Tolerance**
- **Honesty**
- **Responsibility (for ourselves and our world)**
- **Co-operation**

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Rationale of Religious Education

Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church.

*'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'*¹

- Religious Education is 'the core of the core curriculum.'

*'Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school.... All pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.'*¹

- Religious Education is the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ and is a rigorous academic subject in its own right.

*Religious Education is regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines.*² As such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

*"Excellence in religious education, then, will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material."*³

- The outcome of Classroom Religious Education is:

"religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

² Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3

³ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7

⁴ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

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spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life".⁴

- Whilst evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils, the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

The Aims of Religious Education as stated in the RE Curriculum Directory are:

- *To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;*
- *To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;*
- *To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;*
- *To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;*
- *To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;*
- *To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;*
- *To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;*
- *To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.⁵*

Religious Education - Curriculum Time Allocation

10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship or assemblies. The RE time allocation in KS1 is 2h15 min and in KS2 it is 2h 30min.

Programme of Study

To fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, 2012 – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ, St Mary's will use 'Come and See' programme.

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Process

Religious Education is taught through the process of *Explore, Reveal, Respond*. This follows the pattern of: the human **search** for meaning, God's initiative in **Revelation** and the **response** in faith. This pattern is outlined both in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the Curriculum Directory.

As the Curriculum Directory states:

'Teaching in Religious Education should help people be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible.' ⁶

Methodology

A wide range of teaching and learning strategies will be used, including cross-curricular links to provide to ensure children's interest, engagement, enthusiasm. All teaching and learning in RE is appropriately adapted to the learning styles and needs of all individual pupils.

Inclusion

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

Other Faiths

Two other religions are taught from EYFS to Year 6 following the programme of study in 'Come and See'. These are Judaism, and a choice of: Sikhism, Islam or Buddhism. One week's teaching and learning time per year is given to each.

Community responsibility

We recognise the significance of the example set by parents, teachers, priest, governors and all school staff to lead our children on their faith journey.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE agreed by Bishops' Conference.

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- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress.
 - The school portfolio of pupils' work contains three samples of work from each teacher for the Diocesan agreed task each term, covering a range of abilities.
 - An in - house moderation meeting is held every half term.
 - Examples from the school portfolio of assessed samples of work are presented for Diocesan Moderation at RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the summer term, which our co-ordinator will attend.
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- Monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations and book scrutiny
 - Pupils are sub levelled at the end of each term and this information is used to ensure progress and achievement is recorded and tracked. The class teacher also places levels on SIMMS.
 - Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors

Equal Opportunities

We believe that all children are entitled to equal access to the R.E. curriculum. All the children are encouraged to express themselves according to their ability. We are aware of the various cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds of both staff and children and are sensitive in our approach and the use of materials and resources.

Management of the Subject

The Religious Education Co-ordinator has responsibility for the Classroom Religious Education, which includes leading, managing and supporting the delivery of Religious Education across the school. This is achieved through:

- Ensuring that the catholic ethos and vision of the school underpins all elements of practice
- Raising standards for all individual and groups of pupils by implementing the following rigorous monitoring and quality assurance activities:
- Tracking teaching of skills development in line with the creative curriculum
- Regular dialogue with pupils and staff
- Providing quality feedback to staff

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- Analysing any available data to identify the main strengths and weaknesses within RE and developing a strategic plan (action plan) to inform the development priorities for the whole school
 - Being for the monitoring of teaching, assessment and planning of Religious Education based on the development of the children at each stage. (Monitoring occurs in order to support staff and should include classroom observation, book scrutiny, planning and discussion with pupils.)
 - Managing resources and facilities for Religious Education.
 - Liaising with the Diocesan Department for Education particularly through attendance at the Co-ordinators' meetings, and informing the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher and colleagues of current standards and developments within Religious Education.
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- Attending appropriate In-service training for Religious Education, keep up-to-date with current developments and feed these developments back to staff.
 - Advising individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the
 - Setting up a portfolio of evidence to monitor progress throughout the school. (Samples of work should reflect the appropriate Attainment target strands and levels.)
 - Tracking data and use this in consultation with the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher to set realistic, yet ambitious, targets in RE.
 - Ensuring that cross-curricular concerns such as literacy skills, multi-cultural issues, equal opportunity, the use of Computing and PHSE are reflected in Religious Education.

The outcome of our religious education is "religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life." (Salford Diocese Religious Education Centre)