

ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

The most important factor in all our work is the Catholic ethos and this is reflected in our school Mission Statement.

The policy is written in line with St. Paul's Mission Statement:

“Together in Faith, Working as One”

Intent

We develop responsible, resilient, respectful pupils who value themselves, others and their learning.

We aim for our children to be happy, inquisitive, reflective and ambitious individuals who can become lifelong learners ready for the next stage of their 'journey'.

Our curriculum is **CLEAR**:-

- **Challenging** – lessons are stimulating and provide opportunities for children to 'grapple' with concepts, utilising opportunities for regular lesson enhancements.
- **Language rich**– staff promote, develop and encourage high quality talk for learning so that all pupils can express themselves and communicate clearly and effectively in a wide range of situations.
- **Encouraging** – staff promote resilience through the development of a growth mindset and 'the power of yet'.
- **Aspirational** – staff have high expectations and the children dare to take risks and dream.
- **Reflective** – children are encouraged to consider their role in making our world a better place. **'LIVE WISELY, THINK DEEPLY AND LOVE GENEROUSLY'** – (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*)

1 INTRODUCTION

Home, School and Parish are responsible for the religious education of children. However, parents are the first educators. Their co-operation and support is vital at every stage of the children's religious and moral education. The school supports, extends and clarifies what the children experience at home and in church.

Catholic schools are seen as one of the most powerful means of communicating Christian faith and ideals to young people. As teachers, we help to prepare young people for life. Religious Education must lead children to respond to God with love, faith and thanksgiving. Therefore, as a

school, we must communicate the Christian message to children, in a manner appropriate to their age and life experience.

The religious growth and development of the children must be a happy, secure and caring Christian ethos, therefore daily life and prayer cannot be separated. The Catholicity of St. Paul's must permeate in all curriculum areas and all aspects of school-life.

2 PHILOSOPHY

Religious Education in St. Paul's takes into account the religious and educational needs of our children including those from supportive Catholic homes and those for whom the school may be the first and only experience of Church.

Religious education is for all children and it should: -

- Help the children to become aware of God's presence in their lives.
- Respond to God's invitation to enter into a personal relationship with him.
- Foster and deepen the children's faith.
- Help children recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life.
- Enable the children to reflect on their own experience and for them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the school in partnership with the parents is to create a caring, well-disciplined environment where children can learn academic skills, social graces and Christian values to enable them to cope successfully in the world in which they live. We also aim to work with the Parents and clergy to develop the spiritual life of the child and to encourage the children to live and work in a Christian manner in the community.

In the religious and social development of the children, the school seeks:

- To enable the children to acquire an understanding and involvement of prayer, worship and liturgy in the practices and beliefs of their Catholic faith.
- To help the children become aware of God's presence in their lives.
- To respond to God's invitation to enter into a personal relationship with him.
- To foster and deepen the children's faith.
- To enable the children to reflect on their own experience and for them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition.

4 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' (WTL) is the main core of the R.E. lesson from Foundation Stage through to Year 6. A whole school approach is adopted. Our mixed-age classes alternate the programmes of study so that all children experience both year group elements for their cohort over a two-year programme.

Content in (WTL) is so structured that there is cohesion and progression in what children do and learn. There are clearly stated aims, achievable learning intentions and a selection of experiences and activities for each of the learning intentions. These allow pupils to work according to their different abilities.

10% of our timetable is given to the religious lessons, though, as suggested in our mission statement, we try to make all aspects of school life reflect our Catholic faith.

- 4.2 The classroom teacher is responsible for planning each topic in an appropriate way that will suit the children's age in his/her care. This is done by working closely with other teachers.
- 4.3 All teachers employed by the school are expected to take responsibility for the teaching of Catholic Religious Education and receive support and continued professional development from both internal (Catholic Staff, experienced staff, R.E. Subject Leader) and externally (Diocese) training opportunities and support.
- 4.4 Each term, Staff evaluate and assess the levels children are working at. Other Faiths are during our annual 'World Faiths Week' and there is also a pertinent module specifically for this in the Year 5 syllabus.
- 4.5 Cross curricular links are made when appropriate.
- 4.6 Different learning styles are catered for when RE lessons are planned. We aim to address a balance for the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learner. We also utilise opportunities for a 'creative' approach when possible, in order to develop the practices outlined by Lat Blaylock.
- 4.7 ICT is used to enhance our RE teaching and learning.

5 ROLE OF THE R.E. SUBJECT LEADER

The role of the Subject Leader is to:

- 1) Develop an R.E. Policy Document and to co-ordinate the implementation of the "The Way, the Truth and the Life" syllabus using a whole-school approach.
- 2) Attend appropriate courses and to keep informed of new developments and ideas in R.E. bringing them to the attention of staff for discussion and evaluation.
- 3) Arrange special celebrations e.g. Advent and Lent Retreat days.
- 4) Arrange Masses for Holy days, Family Masses or special occasions.
- 5) Support teachers new to the school by working with them to implement the R.E. policy, informing them about courses and answer any queries that they have.
- 6) Advise, liaise and consult with the head teacher, parish priest and governors.
- 7) Build up resources for religious education.
- 8) Ensure that P.S.H.E. is incorporated into our R.E. programme.
- 9) Assist staff in assessing the termly topics by meeting together in staff meetings and recognising strengths and weaknesses of our approach and ways in which we can improve on this.
- 10) Organise in-house and cluster moderation opportunities to ratify assessment outcomes.

6 SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION AND CELEBRATION

6.1 Sacramental preparation is covered in the Year 3 programme of 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'.

6.2 Home, school and parish work together to prepare children in Year 3 for their Sacraments of Forgiveness and Holy Communion. Parish and school work closely to plan the programme, Parent's Meetings and Family Masses. Over time we adopt the most appropriate materials to prepare for Holy Communion and Reconciliation. Parents and catechists work alongside children supporting them in their preparation. We celebrate First Forgiveness as a whole school community. First Communion Celebrations take place during one Sunday in church, depending on group size. Children make their First Communion with their family. We have a whole school celebration once children have made their First Communion.

7 PRAYER

- 7.1 Our primary aim in religious education is to help the children develop a personal relationship with God. We must help them express this relationship in prayer.
- 7.2 Teachers encourage many styles of prayer, formal, informal, public and private during the child's life. Opportunities are given for the children to experience and develop all types of prayer. A big emphasis is put on children learning to learn traditional prayers. These are explained to children and whole school displays are used to illustrate these prayers, e.g. Our Father. Children are encouraged to write own prayers to form prayer displays and class prayer books.
- 7.3 Appropriate prayers are said at the start and finish of morning and afternoon. The best practice is to say one or two prayers, rather than a large number.

8 ASSEMBLIES

- 8.1 Assemblies are a daily feature of school life. Every assembly should form a collective act of daily worship. Special assemblies for the church seasons (Advent, Lent, etc.) are held at the appropriate times.
- 8.2 The whole school meets for assembly on Mondays as well as a Friday Celebration Assembly. Assemblies are led by the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher. Parents, Carers and parish are invited to Friday's Assembly. It celebrates the achievements of our pupils and how they 'live out' and demonstrate our Mission Statement: 'Together in Faith, Working as One.'

RETREAT DAYS

Our Lent and Advent Retreat days form an important and valuable experience for our whole school community. Children are guided in reflections, music, prayer, craftwork, drama and dance. Children work in Pastoral Care groups, consisting of mixed age ranges. These groups rotate around each activity throughout day, with older children developing responsibility, self-esteem and the opportunity to act as role models for younger pupils.

9 CELEBRATIONS

9.1 All religious practice should be seen as a celebration, but there are times in school when the children should prepare a special celebration. Each class takes it in turns to lead our Holy day celebrations. Foundation Stage and KS1 produce a Nativity musical play and KS 2 lead a Carol Concert. These occasions do fully utilise the church provision as and when appropriate.

10 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are warmly invited to weekly assemblies and special celebrations.

11 DISPLAYS

11.1 Classes always have a religious display in their area. It should change to reflect the different topics in "WTL".

11.2 The main areas and hall contain displays that emphasise the Catholicity of the school; so that everyone is constantly reminded that St. Paul's is a Catholic school.

12 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

12.1 The staff in St. Paul's school will ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum without racial or sexual stereotyping.

12.2 RE is taught to all children providing the same opportunities to everyone.

13 RESOURCES

13.1

- "WTL" programmes of study materials for each class.
- Resources to be found in PPA room and on the shared drive
- Staff have been given a list of R.E. resources and suggestions for use of them. Please refer to attached list of resources.

13.2 Visitors are invited to come in to school to speak to children about the work of CAFOD, Mission Together and other appropriate issues. They also provide videos, information, activities to enrich class RE work.

14 NON CURRICULUM

To express the Catholic ethos of the school there are a number of non curriculum features that should always be evident.

14.1 Throughout the school, religious items should be on display, including: Crucifixes, statues and written prayers. Children should be taught the importance of these artefacts and be encouraged to examine them and think about them as part of their heritage.

14.2 The manner in which staff relate to children, parents, visitors and each other should be evidence of their belief in the family of God.

14.3 Staff should talk to the children about their own beliefs and commitment to religious ideals. The school's code of conduct should be put in a Christian context, emphasising the

example of Jesus as a role model for the whole school community – children parents, visitors, teaching and non-teaching staff.

14.4 The school should involve itself in the community, local, national and international through our Mini Vinnie's group. This group meets regularly to discuss school, local and national issues that require our thoughts, prayers and, in some cases, charitable actions.

14.5 The school is part of the parish and children should be made aware of their part in the life of the parish.

15 SEND

Children who have special needs are catered for by staff and work at their own level, supported by an adult as necessary. Staff prepare, implement and review PCPs for SEND children and adopt the use of P-scale guidance as appropriate.

16 ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

16.1 Formative assessment is completed throughout each topic in reference to the 'I can statements', which are highlighted to identify the achievement of each specific outcome.

16.2 Summative assessment occurs on a termly basis using specific assessment tasks provided by the Diocese. These tasks are marked and levelled. A class list of levels is provided to the RE Subject Leader each term.

16.3 Examples of the assessed pieces in each Year group are provided for the RE file, along with Contextual Summary sheets. These are then used for moderation and also to form exemplars for future assessment reference.

16.4 Individual record sheets are handed up to next class.

16.5 Foundation also use record forms which link the learning of the pupils to the specific learning goals. Evidence is captured in a range of ways and collated onto these record sheets by the class teacher. Comments are included to reflect the differences in responses and understanding in order to differentiate between various attainment ranges. A class list of outcomes is also provided to the RE Subject Lead each term.

16.6 At the end of each year a "best fit" judgement is made about the level of attainment of each child, as assessed against the level descriptors of the RE Attainment targets.

17 REPORTING

17.1 Parents receive a verbal report at Open Evening, as well as a written report half way through and at the end of the academic year.

18 MONITORING AND REVIEW

18.1 The RE subject leader completes annual lesson observations, a book scrutiny and Collective Worship learning walks.

19 HEALTH AND SAFETY

19.1As with all areas of the curriculum, the school's Health and Safety and Safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to in all aspects of RE in our school.

20 SUBJECT REVIEW

This policy is a working document and may be subject to change, but it will be reviewed in three years time and will involve the whole staff.