



St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy

“Growing and Learning together in Christ.”
(School Mission Statement)

“Lord be thy Word my rule”
(School Motto)



Religious Education Policy

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The school is a Catholic school, founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and teaching of the Catholic Church. Specifically, St John the Evangelist Catholic Academy, seeks to live as we grow and learn together in Christ’ as our guiding principle.

Mission Statement

This policy document should be considered in the light of our School Mission Statement which outlines all that underpins our work at St. John the Evangelist:

“Growing and Learning together in Christ.”
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“Lord be thy Word my rule”
(School Motto)

Introduction

St John the Evangelist is a caring, Catholic school community and we teach our children that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. We aim to foster an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each individual child’s life and to encourage a personal response to that presence. Our children are helped to achieve their full potential through a Christ-centred creative curriculum that values equality and diversity and seeks to allow each child to develop their conscience and make sound moral judgments based on commitment to following Christ.

The role of Religious Education at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy

Religious Education has a very high priority in the life of our school. As a Catholic school, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life. Our pupils are educated in the beliefs and devotional practices of the Catholic Church.

Aims and purposes of Religious Education

- To develop an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each individual child’s life and to encourage a personal response to that presence
- To allow each child to develop their conscience and make sound moral judgements based on commitment to following Christ
- To enable each child to learn and develop their full potential according to their abilities and adopt attitudes of care and respect for each other

- To promote the Sacramental life of Christian families and to encourage parents to take an active part in the preparation of their children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation
- To foster school-parish links to ensure that our children remain exposed and committed to the Catholic faith beyond the realms of the school curriculum

Learning and Teaching

The Catholic RE scheme 'Learning and Growing as people of God' is followed throughout the school. By following this strategy, continuity and progression - which are intrinsic elements of the programme-, are ensured, from the Foundation Stage, through to Year 6. The RE Team scrutinises the planning and assessment and conducts lesson walks and observations and book scans to ensure that the scheme is closely adhered to.

This scheme is supplemented by work on the saints, the virtues, vocations, Mass and assembly responses, Relationships, Health and Sex Education (Ten:Ten) and Personal, Social and Health Education.

RE lessons should be distinct and identifiably different from other subject lessons, in that they should always start with a prayer and a candle should be lit to symbolise that, as we are gathered in Jesus' name, He is present with us.

Classroom Organisation

The crucifix is displayed prominently in each classroom and in central areas of the school. Within each classroom there is a prayer table and an RE focus, which children are encouraged to use during collective worship and for their own personal, spiritual reflections. The prayer table is always draped with a cloth depicting the current liturgical colour. Each classroom is expected to have at least one RE display which reflects either the current topic being taught, or the liturgical time of year. On the prayer tables in Key Stage 2 there should be a box, to enable children to record their own prayer intentions or go forth responses, which should be shared at an appropriate class assembly during the week.

Collective worship and the development of prayer life/spirituality

Children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through daily participation in morning prayers, Grace before and after meals and evening prayer. Children are also taught traditional prayers following the direction of the Diocese 'Class prayers'. These prayers are said daily, in class, and shared during Collective Worship, when appropriate, thus serving to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of Traditional Catholic Prayers.

At appropriate stages, each class experiences prayerful reflections, including silent contemplation, and short prayer services and assemblies based on topics covered in the strategy. Formal prayers, appropriate to the age and maturity of the year group, are taught throughout the strategy and visible in each classroom. Each class teacher has a copy of the prayers that their class are expected to learn and the RE Team monitors this to ensure that these prayers are practised and taught.

Each child is also given the opportunity for sharing their personal intentions within class and whole school assemblies so that family situations, illness, thanksgiving and individual concerns can be expressed and supported.

There are three weekly whole-school assemblies, led by the Head teacher and SLT; the first of which focuses upon the Gospel from the previous day; thus entitling all children to access the Liturgy of the Word. The second is centred upon the Virtues for the half term linking all that is discussed to Scripture. The third collective whole school assembly is the 'Congratulations' assembly which celebrates the achievements and successes of our children's God-given talents, to which parents, families and friends are invited.

In addition to this, dependent upon the Mass rota, each Key Stage, when not as Mass, gather together or lead their own class worship to share Collective Worship focused upon the theme of the Mass and/or the Values. This assembly aims to involve children practically and spirituality in following the footsteps of Christ Jesus.

Our children also participate in whole school and key stage Masses on a fortnightly basis, in the parish church (EYFS and KS1) or in the school hall (KS2), which are always supported by family members and parishioners. The children themselves are actively involved through reading, offertory and music.

Hymn practices are scheduled weekly; there is a timetable outlining all the hymns to be practised in each session, relating directly to the liturgical events and forthcoming Mass.

During Lent and Advent, liturgies take place thrice-weekly during school time. These are prepared and led by pupils. During May and October, a decade of the Rosary is also prayed daily, in commemoration of Our Blessed Mother, Mary; morning Rosary sessions are led by a member of staff and pupils.

Sacramental Preparation

The Strategy outlines specific preparations for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist and Confirmation. These are delivered in class as an integral part of the RE curriculum, ensuring that all of our children have a sound knowledge and understanding of the significance of the Sacraments to Catholicism.

In addition, there is a structured programme for the children who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. The children, and their parents are expected to make a commitment for the duration of the Sacramental preparations, to taught and practical sessions, delivered by the RE Team and our Parish Priest, with support from the Catechists within the Parish.

Pupils in Year 6 prepare for Confirmation, again through the specific units in the strategy and also through an organised programme, which involves the input of the parish priest, RE team, parents and class teacher.

Parental Involvement in Sacramental Preparation

Every effort is made to ensure the vital links between home, school and parish community are established and sustained. Parents of children undertaking Sacramental preparation for Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation are invited to attend meetings with

the Parish Priest and RE Team. For all three Sacraments, it is seen as vital that the parents attend both the Commitment Masses and the actual celebrations with their child.

Throughout the school year, parents are invited to attend Whole school and Key stage Masses. They are asked to support the nurturing of the faith of their children by encouraging prayers at home, attending weekly Sunday Mass and listening to and talking with their child.

Multi-Cultural Aspects and Race Equality

Whilst all pupils are expected to participate in RE lessons, parents have the right to withdraw their children, although this is strongly discouraged. All pupils learn about other religions and cultures and are encouraged to show respect and acknowledgement for the beliefs of others through open discussion and shared experiences. We recognise the need to familiarise the children with other Christian traditions and non-Christian faiths, and to encourage the children to foster attitudes of tolerance, respect and understanding for beliefs and traditions of other faiths. While remaining true to their Christian faith, the children are encouraged to acknowledge with respect the truth and value of other faith traditions and to establish good relationships with members of other faiths without prejudice. The children are also encouraged to recognise and value the international and multicultural nature of the Catholic Church.

Each year group has a specific area of multicultural religion to follow; staff will endeavour, wherever possible to link the teaching throughout the year, looking for opportunities to 'weave' new learning into the creative curriculum topics. The nursery to Year 2 focus on celebration within other faiths. Whilst Yr3 -6 focus on a particular faith. The faiths we include are: Judaism. Sikhism. Hinduism and Islam.

Differentiation

Children with special educational needs, whether they are children with learning difficulties, or children who are able and talented in RE, will be presented with tasks to suit their ability. Differentiation for these children may be in the amount of support offered by the teacher and/or assistant, or tasks with varying levels of difficulty, including tasks which will extend the more able children's spirituality or knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the topic being covered.

Assessment and Recording of RE

The Diocesan RE team has compiled assessment sheets for each of the year groups, from Nursery to Year 6, based on the Strategy assessment criteria for each unit of work. Each year a focus strand from the RE curriculum is chosen as the focus for all assessment. The assessment sheets detail the differentiated requirements for each topic, based on the "Must, Should, Could" layered target principles. The children's names should be recorded in the section that best fits their overall performance in each unit of work. Once the unit of work is completed, the class teacher completes the assessment sheet and it is filed in the Class Assessment file. A copy of each assessment is also passed on to the RE team, who review each unit, in order to inform future foci. Class teachers use these to analyse the data and in particular compare the attainment and progress of different groups of children.

At the end of each unit and end of the year, children are assessed using the age related standards for their phase. Evidence towards these is built up over the year for a selection of pupils and a final assessment against the standard is completed.

At the end of Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, children are assessed against the attainment levels and data is analysed by the RE team; this data is then compared to core end of key stage data.

In the Foundation Stage, teachers conduct a Nursery Baseline Assessment at the beginning of the year and this is repeated at the end of the Foundation Stage and progress and attainment is reviewed.

Resources

General teaching resources including assembly books, artworks, posters, music and downloads are available at both sites. Classes have access to Bibles either in their classroom or in the communal areas at KS2. The RE Team retains all other resources, such as Sacramental Preparation resources, and resources for whole school/ Class Masses.

Information and Communication Technology

ICT and other appropriate digital software and resources will be used in teaching, wherever appropriate and as facilities allow. It is our intention to present the Catholic faith in a stimulating and yet reverent way, and thus demonstrate its relevance to contemporary life by using modern technology as and where appropriate.

Health and Safety

Candle and Matches: Candles, when used for collective acts of worship and RE lessons, must be kept well out of the way of children. Matches should also be stored in a safe place, out of the reach of children and not accessible to them. Children should never be sent to collect matches. To minimise this risk there are a number of battery operated candles at both sites.

Procedures for going to Church: Children must always be accompanied by the appropriate staff: pupil ratio. Staff need to be especially vigilant when escorting children from the KS2 site, following the risk assessment at all times and reminding children to be mindful of their own safety.

The roles within the RE team

The RE team consists of:

Catholic Life of the school (Helen Rigby),

RE Curriculum and assessment leaders (Phil Turner and Luke Smith),

Prayer and Collective Worship leaders (Phil Turner and Luke Smith),

Music leader (Liz Amison)

This team regularly meet in order to ensure that all the roles and responsibilities, as outlined below, are met.

- To liaise with the Parish Priest and other key parishioners regarding Masses, services, Sacraments and other significant events within the church calendar, where the school is involved
- To ensure the celebration of the Church's Liturgical Year is upheld in school
- To provide teaching and support staff with the specific knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith in order to ensure accurate and confident delivery of the doctrine
- To monitor and evaluate the subject closely, through classroom environment and lesson observations, book scans, planning trawls and pupil interviews
- To consult with staff on the planning and delivery of the units of work when necessary, providing guidance and support to ensure quality learning and teaching
- To train staff in the effective assessment of RE
- To monitor the quality of opportunities and activities provided for the children and the levels of achievement attained in relation to national standards and similar Catholic schools
- To plan and timetable assemblies, hymn practices and Class Masses on a termly basis
- To provide readings and Prayer of the Faithful for School Masses and ensure that they are effectively delivered in Mass through practice with the children
- To provide parents with information for their child's Sacramental preparations and on the delivery and content of RHSE.
- To update the RE section of the school website on a regular basis
- To order and allocate resources to classes and the central resource area within budgetary restrictions
- To highlight key areas of learning and experience through the policy document, action planning and the units of work
- To check resources, materials and equipment regularly for needs arising and ensure permanent resources are respected and returned, to ensure easy access for all staff (Please see appendix for further clarification on the roles and responsibilities within the RE team)

Ways forward

- Please see the RE SEF and Annual school development plan for the Catholic Life and Mission of the school for identified areas of improvement.

RE Team: Mrs Rigby/ Mr Turner/ Mr Smith
This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

This policy was agreed by staff on: January 2022

This policy was approved by School Committee on: February 2022

This policy will be reviewed by the School Committee on: February 2025

Signed _____ Chair of School Committee

Appendix

A) The RE Curriculum Coordinator

Responsibilities	Tasks that will enable you to achieve this	✓ or AFI
<p>To provide leadership and direction for religious education in the school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having subject knowledge of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the scope and sequence of the Diocesan Strategy 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' b) the scope and sequence of the national Curriculum Directory c) National Levels of Attainment in RE • Keeping up to date with new initiatives through reading, attending relevant courses provided by the Diocese, participation in the SLA • Reporting to SMT, Governors 	
<p>To support, guide and motivate those teaching RE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring RE is seen as an enjoyable subject to teach and to learn • Providing policy guidelines which make clear to the class teacher the expectations for planning, delivery and assessment of RE • Updating and reviewing said policies in time specified • Providing additional support for NQT's and those new to the school and diocese • Providing additional support for non-Catholic teachers • Leading INSET sessions for staff • Ensuring staff have access to CPD in RE • Providing feedback to staff about local, Diocesan and National developments in RE 	
<p>To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring monitoring schedule in place with Strategy focus identified • Completing a range of monitoring activities which include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book Trawl Lesson Observations Pupil Interviews Monitoring of assessment (baseline and end of unit assessment sheets) Monitoring of planning Learning Walk • Gathering views about teaching and learning of RE (children, staff, SMT) • Analysing the above activities to identify strengths, areas for development and areas of concern which are subsequently addressed 	

To secure high standards of teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing model lessons, model planning and assessment (assessment for learning and assessment of learning) • Providing clear guidelines and expectations via policy and scheme of work • Providing a range of resources to aid delivery of the curriculum 	
To identify priorities and targets for RE and contribute to the school development plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing an annual Action Plan for RE which is informing the SDP/SIP • Providing evaluative evidence and information for Section 48 SEF particularly Sections 1 (attainment in RE on entry), 3: Achievement and Standards, 4: Quality of Provision • Analysing evaluations about teaching and learning of RE • Providing a detailed spending plan based on the budget allocated (and linked to monitoring and assessment focus) 	

Including Sacramental Education:

Responsibilities	Tasks that will enable you to achieve this	✓ or AFI
To provide leadership and direction for Sacramental Education in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having subject knowledge and understanding of:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the scope and sequence of the sacramental elements of the Diocesan Strategy 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' b) the links with the parish • Liaising and working in partnership with the parish priest, catechists, parents and parish 	
To support, guide and motivate those leading Sacramental Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that there is a Sacramental focus for each year group • Providing policy guidelines which make clear to the class teacher the expectations for the planning and delivery of the Sacramental elements of the Diocesan strategy • Providing additional support for Y3 and Y6 teachers (or those classes receiving the Sacraments) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading INSET sessions for staff • Ensuring staff have access to CPD • Providing a range of artefacts and resources to support the sacramental programme • Working closely with Parish Priest, catechists to provide a programme which involves the parents and parish 	
To monitor and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering the views of participants in 	

evaluate the effectiveness of Sacramental Education	<p>Sacramental Preparation Programmes (children, parents, teachers, catechists, priest)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of the Diocesan Strategy (when Sacraments is the focus) 	
To secure high standards of Sacramental Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a comprehensive outline of the Sacramental Programmes Providing a range of artefacts, resources and experiences to enable teachers/catechists to deliver the Sacramental Programme Providing opportunities which include all those involved in the Sacramental Programme 	
To identify priorities and targets for Sacramental Education and contribute to the school development plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing an Action plan for Sacramental Education which is informing the SDP/SIP Providing evaluative evidence and information for the Section 48 SEF particularly Section 4: Quality of Provision 	

C) Prayer and Collective Worship Leader

Responsibilities	Tasks that will enable you to achieve this	✓ or AFI
To provide leadership and direction for Prayer and Collective Worship in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having subject knowledge and understanding of:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the nature of prayer, liturgy and Collective worship of the Liturgical Year of the Church and its impact upon prayer of the scope and sequence of the Diocesan strategy and the opportunities for prayer within it Keeping up to date with the prayer life of the Church (e.g. Year of St. Paul, Parish Day of Prayer) Reporting to SMT, Governors 	
To support, guide and motivate those leading Prayer and Collective Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that prayer is seen as central to the life of the school Providing opportunities for staff to bear witness Providing guidelines which make clear to all the expectations for the planning and delivery of prayer and collective worship throughout the year Providing a range of artefacts and resources to support prayer Leading INSET sessions for staff Ensuring staff have access to CPD 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for staff prayer and reflection 	
<p>To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Prayer and Collective Worship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditing of prayer (current practice) • Monitoring of prayer in planning and in children's work • Monitoring a range of prayer activities • Monitor of prayer focus' throughout the school via Learning Walk • Gathering views about the range and quality of Prayer and Collective Worship (children, staff, governors, priest) • Evaluating the above to identify strengths, areas for development and areas of concern which are subsequently acted upon 	
<p>To secure high standards of Prayer and Collective Worship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling a range of prayer activities • Providing a range of artefacts and resources to enable teachers/LSA to create prayerful spaces throughout the school • Providing a range of artefacts and resources to be used in prayer and collective worship • Providing a range of opportunities for prayerful experiences throughout the year • Providing opportunities to include the whole school community in the prayer life of the school (parents, governors, parish) 	
<p>To identify priorities and targets for Prayer and Collective Worship and contribute to the school development plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing an Action plan for Prayer and Collective Worship which is informing the SDP/SIP • Providing evaluative evidence and information for the Section 48 SEF particularly Section 6: Collective Worship 	