

St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

*"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn,
love and grow together"*

Reviewed: Spring 2023
To be reviewed: Spring 2025
Reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Sloan', written over a horizontal line.

John Sloan Chair of Governors

Ratified at Full Governing Body meeting

Date ratified: 12.03.24

pp by Vice Chair Nathan Barry

Mission Statement

We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn love and grow together.

Statement of Aims

The community of St Vincent de Paul School aims to serve as a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Catholic Faith at all times. We believe that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children and that we are called to support them in their God-given task.

Every child in our school is valued. They are encouraged to reach human wholeness, spiritually, morally, emotionally and academically, within a happy, secure Catholic Christian environment.

We aim to provide the best possible Religious Education for each child and a happy, productive working environment for every staff member.

Rationale of Religious Education:

- The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human, **that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation**, is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church.¹
- Religious Education is a core subject in our Catholic school.
- For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step by step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.²
- Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

The outcome of 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

¹ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

² Religious Education in Catholic Schools, a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000, p. 8-9

theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.³

The Aims of Religious Education

- To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and 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.⁴

RE Curriculum intent statement:

We aim for all pupils to be religiously literate, know their way around Scripture and traditions of the Catholic Church and we are able to consider how this impacts on their everyday life. We aim for pupils to be increasingly able to make links between aspects of scripture, worship, Church teaching and their own lives. We aim to ensure that through learning about aspects of faith they are able to make informed life decisions, impact positively upon society and focus on the Common Good in their everyday lives.

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This is over and above the time dedicated to include Collective Worship.

Programme of Study:

The taught curriculum is derived from the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools (a mandatory requirement of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales). The Curriculum Directory builds knowledge and understanding at an age appropriate level about faith from the following broad areas:

- Revelation (scripture & history);
- Church;

³ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

⁴ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

- Celebration (sacraments, liturgy & prayer); and
- Life in Christ (the challenges and joys of living a Christian life).

A new Curriculum Directory will be published in February 2023. Our curriculum will be reviewed when this has been published, although early indicators suggest that much of our current approach will fit.

Our planning, carefully mapped to the Curriculum Directory, is broadly based upon a commercially produced scheme, **The Way the Truth and the Life** (published by TERE) which we have heavily adapted in order to suit the needs of the school and expected standards in RE which were revised in July 2018.

This is supplemented by materials drawn from a range of other sources. Since Sep 2019 our RE leaders have completely revised the planning for RE across the school and have innovated in our approach which is firmly rooted in making links between four key distinct but linked aspects:

- Scripture
- Church Teaching
- Worship
- Life

Process

Our starting point in Religious Education is **Revelation**. God is always the initiator in the history of our creation and redemption; it is his revealing of himself that makes classroom religious education possible. To begin with revelation ensures that we respect the revealed nature of Christian faith.

From revelation we move onto **Church**; in other words, we consider how revelation gives life to the Church. The Church is the bearer of God's revelation and the means by which human beings live out their response to revelation, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

From here we focus on two aspects of the Church's response to God's revelation; **Celebration** – the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and **Life in Christ** the moral life and the pursuit of holiness.

However, attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential.⁵

Methodology

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. It 'serves in the examination and acceptance of the truths which are contained in the deposit of Revelation.'⁶

⁵ *The Way, the Truth & the Life, Teacher Book 4*, CTS, 2004, p. 4

⁶ *Briefing*, 26 May 1994, quoting *General Directory for Catechesis*, 74b

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Teachers planning in RE is informed by a model that selects skills to be built, scaffolded or assessed within each unit. Over a two year cycle a skill that has been built would be scaffolded and then assessed through a different unit.
- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria in the Draft Nationally Agreed Standards (as authorised by Bishops' Conference). Knowledge content for this has now been finalised and is due to be published in February 2023, ready for full implementation by 2025.
- The school portfolio of pupils' work contains locally and Diocesan agreed and moderated standards
- In school moderation of work is carried out regularly. Opportunities for working with the Diocese and other schools to standardise work are taken wherever possible
- Assessment of key skills is undertaken throughout topics rather than building up to an assessment.
- The school engages with Diocesan moderation of standards each year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

Management of the subject

The leadership of RE is coordinated by the RE Leadership Team who all have responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. The RE Leadership Team ensures that the Catholic Life and Mission of the school remains strong and that Collective Worship and Liturgy follows the norms of the church, is developmentally appropriate and is both creative and engaging for all pupils.

World Faiths

The teaching of World Faiths is woven into the learning for each year group. In the EYFS this tends to focus on festivals and celebrations and as pupils move into KS1 and KS2 this widens to a systematic study of World Faiths. When pupils study at theme such as 'charity' or 'care for creation' they may consider what this look likes in a range of World faiths.

The Role of the Subject Leadership Team for Religious Education

The Religious Education Team will be responsible for:

- Working with senior leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinises according to school practice.

- Monitoring and developing standards over time
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Promoting effective pedagogy for a creative RE curriculum
- Collecting Pupil Voice in relation to RE and using this to develop effective and innovative practices
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and leading in-house staff training and development.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education.
- Liaising with the Westminster Diocesan Education Service (WDES), the Catholic Education Service (CES), the Headteacher, Governors, parents and pupils.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.