

# Our Lady's RC Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

Ratified by Governors November 2017



## Our Lady's Mission Statement

At Our Lady's RC Primary School we want to  
'know God, love God and serve God'

**We will try hard to :**

- Learn about the **WORD** of God.
- **WELCOME** everyone into our school as Jesus welcomes us into His family.
- Care about the **WELFARE** of others and help those in need.
- **WORSHIP** God through prayer and praise and use the talents God has given us.
- Be a true **WITNESS** to Jesus by showing everyone that we respect, value and love one another.

**We will try to live like Jesus every day.**

At Our Lady's RC Primary School, R.E. is a core curriculum subject. Our policy aims to demonstrate knowledge of the Christian faith, especially the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and the school's mission to witness to that teaching in our local and wider community. This policy has been prepared in consultation with all members of the teaching staff, approved and ratified by the governing body.

### **The Scope of Religious Education**

R.E. provides a meaningful meeting point for religious and educational considerations. Regarding the former, it strives to acquaint the pupils with our shared Christian values, beliefs and traditions. With respect to the latter, it encourages pupils to build a sense of integrity and appreciate their abilities. It provides all pupils with the possibility of growing in knowledge and understanding of religion and appreciation of the impact with faith has on the lives of many people.

Our aim is that pupils will develop appreciation for the Christian message and mission, and thereby develop a sense of love of God, neighbour and self. These, it is hoped, will engender in our pupils the urge for selfless service to the wider community and an awareness of justice for all.

The content of the R.E. programme is informed by 'Come and See' syllabus introduced by the Salford Diocese.

Through the study of the concepts in the syllabus mentioned above, children have access to programmes of study appropriate to their level of understanding.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

## **Structure and Management**

### **THE ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE HEAD AND HEAD OF SCHOOL**

The role of the Executive Head and Head of School is to:

- liaise with the parish Priest
- liaise with parish co-ordinators
- take school assemblies
- timetable staff meetings for RE
- ensure staff have opportunities for prayer and reflection
- liaise with Loreto and other Catholic High Schools

### **THE ROLE OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUBJECT LEADER**

The role of the subject leader is to:

- review the RE policy
- work alongside staff to prepare liturgies, celebrations and worship throughout the liturgical year
- guide staff in planning, assessing and reviewing RE
- encourage staff to achieve high quality teaching of RE
- provide resources necessary for RE and liturgies
- liaise with Executive Head and Head of School in drawing up of timetables for liturgies, Masses and assemblies
- in liaison with parish Priest/Head of School, oversee school involvement in parish Masses
- co-ordinate with display co-ordinator and class teachers to ensure quality religious display
- arrange RE In-service

### **THE ROLE OF THE CLASS TEACHER**

The class teacher is responsible for:

- ensuring the aims of the RE policy are met
- planning, teaching and assessing the content of the Diocesan RE Scheme, Come and See
- developing the opportunities for the spiritual growth of each child through RE, class/Key Stage liturgies, Masses and school celebrations, retreats
- promoting knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, its relevance to everyday life and the skills to engage in religious thinking
- helping to prepare children to understand the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion
- deepening the children's understanding of the Sacraments in Key Stage 2

### **THE ROLE OF THE WHOLE STAFF IN WORSHIP AND LITURGY**

Staff (as appropriate):

- prepare assemblies and class liturgies/reflections
- share responsibility for preparing some of the school liturgies and celebrations
- participate in worship and liturgy through readings, singing and actions

### **THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

Parents are the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith.

The staff at Our Lady's recognise their partnership with parents in nurturing the faith of our children. Parents are invited and encouraged to:

- pray with their children
- take their children to Mass on Sunday
- help in their child's preparation for the sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Communion
- attend year group Masses, school Masses in church, assemblies and other celebrations
- support their child's preparation for assemblies and Masses

### **Implementation Procedures**

The Governing Body delegate responsibility to the Executive Head teacher and Head of School for the implementation of this policy and the R.E. curriculum throughout the school. The R.E. leader assists the Executive Head teacher and Head of School in monitoring the provision of R.E. and reporting back to the Head teacher and governing body.

### **Communication**

RE appears on the agenda for weekly staff meetings as per school improvement plan. Included in these meetings and in staff briefings is discussion on planning, assessment, prayer, resources, themes and organisation of liturgical events.

RE is always included in the Executive Head's termly report to governors. Issues relating to RE are communicated to parents via newsletters and meetings. Parents are also consulted on matters of Religious Education.

### **Planning**

Curriculum R.E. accounts for 10% of curriculum teaching time. Staff use 'Come and See' to help them plan on a half-termly and weekly basis. This involves careful choice of activities and approaches to ensure full coverage of the syllabus, taking into account the different ways that children learn. During Summer 2 all classes complete a study of other faiths based on a specific theme.

The Programmes of Study for all Key Stages are developed through engagement in a variety of religious activities and practices. Teachers aim to bring the Gospel Values to life in their lessons. The children are taught in a manner which encourages questioning and challenge, investigation and reflection. Teachers aim to develop the appropriate skills and attitudes and promote free, informed and full responses to God's call in everyday life. Knowledge, understanding and skills gained are used in other curriculum areas where appropriate. The Sacramental Programme, Class/School Masses, Collective Prayer & Worship and Praise Assemblies reinforce the R.E. Programme.

### **School Masses and Assemblies**

'Whole School Masses' are celebrated at important times in the Liturgical year or when we have a special celebration. The children bring the scripture to life by acting out bible stories when appropriate. Parents are involved in contributing to the mass for example: leading a traditional African offertory and sharing of Polish hymns. Parents and parishioners are invited to attend all Masses.

Where staffing allows, a rota of attending mass in St. Alphonsus Church encourages all children to celebrate mass together outside school alongside other members of the parish. Parents/carers are welcomed to join each class. Opportunities are often taken to talk with Father Pat after mass and learn more about significant artefacts used during the Mass. Also a special time is made for each class to light candles and offer prayers.

Monday assemblies focus on a whole school challenge for the week linked to our School Mission Statement and Behaviour policy. We encourage children to reflect upon their behaviour and think about how their behaviour can positively affect both themselves and others as we 'try to live like Jesus every day.

Wednesday assemblies focus on praising through hymn singing.

'Stars of the week' Praise assemblies take place each Friday morning where we celebrate our achievements both in and out of school. Children are rewarded with certificates from staff throughout the school. We encourage one another to 'let our little light shine.'

Other special assemblies take place throughout the year including; Harvest / SVP assemblies, Remembrance Service in November, Advent, Nativity plays, Carols, Lenten assemblies, Holy Week, Stations of the Cross, Crowning of Mary, First Holy Communion celebrations, Refugee week, Black History assemblies, Fr Pat Clarke (Brazilian street children project) and other Fund Raising assemblies etc.

### **Sacramental Programme**

Children in Year 3 are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. Children attend the parish Mass each Sunday morning and are taken as a group during the Liturgy of the Word to prepare for the sacraments. They then re-join the congregation for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Once a month they take part in the children's Mass, organised by the Youth Club. The children are provided with work to take home to do with their parents. All learning is backed up and further consolidated in the classroom.

The links between school and parish are further strengthened by the fact that the Parish Catechist is also employed by the school and co-ordinates the sacramental programme, altar servers and leads the parish youth club. As a result of this opportunities are capitalised to re-enforce the work done between parish and school.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Work is differentiated where necessary to meet all abilities. Children are given the same support in R.E. lessons as they would if required in English and Maths lessons. All pupils, including those with SEN and additional needs can obtain maximum benefit from Religious Education when:

- Work is challenging yet achievable
- Tasks are structured so all pupils can achieve success
- Teacher's expectations are appropriate and pupil's achievements are recognised.

### **Monitoring and Assessment**

Curriculum R.E. is monitored the same as the other core subjects. The R.E. co-ordinator, Executive Head, Head of School and SLT carry out lesson observations as part of the school monitoring and assessment cycle. The Senior Leadership team collect in books on a regular basis. The team give positive feedback to the children or where necessary

offer challenge to pupils. The R.E. co-ordinator and leadership team feedback to teachers about good practice and areas for development. Examples of good practice are shared.

Teachers follow the suggested assessment activities from 'Come and See' but also adapt these to create their own task for each module. Staff use a range of tasks to assess including those examples provided in the 'Come and See' scheme, artistic representations of their studies, supported by written explanations.

An annual audit of resources takes place each year by the R.E. co-ordinator. Again, R.E. is a core subject and the governing body allocate the same funding for R.E. as it does for English and Maths. The R.E. co-ordinator updates the position statement on an annual basis and then writes up an action plan for the following year. This action plan is monitored by the Executive Head and Head of School during the R.E. co-ordinator's appraisal interviews.