

St John's Catholic Junior School



Policy on Religious Education (RE)

Mission Statement:

"Love one another as I have loved you"

Introduction

St John's Catholic Junior School believes that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise 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.

We are fully committed to providing opportunities for all children to know, love and serve God, in such a way that will enrich their own lives and help them to understand their Catholic faith traditions, in an ever changing world and within the multicultural society in which they live.

Together, following in the footsteps of Jesus, we endeavour to foster responsible, happy, caring and kind people who will be effective stewards and make a positive difference in our world.

Aims and objectives

- To foster a love of God through knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith from scripture and doctrine.
- To encourage the development of a personal relationship with God.
- To help children to be aware of and respect other faiths or value systems adhered to in the UK;
- to develop an understanding of religious traditions, and an appreciation of cultural differences in the UK today;
- To develop children's ability to investigate, interpret, analyse, empathise reflect, apply, evaluate and express themselves.
- To develop respect for truth and for the views of others and celebrate diversity in society.
- To develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues arising in their lives

Entitlement

We follow the Religious Education programme 'The Way, The Truth and The Life', as adopted by the Shrewsbury Diocese. Two topics per year group are studied each term. It is the policy of the school to give at least 10% teaching time to RE. We view the total curriculum in our school as based on the values of the Gospel and we see all education as revealing the mystery of God. During Holy Week, Advent, Lent and other times, there will be an increased entitlement.

Teaching and learning

We base our teaching and learning style in RE on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children both to learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum.

Our teaching and learning in RE enables children to build on their own experiences and to extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. Children are encouraged to draw upon all their 'Learning Powers' of reflection, reciprocity, resilience and resourcefulness, in RE as they do in all areas of learning. Teaching and learning is planned to develop the children's ability to investigate, interpret, analyse, empathise, reflect, apply, evaluate and express themselves, for example, through careful questioning, debate, presentation and study.

Children are actively involved in the planning and celebration of Collective Worship. Throughout the key stage each term, children plan and lead collective worship within their class. We organise visits to local places of worship. Children carry out research into religious topics. They study particular religious faiths and compare the religious views of different faith groups on topics such as rites of passage or festivals. Children investigate religious and moral issues either individually or in groups. On occasions, learning is presented and shared across the Key stage, for example in a 'Market Place' activity to celebrate 'Diversity Week.'

We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children

by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, by:

- ❖ setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- ❖ setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks)
- ❖ grouping the children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group
- ❖ using classroom assistants or scaffolding resources, to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

RE curriculum planning

RE is a core subject in a Catholic School. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with The Way, The Truth and the Life Scheme of Work. We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in two phases (long-term and short-term). The long-term plan, maps the RE topics studied in each term during the key stage.

The year group team of teachers, write the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. Learning objectives are differentiated at three, colour coded levels, and tasks set accordingly. When appropriate, children have the opportunity to choose the task, to remove any ceiling on learning. There are some opportunities planned for open - ended tasks.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through RE in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong, through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

RE and technology

- The use of technology enhances RE, wherever appropriate, in all year groups. The children select and analyse information using the Internet, use powerpoint to lead acts of collective worship, publisher to present work to peers and use visual media. All staff have digital access to on-line daily Collective Worship resource, 'Ten:Ten' and SLT have access to the on-line whole school assembly resource. All Class assemblies are digitally recorded and photographed and available for broadcast in the entrance hall.

RE and inclusion

At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

Assessment for Learning

We recognise that assessment, recording and reporting are a natural part of teaching and integral to the learning process but it is impossible to assess the level of a child's personal faith and it should not be attempted. However, we are able to assess the child's knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes which have been taught in RE.

The assessment of standards is carried out using the criteria set out in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by the Bishops' Conference.

Teachers continually make assessments using strategies such as:

- Guiding children through verbal feedback
- Looking at children's recorded work and marking it.
- Reading children's responses to marking
- Teacher observations of children during learning.
- Observing speaking and listening contributions during lessons.

We follow the assessment policy as set out by the Diocese. This sets out the expected level of attainment for pupils at the end of the Key Stage. At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to his or her expected level of attainment. We use these grades as a basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this

information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Results are recorded using 'Balance Assessment' by the class teacher and analysed by the RE leader and SLT to oversee progress and identify the performance of vulnerable groups.

The RE subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio; this demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school. To ensure external moderation of standards, our children's work, along with other from partner schools, forms part of a portfolio which is compiled by Headteachers and RE leaders of local partner Catholic schools.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. Resources for RE are kept in classrooms and in a central store. There is a set of Bibles, and a collection of religious artefacts and books which we use to enrich teaching in RE. Specialist artefacts are borrowed from Wirral Schools' Library Service, when necessary. Artefacts, statues and candles are also placed strategically around the school.

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

In order to monitor the teaching and learning of Religious Education, learning walks are carried out by the Subject Leader and Head teacher, or RE Governor. Book scrutiny is also carried out at this time. Parent views and Pupils voice are canvassed through questionnaire. Attainment data that is gathered through 'Balance Assessment' by the class teacher is analysed by the RE leader and SLT to oversee progress and identify the performance of vulnerable groups.