

St. John the Baptist
Catholic Primary School



St. John the Baptist Catholic School Religious Education Policy

Audience: Staff/Governor/Public
Frequency of Review: Annually
Postholder Responsible for Review: R.E Leader

Recommended Associated Documents:
Catholic Life Policy
SRE Policy
Curriculum Policy

Approved by the Full Governing Body –
Review – July 2020

Mission

“We will prepare the way by loving, living and learning with the Lord.”

Introduction

Our school aims to develop all children to their full potential. Our school’s character is formed by teaching our pupils to follow the Lord’s example and His Word in the Gospels. As a Catholic school we aim to do this by educating the whole person in our school community with an ethos animated by the Holy Spirit where faith is lived and shared. We seek to promote a shared Catholic vision of the nature and purpose of existence and the values of the human person.

Aims

1. To develop knowledge and understanding of the mystery of God, of the church and of the beliefs central to the Catholic faith.
2. To develop an awareness of the relationship between faith and how we live our lives.
3. To develop appropriate skills, acquire knowledge and organise it in order to make informed judgements.
4. To develop a strong home/school/parish partnership to prepare children on their faith journey and celebration of the sacraments.
5. To nurture and encourage the study and understanding of the scriptures and prayer life to enable our children to become reflective citizens.
6. To promote an intelligent appreciation and understanding of religious questions in general and a sympathetic acquaintance with other religious beliefs and practices, as part of a multicultural and multi-faith society.
7. To achieve high standards in all areas of RE with written work of a standard at least in line with English standards and expectations.

Religious Education

Religious Education permeates all aspects of school life which is seen in our daily life and relationships and in our prayer life and weekly liturgical services. All aspects of school life aim to give the children a sense of value and purpose in the eyes of God, themselves and others. All our R.E. teaching should be effective and meaningful it should, where possible, start from the child’s own experience and relate to every day life and relationships.

R.E. is allocated 10% of curriculum time as required by the Bishops’ Conference. Additional time is spent on prayer, assemblies, Christmas plays and hymn practice. We celebrate Mass regularly and this is the equivalent of half-an-hour of R.E. lesson teaching time. R.E. is taught during two lessons per week in all classes. A greater percentage of time may be allocated to R.E. at certain times of the year, such as Holy Week and through cross curricular opportunities.

During set Religious Education lessons work is differentiated to suit the needs of all abilities. It is presented in a variety of ways, giving children the opportunity to develop and present their own ideas. We strive to make the activities we present to the children challenging and interesting. There are strong cross-curricular links particularly with English/drama, art and ICT.

We aim for Key Stage 2 children to produce quality evidence for all lessons taught each week. This will include written work in lessons taught, however speaking and

listening and reading God's word will take place in lessons and, where appropriate, the evidence may simply be the recording of the date, the lesson's objective and a short annotation and/or photographs.

Activities undertaken as a class are recorded in our R.E. Learning Journals. This includes evidence of collective worship along with other activities that contribute to the Catholic Life of our school.

The Sacraments – Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation

Celebrating the sacraments are wonderful school and parish celebrations which is given significant time and involvement of the whole school community. It is seen as an opportunity for parents and families to rekindle and strengthen their own faith journey.

All the sacraments have the Home/School/Parish partnership at the centre of the programme of preparation. The sacramental programmes involve parents, staff, priest and parishioners working together with activities including parish Masses and prayer partners, as well as meetings in school with parents to learn about the work covered in class lead by staff and how they may support their child at home.

Year 3 children prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist by following the R.E. scheme of work from the Archdiocese, *Learning and Growing as the People of God*. All units contribute to the preparation of the two sacraments. The majority of the sacramental preparation programme is covered in Units B for Reconciliation and Unit J for Holy Communion: 'The Eucharist is a Thanksgiving to God'. Year 3 have a prayer bag to take home to share with their family in their preparations for the sacraments.

Children preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation also follow the Archdiocese scheme of work. Each unit contributes to the children's preparation for Confirmation although two units focus specifically on the sacrament. These units are covered to fit in with the timing of the celebration. They are: Unit E Baptism and Confirmation Celebrations and Unit J Pentecost. Other materials are used to support the children's preparation such as the 'Gifted in the Spirit' scheme. Year 6 complete a project they research for the chosen saint and as for Year 3 have a prayer bag to take home and share with their family in the preparation for the sacrament.

All children in Years 4, 5 and Year 6 celebrate Reconciliation with the parish priest in school during Advent to prepare for Christmas and during Lent for Easter preparations.

The Home/School/Parish Partnership & Links

The school aims to work in partnership with parents and involve them as much as possible in the ethos of the school. This is achieved by:

- Parents are encouraged to worship with their children by inviting them to Masses, prayer services, assemblies and productions.
- Parents are invited to meetings for sacramental preparation for Years 3 and 6.
- Parish Priest, Staff and Parents work together for the children in sacramental programmes.

- Initiatives in other areas of the curriculum also involve welcoming parents into school, such as the Inspire workshops, open mornings and workshops for areas of the curriculum.
- New parents are invited into school visits and for induction meetings, assemblies, social occasions and an induction day prior to their children starting school.
- Parents enjoy attending our annual sports day and regular parades such as Easter Bonnet parade.
- We have an informative weekly newsletter and parish newsletter on our school website.
- Homework is given weekly relating to current virtues.

The school aims to promote links with the Parish community by

- Working closely with parish priest in all Mass celebrations, sacramental preparations, organising visits to the school as parish priest and link RE Governor. Regular HT meetings with priest.
- Worshipping with parishioners at regular Masses on Sunday and at school Masses.
- Jointly organising singing between parish and school choir.
- Celebration of Holy Communion at a Sunday Mass for Y3.
- Joint celebrations in school for important events e.g. Pope's visit and annual prayer service for vocations.
- Sacramental displays and prayer partners from the parish for Holy Communion and Confirmandi children.
- Working alongside children and families to be prepared for sacraments in our parish not attending Holy Cross School.
- Masses celebrated on Sundays as part of the sacramental programme. Our children are presented to the parish.
- Children are encouraged to be altar servers.
- Strong links/liaison with John Henry Newman Catholic secondary school.

Citizenship/ PSHE/ SEAL

Citizenship and PSHE links have many natural links with Religious Education Programme and is recognised and planned for. Through the use of 'Jigsaw' PHSE scheme, children are encouraged to consider morals and making the right choices; building successful relationships with their peers.

Children of other faiths are encouraged to share personal experiences, contrast and compare. This supports our children to develop respect and understanding about the other five main world faiths during the course of their primary education.

Each year all the children are involved in being active citizens in the following activities:

- Harvest Assembly each Autumn when the children collect food which is distributed to a local food bank.
- Anti-bullying week and other topics are covered through SEAL during whole school assemblies; we use the Christian Twelve Baskets materials to deliver this.

These annual activities and on occasions generous responses to global disasters, develops Christian values, as well as global citizenship.

Collective Worship

To live our faith worship is seen as central to our life at St John the Baptist School, seen in the regular celebration of Mass within our parish church, celebrated by our parish priest. The theme, readings and hymns follow the Ordo and are prepared by the individual teacher (and class), in consultation with the R.E leader who has discussed them with the parish priest prior to the start of term. Masses are on a rota for each class from Year 1 to Year 6.

The children have daily collective worship either in class or they attend assemblies either a key stage or with the whole school each Monday and Friday.

Each class celebrates a class lead assembly for the rest of the school and for parents once a year.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Key Stage 1	Hymn Practice	Whole School Assembly	Class Prayer Service	KS Assembly	Whole School Assembly
Key Stage 2	Hymn Practice	Whole School Assembly	Class Prayer Service	KS Assembly	Whole School Assembly

Friday assemblies allow us to offer thanks to God for all our work we have achieved during the week, including outside achievements and awards. These are published in our newsletter to praise our children.

Prayer

The prayer life of the school is central to the school's faith and ethos, playing a significant role in religious education in our school, as a means of expressing and fostering faith. Children are helped to discover varieties and methods of prayer, both traditional and informal, private and communal. Every class take part in daily meditation using a mantra – 'Maranatha' – 'Come Lord'. The day begins and ends with prayer and there are prayers before and after meals. Children are encouraged to have spontaneous prayer and pray for Holy Souls in November. RE lessons always include prayer as part of the lesson.

Reflection

- During Advent there is an advent wreath in the school hall. The whole school assembles to reflect upon a scripture reading in preparation for the second coming and the birth of Christ.
- During Lent the Stations of the Cross are displayed in the school hall. Each day the whole school assembles and reflects upon one Station. A different class (from Year 1 to Year 6) leads these prayers and reflections each day.
- Particular focus is given to the Holy Rosary during the months of May and October.

Hymn Practice

This takes place in preparation for Masses, prayer services and assemblies as appropriate, all staff participate each week. All classes take part with Reception joining the rest of the school when ready.

The R.E. Curriculum

Using the Archdiocese scheme of work called 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' for Reception to Year 6, staff plan medium term plans that cover each of the units of work from the scheme. Medium and short term planning are recorded in the year group planning folders and is kept in individual planning folders and is monitored by the subject leader and SLT.

The origins of this scheme come from the programmes of study produced in the Catholic Directory written by the Bishops. The scheme of work follows the liturgical year, building on children's knowledge and understanding of Bible stories and events. A rich, range of activities to support the teaching of key learning objectives are offered in the scheme.

All support materials used are structured carefully which ensure continuity and progression throughout the year groups and contain the teachings and doctrine of the Catholic Church giving the children a sound knowledge and understanding of their faith.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The curriculum is monitored by the RE leader and HT is informed to secure standards:

- Monitoring of teacher planning
- Scrutiny of books and assessments
- Lesson observations
- Moderation of work
- Sharing of good practice

Assessment, target setting and reporting

The children are assessed at the end of each unit of work and this is recorded in their books, through the use of their target sheets.

At the beginning of the academic year, the R.E. leader seeking RE department guidance leads staff on which strand the school will assess through that year. He/She will advise class teacher's on which modules they are to assess. These assessments are recorded in children's books and on an agreed proforma which is stored in the class and R.E leader's assessment file. A portfolio of work is built up looking at the units covered to see progression and continuity.

Assessment for learning is used in order to allow the teacher to plan the next session, and to identify pupils who are exceeding the objectives, or who would benefit from more reinforcement.

Parents are given a written report on their child's progress in the summer term. They are also made aware of the R.E. curriculum each half term and an oral report is given at parent's evening.

Special Needs

Children's individual requirements will be met through differentiation of work and outcome of planned activities. Children who are identified as having special needs will be given support at all available opportunities. Teachers are aware of areas where sensitivity is required due to individual circumstances. Staff at St John the Baptist are

aware of and plan for different learning styles making use of a balance of V.A.K opportunities and teaching strategies to support all children.

Equal Opportunities and Practice

St John the Baptist School aims to provide all pupils with equal opportunities. They should have equal access and opportunities within the curriculum, both formal and informal, so that when leaving our school they have the widest possible options available to them, educationally, socially and vocationally.

St John the Baptist School supports equal opportunities by countering stereotypes and prejudice, reducing the effects of sexual, racial and social discrimination, while at the same time acknowledging the cultural and educational needs of our pupils. Equality of opportunity for all children is essential, whatever their age, ability, gender, race or background. The RE outcomes are analysed to see how well each group does in terms of progress to identify any group with a concern. This is then monitored and staff made aware if areas of focus if needed.

As a staff we will remain aware of, and provide equal opportunities for all our pupils in Religious Education. We will take into account cultural background, gender and Special Needs, both in our teaching attitudes and in the published materials we use with our pupils.

Resources and display

- All hall displays always have an R.E. focus.
- Our school mission is on display in all areas and rooms of the school and is known by our children being referred to often.
- Jesuit Pupil Profile displays are prominent within the school environment and are used to display children's work.
- Inspirational quotes are placed around the school environment.
- The Religious Education subject leader in conjunction with the whole staff audits religious education resources regularly. They are stored in the storage area adjacent to the Year 6 classroom, with some additional resources in individual prayer boxes within classrooms.
- At least one display board in each classroom is assigned to religious education and children's work is displayed together with other relevant materials. In addition, each class has a display board in the school hall for Religious Education displays as it is a core subject and is considered of paramount importance.
- Each classroom has a prayer focus area that is changed regularly to reflect the liturgical year.
- Each classroom has virtues displayed at the entrance with the opportunity for children to nominate their peers for a Virtues award.

Class Teacher's Responsibilities

Class teachers are accountable to the RE Leader and Head Teacher and the Governing Body. It is the class teacher's responsibility to:-

1. Ensure that all children are given equal opportunities to access the R.E curriculum.
2. Plan and teach from the agreed scheme of work.
3. To inform the co-ordinator of any resources required.

4. To assess R.E. through discussion, assessments and marking.

R.E Leader's Responsibilities

The R.E Leader is accountable to the Governors, the Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team.

It is the co-ordinator's responsibility to:-

1. Write policies, schemes of work and action plans
2. Monitor planning and delivery of R.E
3. Up-date resources as appropriate
4. Plan rota for weekly Masses and yearly class assemblies
5. Monitor planning of weekly assemblies
6. Oversee preparation of children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist and Confirmation
7. Review annually the RE SEF with the SLT and present to governors

The role of the governing body and head teacher

The role of the governing body is to monitor and give strategic direction to the school improvement plan. The subject leader meets regularly with the link governor for Religious Education to inform them about religious education standards and school mission/liturgical life of the school.

The head teacher has ultimate responsibility for the teaching of R.E within the school. They must monitor and ensure that there are strategies and guidelines in place for planning and teaching the subject. The head teacher set annual performance targets for teachers that include at least one RE target. The head ensures she consults with staff and they receive the appropriate training to teach R.E. All children must be receiving their entitlement as set out by Birmingham Archdiocese. The Head Teacher must ensure this is so.