



ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ALDERSHOT A VOLUNTARY ACADEMY IN THE DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (September 2018 - 2021)

VISION STATEMENT

As a Catholic family we welcome all and value Christ in everyone, whilst seeking the highest possible achievements.

The School's Vision and Mission Statements underpin this document.

"Mission & Curriculum: Faith & Knowledge"

"By the year 2030 most of our pupils will be entering the world of work; many of them will be employed in jobs not yet created in companies not yet formed. The School must provide firm foundations to help prepare children for this future; it must also provide them with every opportunity to grow and develop in their knowledge, understanding and personal belief in the Catholic faith. Only by enabling the children to learn about their religion, whilst nourishing, strengthening and expressing their faith can St Joseph's adequately fulfil its mission as a Catholic School within Portsmouth Diocese."

THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY

- to provide guidelines to help everyone put our Vision and Mission Statement into practice in the everyday life of the School.
- to act as a framework for planning and teaching RE in the School.

For this Policy to be effective, commitment and eagerness to grow in understanding of the needs of our children are required from everyone in our Faith Community.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education in the School, together with the day to day enactment of its Catholic Mission, supports parents in the children's faith development. This should be underpinned by the use of the RE curriculum programme recommended by the Diocese, as the School's main resource for RE (Currently the 'God Matters' programme.) All values and beliefs will fully support, and where appropriate, be integrated into all other curricular activities, with particular reference to Personal and Social Education.

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM

The aims and objectives of Religious Education in the School cannot be further expressed without reference to school's Vision and Mission Statement. Each of the key elements for implementation of this Policy reflects one or more elements of these, and so they are shown here:

The Vision

***"As a Catholic family
we welcome all and value
Christ
in everyone, whilst seeking
the highest possible achievements."***

The Mission Statement

- To welcome and care for everyone and each other, promoting strong links between home, school, parish and community.
- To recognise that Christ is in and around us and to celebrate His love through our prayer and worship.
- To value and respect the uniqueness of each individual on their own journey of faith and learning and to meet him/her wherever he/she is.
- To foster a sense of personal worth, self-discipline, respect for everyone and the highest possible standards of work.
- To ensure that St Joseph's will be a place where everyone has a right to hold an opinion different from others and a right to be heard, and where we listen to each other with respect.
- To work in close partnership with parents, recognising our shared responsibility for their children.
- To stretch our talents and our learning skills, children and staff, in all our activities, and to recognise and rejoice in the talents of others.
- To actively try to be of service to the local community and beyond.

IMPLEMENTATION - POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Implementation of the Mission Statement through this RE policy is supported by the following elements:

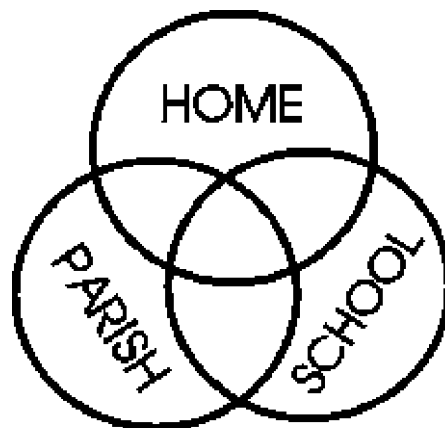
- Religious Education Curriculum: Scheme of Work & Assessment
- Prayer.

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM

- Collective Worship.
- Scripture.
- The Role of the RE Co-ordinator.
- The Role of the School Chaplain (if there is one in post).
- Links with Home, Parish and Beyond; including charitable activities
- Links with other faiths and beliefs; including RE and multi-cultural and multi-faith aspects.
- Personal Development of the Teaching Staff including In-service.

The environment within which St Joseph's School lives and works is acknowledged: the children's differing home situations, including single parents and separations, as well as the falling proportion of practising Catholics in the community; so too are the ever-increasing challenges of modern life and society which tend to attack and can undermine everyone's faith life. But in the light of the Gospel, this is all seen as an opportunity for witness and development, through the example of Christian living in the school, and by offering support for all in the school community.

The School represents one integral part of the three-fold partnership which is responsible for the children's education and faith development, alongside parents in the home, and church community in the Parish.



Our role is therefore one influence among many, albeit an important one, since we know that children learn through interaction with everyone they meet: *"The first and prime educators of children are their parents."*

THE CONTEXT

- ***To welcome and care for everyone and each other, promoting strong links between home, school, parish and community.***

In St Joseph's, Religious Education teaches children about their faith in the curriculum subject, within the context of a Catholic Faith Community which seeks to live by and foster Gospel values, providing constant opportunities for development of personal faith for all :

- from Catholic homes, whether practising or not;
- from other Christian homes;
- and from homes of other beliefs.

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM

The School contributes to the Catholic education of the children in the Faith Community in Aldershot, and to some extent surrounding parishes. The Catholic life of the School is both supported and enhanced through the relationship with the Parish Priest. We recognise and respect the diversity of religious backgrounds and levels of commitment among the homes from which our children come, and seek to accompany them in their journey of faith, at whatever stage that may be. A commitment to the Catholic tradition is not presumed, but it is intended that our RE will help to deepen the faith of those from homes with such a commitment, whilst fostering the spiritual and religious development of all.

The provision of Religious Education will therefore lead to different results for different children. It is acknowledged that a child can achieve a high level of attainment in the curriculum subject without belief, and that the gift of faith is ultimately not ours to give.

Religious Education and the Early Years

During the Early Years our children are helped to foster a sense of beauty and wonder, and to explore God's and their own creativity. They are encouraged to develop a positive self-image, made aware of acceptable behaviour, with due regard for the respect and needs of others. Opportunities to develop socially and spiritually are actively planned in the curriculum. Provision appropriate to their age and development is made for participation in all aspects of RE.

Religious Education and Special Needs

In faith development and RE curriculum areas, we will strive to meet all our children on their own unique and personal faith journey, and to provide for their individual needs, responding to both learning and pastoral needs as appropriate.

Religious Education and Equal Opportunity

In the teaching and practice of our RE we will provide equal opportunities for all regardless of ethnicity, gender or special need. We foster a balance of views and equal access to participation in activities.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

Identification of talented children within RE will be made in consultation with both class teachers and the RE co-ordinator. These children will be provided with differentiated activities to ensure they can achieve their full potential and mastery within this subject.

Assessment

Assessment of children's work is a necessary part of the learning process. Its purposes include the affirmation of attainment and achievement, the necessary recording and reporting of children's progress, and helping the child to take the next step towards mastery in the subject. In line with current Diocesan guideline we are continuing to use levels (taken from 'Levels of attainment in RE in Catholic schools- Bishops' Conference). Assessment in RE takes place once a term in all year groups. The children's religious understanding is formally assessed through oral and written methods. Questioning should give children time to respond, encourage exploration of understanding and involve all children not just the few. Advice (marking or oral feedback) should focus on what he/she can do to improve. The results from assessment are analysed during book monitoring and fed back to staff and tracked at the end of the year.

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM

The Time Element

Mindful of the Bishop's recommendation, we believe that the element of time needs to be translated into an appropriate and realistic reflection of School practice. At KS1 time allocation will be 10% of teaching time; at KS2 time allocation will be 10% of teaching time. In addition approximately 1½ hours would be reflected, on average, in Collective Worship - see the weekly pattern for collective worship. This time does not include masses, celebrations, retreats etc and may or may not be cross curricular.

The "God Matters" Programme & The School's Scheme Of Work

The "God Matters" programme for Religious Education in Catholic Primary Schools is recommended for use in the Diocese of Portsmouth. It is not something just for the RE co-ordinator and for RE lessons. Its themes should be vibrant throughout the whole life of the School.

SCHEME OF WORK

The whole School explores each religious theme concurrently, with regard to age and stage of development, following a yearly cycle. The themes are linked to the liturgical year which determines when the themes can be taught. Integrated into each theme is an element of Catholic Social teaching.

The themes taught are:

Creation
Prayers, Saints and Feasts
Advent
Christmas
Revelation
Lent
Holy week
Easter
Pentecost
Sacraments

LINKS WITH HOME, PARISH AND BEYOND

- ***"To welcome and care for everyone and each other, promoting strong links between home, school, parish and community."***
- ***"To actively try to be of service to the local community and beyond."***

This policy recognises that the School represents but one integral part of the three-fold partnership which is responsible for the education and faith development of the children, alongside parents, their first teachers in the Catholic home, and the church community in the Parish.

The formal and informal support and involvement in the school's life by the Parish Priest, school chaplain, (if applicable), deacon(s) and community is therefore essential.

The School welcomes parents and other parishioners to collective worship celebrations in the School, whenever possible. Furthermore, St Joseph's tries to respond to the needs of the local

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM

community through visits to local Residential Homes and through raising money to support local charities.

The School supports the Parish faith community in the preparation of children for their First Holy Communion and Confession through:

- Linked teaching in the RE curriculum.
- Staff involvement in Parish-based liturgical celebrations.
- Participation by the School Chaplain (if in post).
- Provision of resources and liaison for the children's and parents' elements of the programme.

St. Joseph's has a link partner school in Manchester, St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School. Both schools are committed to collectively developing the faith of our communities, by working and praying together.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

In accordance with the Mission Statement and Catholic social teaching, we actively seek to be of practical service to others, not only locally but also globally. We commit ourselves annually to raise monies for at least two charities at specified times - Advent and Lent. We also respond practically, where possible, to various other charitable requests when they arise, especially those that are child-centred and disaster relief appeals. It is the responsibility of the School Committee to select such charities and organise how funds can be raised.

LINKS WITH OTHER FAITHS AND BELIEFS

"The religious dimension of the School is expressed through the celebration of Christian values in Word and sacrament, in individual behaviour, in friendly and harmonious interpersonal relationships, and in ready availability.

The Catholic School finds its true justification in the mission of the Church: it is based on an educational philosophy in which faith culture and life are brought into harmony."

The ethos of the School is vital to the context of the religious education carried on in the School, and the religious education itself makes a vital contribution towards helping our children to live in our multi-cultural, multi-faith society. In our own School community, we have children from other faith traditions whose faith-stance we respect. We also provide opportunities for children to learn about the beliefs and practices of those religions not known to them.

We believe that God has created each person to be unique and consequently we respect and enter into dialogue with those from other faith traditions (just as Christ did), and recognise that God is in everyone. This in itself should not be a threat to our own faith stance.

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM

In line with Diocesan guidelines we teach about Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam throughout the year. An aspect of one of these faiths is taught at the end of a topic when there is an opportunity to link it with our Catholic faith.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING STAFF

"To stretch our talents and our learning skills, children and staff, in all our activities, and to recognise and rejoice in others' talents."

The School allocates specific Inset time each year to the Christian growth and development of staff, including attendance at local cluster groups with local Catholic schools. Regular learning sessions are provided to help staff develop their understanding of the "God Matters" programme. Opportunities for gathering for prayer are offered regularly for staff, with monthly reflections for staff led by our deacon or chaplain.

Staff participate in collective worship in the School, appropriate to their class:

- Masses
- Liturgies
- Assemblies
- Class Prayer
- Rosary
- Singing assembly

School staff support celebrations in St Joseph's and other parishes as appropriate. Opportunities are offered for School staff to gather and celebrate as a community. These occasions provide essential mutual support and well-being for all.

REVIEW and MONITORING

The RE co-ordinator, together with the RE director and headteacher, will ensure the implementation of this policy. The RE co-ordinator will monitor teaching and learning in RE formally termly. However she will also informally monitor to ensure that high standards in RE continue. Any action points will be monitored and advice taken if needed to remedy any issues.

The RE co-ordinator will induct all new class teachers in the teaching of RE and ensure that NQTs complete the school's document 'Induction in Catholic aspects of school life' and follow up any development areas.

The RE director, RE co-ordinator and headteacher will ensure that the RE Self review is completed annually and actions taken to make sure that RE is at the centre of all that the school does.

DATE OF APPROVAL:
September 2018

DATE OF REVIEW:
September 2021

Signed: Mrs D. McNeill
Headteacher

Dr Campbell McCafferty CBE
Chairman of Governors/Directors

COMMITTEE - CURRICULUM