

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

"We are growing together on our journey of achievement with Jesus in our hearts, heads and hands".

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

"Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject amongst many, but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life".

(Bishops Conference of England & Wales 1988)

### **POLICY AIM**

- To provide guidelines which will help put our Mission Statement into practice in everyday life of the school.
- To act as a framework for planning and teaching RE in the school.
- To act as a guideline for worship in the school.

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### **1. OBJECTIVES**

In Religious Education, we will aim to develop:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- Knowledge and understanding, and respect for the other principal religious traditions; Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.
- Growth in their spiritual and moral development.
- Skills and attitudes to support their personal, moral, social and cultural development.
- Respect for truth and the views of others and awareness of their own moral responsibility.
- Foster appropriate attitudes to religious commitment in everyday life and the challenge of living in a multicultural society
- Explore big questions in a philosophical way.

## 2. THE CURRICULUM

The ethos of Catholic Education promotes the ideal that pupils should be supported to achieve their full potential as unique individuals by fostering a sense of belonging and support.

For pupils from a strong faith background, it will be a chance for their faith to grow and deepen, for some it will be a chance to develop some knowledge of their faith and for some it will be the first opportunity they will have had to hear the Gospel message.

We recognise that children come from a range of backgrounds and abilities and that our teaching of R.E. will reflect this:

**Early Years** – Pupils are encouraged to foster a sense of awe and wonder and explore God's creation. They are encouraged to develop a positive self-image, made aware of acceptable behaviour, respect others and engage in Prayer. Pupils are taught to act reverently and taught to make the sign of the cross and participate in RE activities.

Religious Education will be treated as a subject in its own right; taught, resourced and developed as any other core subject in the school.

**Special Educational Needs** – We strive to meet the needs of every pupil and recognise they are unique and on a personal faith journey. The school provides support for individual pupils and staff encourage them to respond in a way that is appropriate to their ability.

**Equal Opportunity** – We provide equal opportunities in RE, regardless of ethnicity, gender or special needs. We endeavour to foster a love for the subject and equal access to the curriculum.

The curriculum at St Joseph's is underpinned by our School Mission Statement which is founded on Gospel values and, as we see **all** education as playing a part in revealing God in our lives, we recognise two aspects of Religious Education in the school:

- i. **Implicit** – those opportunities which arise in the course of a school day to lead pupils, through differing aspects of the curriculum not directly associated with R.E. or through relationships, to a religious understanding of their implications. It is the policy of the school to use such opportunities as they arise.
- ii. **Explicit or Curriculum Education** – timetabled or planned periods of time given over to explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom. It is the policy of the school to allocate 10% of curricular time to Religious Education, in line with the wishes of the Bishop's Conference.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to other places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

The God Matters Programme, recommended by the Diocese of Portsmouth, provides the basis of our school R.E. Curriculum. Each teacher plans and adapts ideas based on the interests and ability of the class.

The scheme follows a yearly cycle and its themes should be evident throughout the school, in the classrooms and in the floorbooks.

The Units are:

- Unit 1 – Creation
- Unit 2 – Prayers, Saints and Feasts
- Unit 3 – Advent
- Unit 4 – Christmas
- Unit 5 – Revelation
- Unit 6 – Sacraments
- Unit 7 – Lent
- Unit 8 – Holy Week
- Unit 9 – Easter
- Unit 10 – Pentecost and Mission
- Additional: Other Faiths

### **3. THE ROLE OF THE R.E. LEADER**

- To organise Masses and Liturgical Celebrations within school.
- To organise opportunities to explore other faiths (in consultation with the Head teacher and Staff).
- To liaise with the Parish Priest in arranging the liturgical diary for the school term.
- To work collaboratively with our sister school.
- To liaise with cluster groups within the Diocese of Portsmouth.
- To support other members of staff, including non-Catholic staff.
- To update teaching and policies.
- To raise and maintain standards in RE.
- To monitor teaching and learning, and assessment in each class.
- To report to Governors about the subject.
- Lead staff INSET, including 'Before you begin' for each unit

### **4. RESOURCES**

The majority of R.E. Resources are located outside the staff room, but each class keeps resources appropriate to their teaching.

### **5. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING**

Assessment is an essential part of the learning process and it is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through marking work set and following the assessment guidelines set down by the diocese.

The class teacher must ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging and at the end of each unit, input data to reflect which pupils are meeting age related expectations. The RE leader will analyse the data and support teachers to make next steps for their pupils.

## **6. THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM R.E.**

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we strive to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of ethics.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher to discuss any concerns about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at St. Joseph's Catholic School.

## **7. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

We believe that collective worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise, adoration and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The current requirement for a daily act of worship is observed, either during whole school, Key Stage or House assemblies or in individual classrooms.

When planning any Act of Worship the leader will follow the pattern:

- Gather
- Proclaim – suitable Bible reading
- Reflect
- Respond through Prayer
- Go forth

The pupils are encouraged to take part in worship and where appropriate deliver an act of worship to their peers. Every teacher acts as a role model for the pupils, showing them how to be reverent, reflective and take part in planned and spontaneous prayer.

## **8. PRAYER**

Prayers are said three times each day:

- Morning Prayer (oh my God you love me)
- Lunch time Prayer (Bless us oh Lord as we sit together)
- End of day Prayer (Thank you Lord)

Children are actively encouraged to make spontaneous offerings through Prayer and take an active role in planning and leading worship.

Each classroom has a prayer table that reflects the period of the Church's Liturgical Year and the Unit of work being studied in the Curriculum.

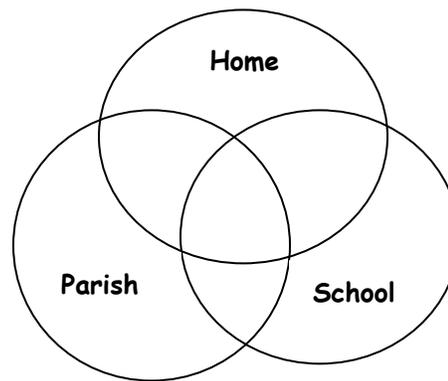
Each meeting held in the school for staff, parents/carers or governors begins with a prayer

## 9. HOME/SCHOOL/PARISH

**Prayer** - The school strives to encourage parents/carers to foster the prayer life of their families through:

- The school prayer sheet given to all pupils
- Reference to the church's liturgical year and the R.E. Unit of study in the school newsletter
- Publication of parish and/or school services for important feasts
- Inviting parents/carers to share in liturgical celebrations and class led assemblies
- Encouraging parents/carers to recognise themselves as part of our school worshipping community.

**Home/School Links** - The school represents one integral part of a partnership between home, school and Parish. Our role is to provide all children with a secure knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and the opportunity to experience liturgy in a caring community. In order to create a strong link between the three parts, we encourage the full participation of parents and carers in school religious life.



The importance of the Parish is also vital in accompanying families on their journey of faith and is accomplished through:

- Knowing, visiting and encouraging families
- Providing welcome and acceptance
- Sharing faith with them and providing suitable catechetical resources and courses
- Celebrating with them through liturgy, sacraments and prayer

The school is an integral part of this provision and works with the Parish to provide as many of these opportunities as possible.

The value of strong links between home, school and parish is the real evidence of Christian community and the vitality of the local church.

Drafted by Mrs N Philpott

*Policy to be reviewed every two years.*

*Policy to be the responsibility of Curriculum & Standards Committee*

Approved by the Governing Body	/ /
Chair of Governors signature	.....
Date	/ /
Review date	/