

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy 16



Mission Statement

"Living, Learning and Growing in God's Love."

Introduction

Religious education forms the cornerstone of the life and work of St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School and permeates throughout the whole curriculum. We believe that,

"Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for, and substantially shape the school curriculum and offer living experience of the life of faith in its practical expression." (Bishops of England and Wales, 1988)

We see our Christian community sharing in the mission of the church, on our journey to closeness with Christ.

We strive for our Catholic ethos to pervade our school day. We try to conduct our relationships in the way Christ wishes.

Philosophy

This document reflects the values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of religious education at St. John Bosco. It gives a framework within which all staff work and gives guidance on teaching, planning and assessment. This policy is intended to be read in conjunction with the curriculum mapping for R.E and the Diocesan scheme of work, *Learning and Growing as the People of God*, which gives details of what pupils in different year groups will be taught.

The Religious Education provided in a Catholic school cannot be confined to the teaching and learning specifically devoted to Religious Education. The school should seek to ensure that the message and spirit of the Gospel, permeates ALL aspects of school life, that informs the approach to and treatment of the whole curriculum and that it is reflected and communicated in the love, care and respect with which staff and pupils are treated.

Nevertheless, specific Religious Education teaching is of central importance.

"It leads children into an exploration of the different aspects of religion and throughout reflection upon religious belief."

Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools 1996

It is a subject which must be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as other core subjects.

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy 16

Aims

Religious Education in our school should:

- Nurture children's faith.
- Promote in a gradual way their understanding and appreciation of Catholic teaching and practice.
- Develop their involvement with the Church Community.
- Develop their ability to show care for others.
- Foster pupils' religious, spiritual and moral development.
- Develop the skills required to be able to examine and reflect on religious belief and practice, including those from other faiths and cultures.
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder.

Curriculum Planning

St John Bosco has adopted the Archdiocese scheme, Learning and Growing as the People of God. The scheme provides progression from Reception to Year 6 in the key areas of Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life of Christ. It also allows opportunities for monitoring and assessment. The scheme is intended to link in with other curricular areas and it should be resourced by using Bibles, Sacramental programmes, Multicultural resources and other resources appropriate to the programme of study.

R.E. Lessons

- R.E. is a timetable subject covering 10% of teaching time.
- R.E. is taught systematically throughout the school using the Diocesan Scheme "Learning and Growing as the People of God." This provides continuity and progression in each year group.
- R.E. is taught as a subject in isolation and where appropriate should be linked with other curriculum areas including I.C.T.
- Children are expected to develop a repertoire of prayers appropriate to their year group. (see Prayer Policy)
- All KS2 children should have a development knowledge and understanding of the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary.
- All children should be provided with the opportunity in their R.E. lessons to pray together as a class, to make up their own prayers in both oral and silent form.
- R.E. written work should be marked in accordance with the marking policy. Special emphasis must be made on the spelling of key words "God", "Jesus" ensuring the correct use of capital letters.
- Lesson objectives should be shared with the children and an opportunity for prayer and reflection may be included at the start and end of each lesson. - eg. Light a candle to set RE apart from other lessons. At the end of the lesson blow the candle out to emphasise the 'specialness' of an RE lesson.

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy 16

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning objectives of the school are:

- To help children become more aware of and to reflect on their experience of living in the world with others (Experiential).
- To reveal to the children some aspect of God's plan for our salvation (Doctrinal)
- To help them respond to God's love in their lives. (Moral)
- To help them listen to and respond to God (Prayer)

Prayer has an important role in the scheme and is taught both as an integral and a discrete area of study.

Each classroom and the school hall should have a religious focus point. A crucifix and a Bible should be displayed in a prominent place. The prayer corners should include drapes appropriate to the liturgical season.

S.E.N. Provision

Lessons and activities from the scheme should be planned and differentiated sufficiently to allow children to work at them at their own ability level, including extending the most able.

Display

In order to highlight the importance of Religious Education and the Catholic ethos of the school, displays of a religious nature should be evident in each classroom throughout the year. Similarly such displays should be encouraged in corridors and at appropriate times of the year in the school entrance.

An R.E. / Prayer focus area should be encouraged as a focal point in each classroom. This area should have at least cloth of the appropriate liturgical colour, a crucifix, a candle and a Bible. Statues, artefacts and posters should be prominently displayed whenever possible and changed on a regular basis.

Liturgy and Celebration

- School Masses are an essential factor in the religious life of the school.
- Preparation for Masses should take place within the context of the R.E. lessons with pupils developing their understanding of the meaning and structure of the Mass as they progress through school. All children should be actively involved in their Masses by doing the readings, offertory procession, serving and singing hymns.
- The Parish Priest should be involved in the preparation of as many Masses as time permits.
- The school aims to ensure that children attend Mass at our Parish churches for specific Holy Days of Obligation.
- All parents are encouraged to take part in all school Masses.

Services

- Early Years children are equally essential to the religious life of the school.

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy 16

- Preparation for services should be taken from within the context of the R.E. curriculum and during R.E. lessons.
- All children should participate in services – singing, speaking, drama etc.
- The Parish Priest or church representative should be invited to take part in the children's services.
- Parents should be encouraged to attend their children's service.

Sacramental Preparation

Sacramental preparation for Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation is an important and integral part of the Religious scheme. It is important the whole faith community (children, parents, teachers, priests) are involved in this preparation.

The following guidelines are in accordance with those set in the Diocesan policy framework.

“Communicating Christ”

- First celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation should precede First Holy Communion.
- Preparation should be a continuing process in keeping with the age and moral development of the child.

Preparation for all Sacraments is built into the People of God's scheme. Timings of the units have been adapted on the school curriculum mapping document for R.E. to take into account the scheduling of the Sacraments in the school, parish and liturgical year.

We value the contribution made by parents at these important times of their child's development and ensure that they are given opportunities to be involved in the preparation for the reception of the sacraments, through work at home, celebrations and Masses held in the Parish and in school.

- Children in Year 3 (unless parents request otherwise) will be prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation in the Spring Term and Eucharist in the Summer Term.
- First Communion Day is arranged for a mutually agreed Sunday in the Summer Term. This celebration is a community event involving school, Parish and families. All are invited to attend Mass and refreshments that follow.
- Children in Years 5 and 6 (unless parents request otherwise) are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation at a time that is convenient to the Bishop.

Assemblies and Collective Worship

- All children take part in a daily act of worship; this may be whole school, key stage or class.
- Assemblies are considered to be an important element in the delivery of moral and religious education to the children.
- Early Years children are integrated into whole school assemblies as is appropriate to their needs.

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy 16

- The content of assembly should be of a religious or moral nature. During assembly time the school community is expected to discuss, sing and pray together. It is expected to prepare for special feasts and follow the church liturgical calendar.

Cross - Curricular Links

The R.E. scheme provides many opportunities for Literacy links. Relevant texts can be studied as part of the Literacy Hour. R.E. can also be used to develop speaking and listening skills, drama and role play.

Within R.E. there are a variety of opportunities to develop Numeracy skills such as conservation of number, number related to chronology and AT1 possibilities.

R.E. provides opportunities for a variety of I.C.T. activities and can be linked to the History and Geography curriculum.

Moral Values

We recognise the atmosphere of the school is very important for personal and moral growth. An atmosphere of love, respect for others, sympathy and forgiveness, contributes to the children's self confidence and self acceptance, and develops their capacity to relate to others and to God.

We encourage children to develop the moral qualities of self discipline, perseverance, determination, patience, fair play and consideration for others. The school has a high standard of behaviour and follows an assertive discipline policy. This helps the children to acquire self control, to appreciate the rights of others and to realise that there are limitations to their own freedom.

Family Life Education

As followers of Christ we must respect ourselves and others and this is reflected in our Sex and Relationship education Policy (SRE). This follows the recommendations and teaching materials of the Diocese. (see SRE Policy)

Moral Education

The moral growth of all pupils is of paramount importance throughout the school. This is encouraged through the role model and expectations of the teacher, the caring ethos which encourages the respect for others and their property, self discipline, fair play and honesty at all times. We also develop perseverance, organisation, getting along with others and self confidence through the PHSE - S.E.A.L. programme. The development of a Christian conscience is an essential part of each child's moral development.

Equal Opportunities

All staff are expected to follow the equal opportunities policy of the school when teaching Religious Education. Particular attention should be paid to the subject of family relationships e.g. one parent families, a non-Catholic parent, different cultural backgrounds etc. Pupils are expected to have a developing awareness of other faiths and a positive attitude towards them. The school policy on Race should be implemented at all times.

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy 16

Assessment and Record Keeping in R.E.

Each unit of R.E. is assessed in line with the revised Diocesan guidelines and recorded. It identifies specific attainment targets and levels for R.E.

This assessment is used to plan future learning and is monitored inline with whole school monitoring programme.

Resources

Governors are committed to ensuring that there are sufficient and good quality resources to meet the breadth of the R.E. curriculum. Priorities are identified in the School Improvement Plan and purchased accordingly.

Pupils are encouraged to look after resources and in particular handle bibles carefully. Bibles are on display in every classroom, with appropriate class sets throughout the school.

Visits to support the sacramental programmes eg. Alton Castle retreat are subsidised through school fund.

Resources and Accommodation

The following are available for the teaching of R.E.

- Bibles
- Bible Reference Books
- Story books - including Big Books
- Prayer Books
- Pictures and Posters
- Hymn Music
- Religious Artefacts
- Specific texts for Sacramental Preparation
- Boxed collections for Feasts Days and key events of the Liturgical Calendar.

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