

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle  
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



# A Model Policy for Religious Education

## Mission Statement

St. Joseph's is a happy and caring Catholic school where everyone aspires to reach their true potential with Christ at the heart of all we do.

## School Motto

We are children of God, We Achieve, Believe and Care.

## 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.'*<sup>1</sup>
- 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.'*<sup>1</sup>
- 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.*<sup>2</sup> 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."*<sup>3</sup>
- 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.
- 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"*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

<sup>2</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3

<sup>3</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7

<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

## 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 Education ....should 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.'*<sup>6</sup>

## 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 and Equality

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

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

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

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

## **Right of withdrawal from RE**

Parents have the right of withdrawal from RE for their children. The school has a separate Policy for the Withdrawal from RE.

## **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.

## **Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

- Assessment of standards is carried out using the Age-Related Standards in Religious Education (3-19) interim document agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a records of pupils' progress and previously moderated class books.
- A moderation of pupils' books takes place termly, 'Working Below' pupils in Autumn term, 'External Moderation' with a local Catholic Primary school in Spring term and 'Working At' pupils in Summer term before Diocesan moderation.
- Pupils' books are externally moderated with the CET and at diocesan RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the summer term.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning takes place throughout the year, books checks take place in Autumn term and lesson observations in Spring.
- Progress and achievement is recorded and tracked in the following way through Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust (BWCET) and is collect twice a year.
- 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 through the Head Teachers report at termly meetings.

## **Management of the Subject**

Mrs Hughes the RE Lead has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by Mrs Hughes – RE lead and Mrs Maher – Head Teacher and updated every 2 years.

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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 implement the changes to the Age-Related Standards in Religious Education (3-19) interim document and support staff during the transition period.
- To collect and keep pupil books showing pupils working at expected each class at the end of each academic year.
- To facilitate in-house moderation of pupils' books every term.
- To attend annual diocesan and CET moderation meetings with the required pupil books.
- 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 CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).
  - To keep up to date with any changes to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and attend relevant training.