

Saint Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Learn to Love; Learn to Believe; Learn to Achieve.

*In our school Christ is at the centre and children
are at the heart of all that we do:*

*We inspire everyone to succeed to reach their potential
in a safe inclusive happy environment;*

*We develop resilient hard working independent individuals
who are confident to take risks.*

Religious Education Policy

Date: 10 September 2023

Review Date: 9 September 2024

Signed by Chair of Governors: Mrs S Buller

Introduction

The School Motto is:

'Learn to Love, Learn to Believe, Learn to Achieve'

This policy should be read in conjunction with the NRCDES policy.

https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/application/files/4015/1022/7703/Religious_Education_Policy_-_January_2017.pdf

The principles underpinning the spiritual development of our children are based on the Gospel Values of justice, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation. Children learn to appreciate the love of God in their everyday lives and in the world about them.

The life of the school is underpinned by the school's Mission Statement, which is displayed in every classroom and public area. School life is driven and shaped by these values, our motto and our Catholic ethos.

Mission Statement

'In our school, Christ is at the centre and children are at the heart of all that we do.

We inspire everyone to succeed to reach their potential in a safe, inclusive, happy environment. We develop resilient, hard working, independent individuals, who are confident to take risks.'

This policy will outline the approach to Religious Education including related issues such as collective worship, spiritual development and moral development.

Rationale

Every Catholic school in the Diocese of Nottingham is required to teach, develop and resource Religious Education with the same commitment as any other core subject.

'The outcome of excellent 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.' Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools (CES 2012)

Our Aims and Objectives

At Saint Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we aim to nurture every aspect of Catholic Life and to provide individuals with opportunities to develop a personal relationship with God by creating:

- An environment that uses Jesus as a role model, thus demonstrating the Christian values of respect, trust, honesty and co-operation
- A celebrating community, which uses prayer, assemblies, festivals, liturgies, positive discipline and worship
- A sense of belonging to and participating in a community
- A real understanding and practise of the Catholic Faith
- Opportunities to develop understanding, respect and appreciation of other faiths
- Familiarity with religious language, symbols, signs and gestures of worship and prayer
- A curriculum that develops the whole child, integrating physical and intellectual growth alongside moral, spiritual, emotional and physiological growth.

The Religious Education Curriculum

Religious Education is a core subject which is central to the Catholic life of the school, based on the expectations and aims outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools (CES 2012).

“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.”

Catholic Bishops ‘Conference of England and Wales (May 2000)

The ‘Come and See’ Programme

This programme of study forms the basis of our scheme of work and teaching. It is developed through three themes; the Church, the Sacraments and Christian Living. Each theme occurs once in every term and gradually builds on the understandings of the previous theme. Each theme is explored through different topics across the year groups.

The school ensures that all pupils are provide with the opportunity to learn about other faiths and religions. During the Advent Term, a week of Religious Education teaching is focussed upon Judaism, then in the Lent term, there is a focussed unit on Islam, and in the Pentecost term, the pupils learn about Hinduism.

In addition to the timetabled RE sessions and daily collective worship, Saint Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy celebrates holy days, special feast days, class assemblies, key stage worships, class worships, come and praise and whole school Masses.

The Structure of Religious Education Teaching

This is delivered through a process recognised in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- By exploring their life experience to discover value and significance: **EXPLORE** (approx. 1 week)
- By hearing, understanding and reflecting on the Christian message: **REVEAL** (approx. 2 weeks)
- By bringing it to mind, by celebrating and applying it: **RESPOND** (approx. 1 week)

Planning

We carry out the curriculum planning in RE in two phases; long-term and short-term. The long-term planning maps the RE topics studied in each term by each year group. The RE subject leader devises this plan in collaboration with teaching colleagues in each year group, using the Come and See primary map. Class teachers write short-term topic plans using the template provided in addition to planning guidance from the RE Advisor at Nottingham Diocese Education Service. Class teachers are provided with planning sessions with the RE subject leader, and plans are reviewed half-termly by the Senior Leadership Team. Planning must outline specific learning objectives and expected outcomes linked to the 'driver words' suitable for each year group (Nottingham Diocese Education Service End of Year Expectations Document, 2019). Planning is tailored to the specific needs of the children so that the learning is accessible and engaging.

Time allocation

The time allocation for Religious Education is 10% of the taught week in each key stage, in accordance with the guidelines from the Bishops of England and Wales (May, 2000).

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Reception classes, Religious Education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. RE is included in 'Understanding the World' and 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development' areas of learning. Children complete baseline assessment in recognising religious words, actions and objects at the beginning of EYFS and at the end.

Assessment

Saint Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy use the Nottingham Diocese Education Service End of Year Expectations Document (July, 2019) to assess children according to their year group expectations. Children are assessed against the 'driver words' applicable to their year group and are assessed in three strands; learning about religion, learning from religion, and forming an opinion about religion. Pupil progress is judged through observations, discussions and extended pieces of recorded work, which is internally and externally moderated to substantiate judgements. The Education Service also set assessment tasks once per term to aid moderation.

Lesson drop-ins, book looks and pupil voice are used to inform termly pupil progress meetings with the Head Teacher.

Evidence is gathered against the standards throughout the year. This will include assessment tasks and extended pieces of writing that have been moderated and a judgement agreed upon. The aim of this is to exemplify RE standards for each year group for tracking purposes, and to further support teaching staff in their decisions and pitch of lessons. Monitoring is completed termly with the link governor. Saint Mary's CVA use the Trust assessment framework on Insight to monitor pupil progress.

Pupil Progress meetings are held termly for each class with the Head Teacher. Children may be identified and targeted thereafter to ensure at least expected progress is made from their starting point in RE. A baseline assessment is carried out at the beginning of Reception to help find out what basic Catholic knowledge, vocabulary and experiences children have on entry to the school. Throughout Reception, the teacher and the school 'add value' (teach the children basic Catholic knowledge, vocabulary and offer a Catholic context to give some experience of Catholic life). The baseline is then carried out at the end of Reception to demonstrate the gains in knowledge and understanding (value-added).

Marking and Feedback

Marking and Feedback will be given in line with the school's Marking and Feedback policy. Assessment and Feedback in Religious Education (RE) will be at least weekly, with one quality mark taking place each week. Termly RE assessments will be formally marked and placed in the pupil's RE assessment book.