

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A Model Policy for Primary Schools



St. Teresa's RC Primary School



Our Mission Statement

We will learn, serve and pray in a Catholic community helping all children to become the best that they can be.

To achieve this we will:

- strive to do the little things well like St. Teresa.
- value ourselves and one another.
- reach out to others.
- accept and forgive.
- worship together.

'Let us do the little things well today.'

St. Teresa of Lisieux



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.'
- 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 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.

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

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.

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 - the 'Come and See' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese.

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 Directory states:

'Teaching in Religious Educationshould 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 variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

Inclusion

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

⁵ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

⁶ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.7

Other Religions

Two other religions are taught from EYFS to Year 6 following the programme of study in 'Come and See'. These are Judaism, which is usually taught in the Autumn, and Islam*, which is taught either in the Spring or Summer. At least one week's teaching and learning time per year is given to each. (**As the demands of the RE curriculum are great we may on occasions devote a teaching day to other faiths in the summer term after SATs – one day per each faith.*)

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.
- 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 term. Cross school moderation takes place at least yearly.
- Examples from the school portfolio of assessed samples of work are presented for Diocesan Moderation at RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the summer term.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning takes place according to the School Self Evaluation Schedule. Lesson observations are carried out every half term or more if necessary on a rota/new teacher system. Book and planning scrutiny and takes place termly. A target relating to RE is included Performance Management.
- Pupils are sublevelled at the end of each term and this information is used to ensure progress and achievement is recorded and tracked on the Pupil Progress Tracker. Results are monitored to assess progress and achievement made.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors on a yearly basis in the school data progress meeting.

Management of the Subject

Fiona Lindsay, the Co-ordinator/Subject Leader has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. See job description of the Co-ordinator.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Head teacher, RE Co-ordinator, governors and whole staff and updated every 2 years.

January 2014

APPENDIX 1

DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

Primary RE Co-ordinator Job Description

- To be responsible to the Headteacher and colleagues 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.
- To manage resources and facilities for Religious Education.
- To liaise with the Diocesan Department for Education particularly through attendance at the Co-ordinators' meetings, and inform the Headteacher and colleagues of current standards and developments within Religious Education.
- To attend appropriate In-service training for Religious Education, keep up-to-date with current developments and feed these developments back to staff.
- To advise individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the Religious Education process and teaching methods.
- To set up and maintain a portfolio of work in order to monitor progression and continuity. Samples of work should reflect the appropriate Attainment target strands and levels.
- To track data and use this, in consultation with the Headteacher, to set realistic targets in RE.
- To ensure that cross-curricular concerns such as literacy skills, multi-cultural issues, equal opportunity, the use of Information Technology and PHSE are reflected in Religious Education.
- In consultation with the Headteacher to communicate with parents, governors and the parish community regarding issues associated with Religious Education.
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- To liaise with other primary and secondary colleagues.
- To maintain a Subject Leader's file containing:
 1. The Religious Education Policy and Guidelines
 2. Medium term plans which represent schemes of work in school.

3. Assessment and monitoring procedures for teaching and learning and evidence of that monitoring.
 4. Audits and reports to Headteacher about progress made in RE.
 5. A record of Staff Professional Development in RE
 6. Data and current targets in RE.
- Working with the Headteacher and colleagues, to undertake a regular audit/review of Religious Education in line with the school development plan.
 - To be familiar with the current inspection framework and to consult with the Headteacher to complete the school's SEF 48 document.
 - To keep up to date with any changes to the Areas of Study (Religious Education Curriculum Directory).