



St Edmund's Catholic Primary School
'Together we learn and grow through worship and celebration.'

Religious Education Policy

Committee responsible for policy	Curriculum and Achievement
Co-ordinator	Fearghal Nash
Statutory/Non-statutory	STATUTORY
Frequency of Review	Free to determine – every 3 years or earlier if required
Date of last review Approved by Staff/ SLT/Committee/FGB	June 2024
Date of next review	June 2027
Purpose of policy	To ensure all staff understand the legal requirements for teaching RE in a Catholic school
Consultation	Staff
Links to other policies	All other subject policies Curriculum, Marking, Planning

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Catholic School exists to provide an Education that is God centred. It is based on the belief that everything of worth comes from God and builds on the faith already established by the family through Baptism. *'Together we learn and grow through worship and celebration'*.

We encourage our children to develop their academic potential and individual talents and everyone in the school to show qualities of honesty, tolerance, forgiveness, caring and patience. All are made welcome and the worth of each is recognised, valued and celebrated.

Introduction

Christ is the centre and foundation of our Catholic School. All members of our school community share the responsibility of supporting the Catholic identity of the school. Parents, staff, governors enable our children to live full lives in Christ and help them to participate in the building up of the Kingdom of God.

At the heart of the understanding of life lies God, its creator. Indeed without acknowledgement of God as the source and destiny of human life, efforts at education will always fail to reach beyond the pragmatic.

Archbishop of Westminster Vincent Nicholas (2005)

It is recognised that ‘...the first educators in the faith are parents. By their example in the home and the participation in the Mass and other sacraments, the foundations of life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down.’ (*Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, 2000*)

Aims and Objectives

The Catholic vision of Education promotes the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God. This vision inspires and encourages the beliefs and values that are lived out in the daily life of the Catholic school. Within this vision, Religious Education is very much a journey of formation involving every member of the school community, together with a pupil’s family and parish community.

At St Edmund’s School Religious Education is a subject in its own right in the school’s curriculum. It is a rigorous academic discipline, and as such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. For those not already engaged in the journey of faith Religious Education may be the first opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel.

Aims

At St Edmund’s we aim to develop

- The knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life; the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of the central beliefs that Catholics hold.
- The knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose; to develop awareness and appreciation of Catholic belief, understanding of its impact on personal and social behaviour and of the vital relationship between faith and life, life and faith.
- The skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon Religious belief and practice.
- The formation of responsible and committed Catholic citizens encouraging our children, as they grow towards the highest standards in academic achievement, social responsibility and personal development.
- An awareness and understanding of other faiths and the multi-faith society in which we live.

Objectives

The objectives of curriculum Religious Education at St Edmund's School are

- To encourage the children to develop a personal understanding of God and His importance in their lives.
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection by the pupils:
- To develop the following skills:
 - Ability to listen;
 - To think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically;
 - To acquire knowledge and organise it effectively;
 - To make informed judgements;
- To foster the following attitudes:
 - Respect for truth;
 - Respect for self;
 - Respect for others;
 - Awareness of the spiritual;
 - Moral responsibility;
 - Religious commitment in everyday life;
 - The challenge of living in a multicultural, multi-faith society.

The outcomes of Religious Education is Religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of Religious commitment in everyday life.

[From the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools]

Content

The content of our Religious Education comes from the Curriculum Directory, provided by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales. To help with planning and ensuring the Curriculum Directory is accessible to the children, we use a range of planning tools including the Come and See scheme of work, the Margaret Carswell resources, CAFOD and any other relevant materials.

Teachers are encouraged and supported to extend these plans to ensure that the RE curriculum that is delivered gives children the scope to attain the higher standards for each key stage. We have worked collaboratively with other local Catholic schools to ensure these plans are reflective of the Catholic Education Service Age Related Standards Framework. The RE Lead will support the teachers to extend their planning to reflect the events of the liturgical year and Catholic Social Teaching themes. Additional whole school themes are added to personalise the RE curriculum to our school community (life of St Edmund, lessons on our house saints, exploring our school mission statement etc). Throughout the year lesson time is also dedicated to significant events in the liturgical year such as Harvest and May is the Month of Mary as well as studying other world faiths (see Other Faiths Policy).

Following the introduction of the Standards in Religious Education document, staff are provided with a unit overview for each of the unit's taught which references the standards for each phase. This guides teachers with their planning and the end of phase expectations are explicit.

Each term, the children cover three topics and the different year groups covers the same themes at the same time. We send out a newsletter explaining what each child will be covering and how each parent can support us in this very special part of a child's Catholic education.

CPD is provided to support staff with their RE support knowledge and the parish priest supports in this area

Staff are being trained in preparation for the implementation of the new Religious Education Directory using Diocesan CPD.

Having made a positive choice for Catholic education, parents are expected to encourage the children by their own example of regular religious practice and fully support the work of the school in this area.

Curriculum Time allocation

Religious education at St Edmund's is at the centre of the daily life of the school. In line with the Bishops' Conference recommendations, a minimum ten per cent of teaching time is allocated to RE each week, this does not include Collective Worship. Other subject areas, such as drama, art and English, complement the RE curriculum.

RE is brought into other areas of the curriculum wherever possible including thematic approach to events such as Arts Week. RE is effectively brought into other areas of the curriculum such as Music, Art, school trips and specialist days. Furthermore, teachers will provide, where appropriate, opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their computing skills through RE.

PSHE/RSE

PSHE supports the RE curriculum and is taught in addition to the time given to RE. Pupils study topics such as the rights and responsibilities of individuals; the study of democracy and the parliamentary process and bullying. Circle time gives pupils the opportunity to discuss and understand human feelings and emotions and their likely impact in relation to themselves and others.

At St Edmund's we use the Ten:Ten scheme as the basis for our revised Relationships, Sex and Education (RSE) scheme (refer to RSE policy).

Teaching and Learning

At Edmund's we use a variety of teaching and learning styles across our curriculum provision. High standards and expectations are expected in all subjects but especially in RE as it is considered the core of the core subjects.

There are children of different abilities in all classes. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by ensuring that quality first teaching supports and challenges the ability of each child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons this may be through the organisation of pupils, different tasks for different groups whilst in other lessons all pupils may work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas.

RE books should be treated as the most special books the children use. The RE books contain a wide variety of evidence of the learning activities that take place which celebrates the diversity of teaching within RE such as art, drama and extended pieces of writing. RE Homework is also given to extend the pupils' religious knowledge and understanding. This may be a standalone piece or longer project work.

Marking:

- Marking should identify what the children do well in relation to the RE learning objective.
- If the children have not met the success criteria, marking should show them how to achieve it next time, indicating how they might move forward in their thinking and understanding.
- Questions should be used, on appropriate pieces of work, to help children reach higher levels and deepen their religious understanding.
- Further questions can also be used to ensure the children can reflect on how their learning should impact their own lives.
- Religious vocabulary should be corrected if spelt incorrectly.

Assessment:

Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do. Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the standards framework. Class teachers will assess children's progress and attainment during each lesson and use this to inform future planning. The first lesson of each topic is used to assess what the children already know about the topic so that the planning can be adapted to the children's needs. The children also complete a self-assessment at the end of each topic to identify the progress that they have made

Teachers assess summatively at the end of each term. Assessment judgements will be made using children's books, displayed work, verbal responses in class etc. and the areas for assessment for each term are identified in school's RE assessment document. This allows staff to make a holistic summative judgement at the end of the term to demonstrate how pupils are performing in RE. Children are assessed as 'working towards the expected standard' (WTS), 'at the expected standard' (EXS) or 'working beyond expected' (EXP).

The children are given an overall RE grade at the end of each academic year.

Pupils' work will be moderated in staff meetings at least once a term to support teachers in their judgements. Moderation will also take place in Deanery meetings and at the end of the year at a Diocesan meeting.

RE attainment is reported to parents each term through parent teacher meeting, progress sheets and annual reports.

Monitoring:

The level of teaching and learning in RE will be monitored through:

- Book checks;
- Monitoring of plans;
- Regular lesson observations
- Level analysis
- Work moderation
- Pupil, parent & staff questionnaires
- RE Advisor visits
- Section 48 inspections

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Governors** will

- ensure that there is a named person(s) who is responsible for RE
- ensure the RE policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- ensure that there is a budget for RE that reflects its centrality as the core of the core subjects
- ensure that the RE programme and resources are suitably monitored and evaluated. The RE link governor will take a lead on monitoring and evaluating the programme and feedback to the Curriculum and Achievement Committee or full governing board as appropriate
- ensure compliance with Diocesan requirements

All staff who teach RE will

- be prepared to witness to what they teach
- understand that they share in the teaching office of the Church exercised in the person of the local bishop and enshrined in the trust deed of the school
- fulfil their professional responsibilities regarding all that develops and enhances the life of the Catholic school;
- have high expectations of all their pupils;
- take care continually to deepen their own knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith

The **Headteacher** (Mrs Carmel Moreland) will

- Appoint staff suitable and qualified to teach Religious Education
- Provide appropriate resources and opportunities for training
- Ensure that 10% of the curriculum is devoted to Religious Education;

The **RE Lead** (Mr Fearghal Nash) is responsible for

- Monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education
- Supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education
- Being informed about current developments in the subject
- Ensuring parents, as the primary educators of the faith, are kept fully informed about RE e.g. Fortnightly newsletter, termly RE newsletter
- Providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school
- Updating the Religious Education development plan and policy
- Encouraging the use of appropriate practice
- Consulting with staff at all levels and ensuring that information is communicated to them
- Leading staff in INSET
- Maintaining and updating resources
- Liaising with clergy
- Promoting the use of outside resources and opportunities
- Presenting the Head teacher with an annual update on RE, which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

The **Catholic Life and Mission Lead** (Miss Catherine Grace) is responsible for

- Advising on, and leading Assemblies; Collective Acts of Worship and Liturgies.
- Ensuring that the liturgical year is celebrated with the school
- Creating a termly RE newsletter
- Planning and coordinating whole school, key stage and year group Masses

- Liaising with clergy
- Planning and coordinating the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent and Lent
- Ensuring parents, as the primary educators of the faith, are kept fully informed about RE e.g. fortnightly newsletter, termly RE newsletter

Mini Vinnie Lead (Miss Catherine Mone) is responsible for

- Co-ordinating the Mini Vinnie group and supporting the charitable activities within the school.

Review

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors the RE policy every third year unless relevant changes occur. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body.