

St Edward's Primary School

Religious Education Policy



Reviewed ~ September 2021
Review Date ~ September 2022





Our Mission Statement



...we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring.
1 John 3:18

Our Vision Statement

We are guided by our Mission Statement and we aim to:

- develop and care for the **whole child** through our teaching and sharing of the Catholic faith.
- show our love of God in the way we care and value each other and ourselves.
- aspire and equip children with those skills necessary to become contributing members of society and responsible adults.
- recognise and encourage all pupils' individual gifts and talents.
- provide an excellent quality of education striving to achieve the very highest standards for all pupils and, at the same time, develop lively critical minds.
- develop each pupil's appreciation of education as a lifelong and enjoyable process.
- work in partnership with the Parish and families, local schools and community groups recognising that only by working together can the school make its contribution towards the development of committed Christians and active members of the Church.

SAINT EDWARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

"Live, Love and Serve."

At St Edwards we endeavour to develop and care for the whole child through our teaching and sharing of the Catholic faith.

We aim to develop an awareness of God's love for each person in the school community, through our work and prayer.

We aim to show our love of God in the way we care and value each other and ourselves.

In the delivery of the curriculum we aspire to equip children with those skills necessary to become contributing members of society and responsible adults.

We recognize and encourage our pupils' individual gifts and talents.

St Edward's staff will aim to provide a good quality of education striving to achieve the very highest standards for all its pupils and, at the same time, to develop lively critical minds.

We will aim to develop each pupil's appreciation of education as a lifelong and enjoyable process.

St Edwards School wishes to work in partnership with the parish and families, local schools and community groups recognizing that only by working together can the school make its contribution towards the development of committed Christians and active members of the Church.

Statement of Intent:

At Saint Edward's school we aim to ensure that the curriculum provides opportunity for growth through the acquisition of skills and knowledge in a Catholic/Christian setting. We aim to create a school environment that nurtures the whole child, allowing for the development of each individual's potential,

giving a framework for living where sound relationships can be established and everyone has dignity and is valued.

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of religious education at St Edwards School. It has been devised through consultation with the governors and members of staff. As with all our documentation, it must be read in conjunction with our school mission statement and school aims. Our mission statement states that;

Article 14-You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs.

"At St. Edward's school we aim to develop an awareness of God's love for each person in the school community, through our work and prayer. We aim to show our love of God in the way we care and value each other and ourselves."

WHAT IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?

Religious Education "is not one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for, and substantially share, the school curriculum, and offer living experience of the light of faith in its practical expressions."

**Roman Catholic Bishops
Conference**

When parents entrust their children to our school, they are entitled to expect that they will experience the whole curriculum as one inspired by the gospel, and as one which embodies the spirit and ethos of a gospel- inspired community. The characteristics of Saint Edward's school, the experiences which the children have of learning and the relationships with the community offer a number of opportunities for our vision of education to be expressed in practical ways, in the management and whole pastoral system of the school.

We are conscious that all of us involved in the life of this school community- children, parents, teachers, governors, support staff, domestic staff etc. - are also workers in the kingdom, channels of God's love and empowered by God's spirit. Each and every one of us has our own vocation, and all of us are on a journey of faith, and each journey is a very personal one.

The spirit and ethos of the school result from:

- * A conscious pursuit of specific values,
- * The determination of clear priorities of what is taught and how,
- * The way in which the community is organised and managed,
- * The relationship it has to the wider community of parish, neighbourhood and global community.

Our Aims:

At Saint Edward's Primary School our aim in religious education is to lead our pupils by our example and teaching to a living Christian faith. Taking into account the children's age, needs and capacity to learn we aim:

- To build a loving relationship with God the creator through prayer, worship and the life, words and actions of Jesus as recorded in the scriptures.
- To nurture, guide and spiritually enrich our children on their faith journey.
- To pass on knowledge of and devotion to the Catholic faith and its traditions - a responsibility we share with parents, the child's primary educators in faith, and the parish community of the Holy Name of Mary.
- Together with parents, catechists and parish we aim to fully prepare our children to experience the presence of God through the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist
- To encourage the children to develop self-respect, respect for others and for God's creation
- To develop the children's awareness of their responsibility for their actions and enable them to develop an informed conscience and sound moral judgement
- To develop a sensitivity to the children's backgrounds and specific needs and encourage them to recognise, respect and value other faiths, religions and cultures

- To foster a living commitment to the Catholic faith
- To ensure that Religious Education continues to have a central place in the curriculum, permeating every aspect of school life
- To offer each child a secure and caring classroom environment in which they are encouraged to strive for excellence and reach their true potential as unique human beings
- As partners in this precious mission we will support each other practically and spiritually through our reflections and evaluations.

Article 2- All children have these rights no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is or what their culture is.

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.'¹

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.'¹

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.²

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."*³

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".*⁴

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.

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, paragraph 4

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

³ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, paragraph 7

⁴ 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.⁵*

Religious Education - Curriculum Time Allocation:

In line with the recommendations of the diocese of Middlesbrough 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship.

There is also a religious focal point in each classroom reflecting the liturgical year that is changed at regular intervals. Also a well-chosen variety of religious symbols are displayed throughout the school including a selection of the children's artwork and written work.

Religious education is taught to all the children at Saint Edward's School. The admissions policy expects all children to attend the lessons as they provide an important influence and rationale for the ethos and purpose of our school. Religious Education is more than 'just another subject'. It is taught through the way we bear witness to our beliefs and through our attitudes to all those around us in Saint Edward's school, our families and the wider community.

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

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

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.

Teaching Programme and strategies:

We must always be mindful that all adults working in the school are role models for the children in our care and that the sincerity of our commitment to Religious education and to living out daily the Christian message should manifest itself in all areas of school life: in our attitude to work, how we welcome and treat and respect the children, adults and everyone who is part of our school family.

Process:

Religious Education is taught using "Come and See" through the process of *Explore, Reveal and 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.' ⁶

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:

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

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.

Article 30- You have the right to practise your own culture, language and religion.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting:

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress.
- An in-house moderation meeting is held every term to monitor and track progress of pupils. Moderation is cross referenced against the objectives in the formative assessments across each of the primary phases.
- Examples from the school portfolio of assessed samples of work are presented for Diocesan Moderation at RE Coordinators' Moderation meetings in the Summer term.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning will take place throughout the school year. Work scrutinies, Lesson Observations and Collective Worship will take place Termly.
- Assessment - Pupils are assessed according to age related expectations. These age-related expectations align with the key objectives stated in the formative assessments for each of the phases across the primary age range. For example, RE Standards for RE Early Years Foundation Stage 3 - 5 yrs, RE Standards 5 - 7yrs, RE Standards 7 - 9yrs and RE Standards 9 - 11yrs.
- Age phases 3 - 5yrs and 5 - 7yrs - Centre on **Knowledge and Understanding** (Learning from Religion) where coverage is tailored to allow children develop their understanding and knowledge of RE and increase their awareness and use of religious vocabulary. This phase also includes **Engagement and Response** (Learning from Religion) where the children will explore meaning and purpose alongside beliefs and values.
- Age phase 7 - 9yrs is as above but there is an extra section entitled **Making Links and Connections** added to **Knowledge and Understanding**. There is also an additional section entitled **Analysis and Evaluation** where children will have the opportunity through carefully planned activities to use different sources of evidence, construct arguments and make judgements.
- Age phase 9 - 11yrs builds on the previous age phase. Within **Analysis and Evaluation**, the children will also be taught to recognise **diversity** -

recognising differences as well as comparing and contrasting different points of view.

- Each of the above phases will be assessed termly and evidenced within RE books.
- Progress and achievement is recorded and tracked using our school tacking system which allows the RE Leader to gain an overview of standards and progress termly.
- 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 via termly Headteachers reports.

Article 28-You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to achieve the highest level possible.

Management of the Subject:

Mrs K Fox, the Co-ordinator/Subject Leader 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 Head teacher, staff and governors and updated every 2 years.

Date for Review: **September 2022**

The Role of the 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 set up and maintain a portfolio of work in order to monitor progression and continuity. Samples of work should reflect the appropriate Attainment target strands and levels.
- 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 SEF 48 document.
- To keep up to date with any changes to the Areas of Study (Religious Education Curriculum Directory).

