



St John Fisher RC Primary School

POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Context Statement

The Mission Statement emphasises the duty of the school to educate the whole child. RE and worship are essential for children's spiritual and moral development. RE also contributes to the growth of children's ability to form personal relationships and to their understanding of the curriculum as a whole.

The Mission Statement also makes it clear that responsibility for children's education is shared by parents, school and parish. The RE programme in school refers constantly to these links, begins with children's religious home experiences and leads them towards awareness of their parishes and the wider role of the church in the world.

Worship draws on all aspects of children's lives, encourages the offering of their best efforts to God, and invokes His blessing on their further learning. Parents and parish members are invited to Masses and Assemblies and included in as many aspects as possible of the life and work of the school.

Aims of RE

At St John Fisher School it is our hope and aim to provide faith development and knowledge of religious matters for our children in a setting which is inspired by and seeks to live out the values of the Gospel.

This we do by:

- providing a systematic presentation of the Catholic Faith
- providing opportunities for children to develop a personal relationship with God
- providing for our children the experience of belonging to a faith community
- enabling the children to become familiar with religious language, symbols, signs and gestures of worship and prayer
- helping children, according to their age, to respect other faiths and to be aware of similarities and links between the Catholic faith and other faiths

The school endeavours to help children understand that religion is not only for learning, but for living, and that all living can become religious.



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The RE Curriculum

The programme used is 'Come and See'.

We have a whole school approach, where the same topic is being taught throughout. Cross curricular links are made when the opportunity presents itself.

Other material to be taught includes the liturgical year, major feast days, and devotions and aspects of the lives of some saints. Teaching about the Sacraments is carried out through Come and See but some aspects of Mass are also separately taught. The Sunday Gospel Readings are shared and reflected upon at whole school assemblies and again in class through the Wednesday Word.

Recognition and respect for other faiths is addressed through the provision suggested in Come and See. Particular emphasis is given to the Jewish faith because of the shared scriptural tradition, and the closeness to Christianity. The Jewish faith is studied each year. A celebration of the Passover is organised by Year 5, this is to re-inforce what is studied in class and bring this old tradition to life. One other faith is studied. This is selected by the staff from a list of faiths resourced by the Come and See scheme of work. The school has established links with the Mosque in Morden and members of the Islamic Community are invited to talk to the children about Islam.

Main Classroom Practices

All classes receive regular RE teaching. Most classes at present are being taught by Catholic teachers. Each class experiences a variety of teaching styles, including whole-class teaching, group or paired discussion and individual work including creative written work, art and drama. Children are encouraged to express their own ideas and develop concepts in their work and to make an individual response to the content of the lessons. The use of ICT is encouraged in RE, and indeed is an integral part of the new 'Come and See' programme. Visitors are invited to talk to the pupils from first-hand experience about their particular vocation and experience relevant to the topic being studied.

Time allocation

Collective worship:

KS2: 60 minutes per week plus class acts of worship (prayers, reflection, meditation)

60 minutes per month for Mass

(Y2 join KS2 for Masses from the Summer term onwards.)

KS1: 75 minutes per week plus class acts of worship (prayers, reflection, meditation)



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RE lessons per week

N & YR	50 minutes
Y1 – Y2	2.25 hours
Y3 – Y6	2.5 hours

In all cases the total weekly time includes two or three lessons which equates to 10% of the teaching time. Time allocation increases along with the children's ability to listen, to understand and to sustain their interest.

Planning, Assessment and Recording

Planning: The themes and topics framework sets out the programme for the year. Within all classes, teachers develop activities for children of different abilities. An overview of each topic is provided on the 'Come and See' website, this forms the medium term plan. Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teachers. Standardised planning proformas are provided by the co-ordinator and saved on the school hard drive. Teachers of parallel classes further discuss the topics and planning to ensure continuity across the year group. Samples are seen from time to time by the Headteacher. All plans are seen by the RE Lead as required as part of the monitoring schedule.

Assessment:

2017/18 is a transition year for assessment. In order to aid the change from using levels for assessment to the new assessment framework developed by the diocese, schools are free to use either or both systems. At St John Fisher, we will be moving to the new assessment framework from the summer term 2018. The RE Lead will provide training in the spring term.

The new assessment framework, sets age related expectations (ARE) for each year group in two areas:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Engagement and Response

These broadly correlate to the old AT1 – Learning About Religion and AT2 – Learning From Religion.

Pupils will be assessed as working below/towards/at/above ARE.

The Diocese have provided end of year descriptors that will form the new assessment criteria. Lesson planning will have to be adapted to increase the focus on 'Engagement and Response' as the current scheme is very content based.

Recording:

The recording of assessment is also in transition in 2017/18. Conversion of levels to the new ARE system is problematic and so is not recommended. The first assessment point of the new system will therefore be summer 2018.



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Special Needs and Differentiation

It is recognised that children are at different stages of development and this is as true for RE as for other subjects. Children's understanding of their faith is affected by their intellectual capacity and their home experience of religion. The work they produce is affected also by any difficulties they may have with literacy, pencil control or interaction with others. The school also admits some children whose families are not Catholic. These children are encouraged to participate in lessons, but their different faith background is respected and their contribution valued.

Teachers meet individual needs by:

- varying the level of instruction and discussion so that each child may learn something from each lesson
- setting differentiated or open-ended tasks drawing on a variety of skills so that each child may complete a satisfying piece of work or contribute to a group effort
- providing opportunities for children to use their knowledge from home or to rise to an intellectual or creative challenge
- valuing and affirming the individual responses of all children and commending children's performance for effort as well as achievement
- emphasising at all times the inclusive nature of the kingdom of God

Feedback and Marking of Religious Education

At St John Fisher we believe that the feedback pupils receive directly and during their lessons has the most effective impact on their progress. This is particularly pertinent in RE where responses are often of a more personal and sensitive nature than for other curriculum areas. A new Feedback and Marking Policy came into effect at St John Fisher in September 2017.

The marking requirements for RE are as follows:

- All work must be code marked
- The spelling and Zero Tolerance must be followed (except where this may spoil work of a sensitive nature)
- Factual misconceptions to be corrected (by individual, group, class as appropriate)
- A comment to guide reflection to be made for appropriate extended pieces

Children are encouraged to do their best and are reminded that any targets set for writing apply to all pieces of writing in R E.



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Links between Home, School and Parish

Information is given to parents about the topics to be studied each term. Parents receive the termly newsletter, which is downloaded from the Diocese of Southwark's Website. Parents also receive a weekly school newsletter which keeps them informed about events happening in the school as well as the church.

The newsletter also has a copy of the Wednesday Word shared in school.

Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's progress in RE through annual reports, at Open Evenings or informally with the class teacher if there is any uncertainty or question. Children are encouraged to bring articles from home and to include members of their family in class prayers.

The Parish Clergy pays regular visits to classes. They contribute to the RE curriculum, by giving specialist input eg on the Sacraments or the life of a priest. The Parish sister also visits and encourages the children to join the Guild of the Blessed Sacrament whilst older children in KS2 are encouraged to join The Guild of Our Lady. Children from our school are also involved in the Sunday Liturgy.

In Y3 the children are being prepared to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Their class teachers are kept informed of the programme being followed in St John Fisher Parish. The work done in school during this year supports and complements that of Catechists and parents. The school is represented at the initial meetings of parents in St John Fisher Parish. Priests and Catechists from St John Fisher Parish are invited to the Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated in school in July. The RE co-ordinator organises parts of the Liturgy for the three Masses and KS2 children represent the school at these Masses. Year 4 children act as prayer partners to the Y3 First Holy Communion children.

Key workers in the parish such as the Deacon and those who lead groups such as the SVP and LIFE are invited to take part in Assembly. A member of the parish Folk Music Group contributes to the musical life of the school and encourages the older children to sing in the church choir.

St John Fisher is very much the Parish School and as such has a part to play in all the events of the Parish, a role the school embraces with great enthusiasm and success.



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Collective Worship and Prayer - Collective Worship includes:

- a monthly Mass for Children in Key Stage 2
- a mass in school or in Church on Holy Days of Obligation and a Mass on or near the feast day of St John Fisher, when possible held in Church for the whole school
- a class Mass for Y2 is celebrated in the classroom in the Spring Term. The priest explains each part of the Mass to make it more relevant to them; this prepares them for the summer term when they start to join the KS2 Masses in the big hall.
- a Mass of celebration is held in school after Y3 First Communions and one of thanksgiving for Y6 as they prepare to leave the school at the end of the summer term
- KS1 have a separate school assembly each week
- two 'whole school' assemblies are also held each week; one is led by the HT/DHT and one is often led by a class or the Chaplains
- class-based prayers are said in the morning, before meals and at the end of the day
- children are also invited to say seasonal prayers before school in the RE school focal prayer corner with the RE Lead and school Chaplains.
- KS2 hold class based acts of worship related to their current topic, a model for each topic is provided
- KS2 have prayer leaders in each class

Nursery children have a short daily prayer time of their own. All assemblies are predominantly acts of worship. Any other announcements or celebrations are separated from the main, prayerful part of the assembly.

Prayer includes:

- formal prayers to be learned by heart and recited aloud
- formal prayers with which children are familiarised eg those used in Mass
- response prayers eg psalms, bidding prayers and litanies,
- prayers read aloud for listening.
- prayers improvised for listening or repeating phrase by phrase.
- prayers to be read silently eg from display captions or classroom prayer books.
- prayers composed by children for their own use.
- collective meditation.
- individual reflection or contemplation.
- prayer of movement, dance or gesture.

The school endeavours to give all children a variety of prayer experience. Each classroom has an area of focus for prayer, displaying items and pictures appropriate to the season and some written forms of prayer. Children are encouraged to choose or compose prayers for class use and to suggest prayer intentions. They may also bring items from home to display. Children's work is featured in the area.



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Aims of Collective Worship

The aims of collective worship are as follows:

- to provide opportunities for the development of a personal relationship with God
- to support the spiritual development of each child
- to enable each child to become familiar with the traditional forms of prayer used in the Catholic Church
- to provide the children with the experience of good liturgy
- to introduce a variety of formal and informal prayer settings and forms
- to facilitate growth in the knowledge of the person of Jesus Christ
- to encourage a social and individual moral consciousness
- to help children experience a sense of loyalty and belonging to a worshipping Christian Community

Statement of Principles

In accordance with the aims stated above, it is the practice of the school:

- a) To provide opportunities for all to take part.
Each Mass is planned by one class or the Chaplains which is responsible for choosing a theme (usually seasonal or influenced by the Come and See programme), selecting readings, composing bidding prayers, choosing hymns, bringing items for the offertory procession and flowers for the altar. Teachers ensure that every child, who expresses interest, has an active and significant role to play at some time during the year. The same policy is followed for the class Assemblies, in which every child is seen or heard individually as well as collectively.
- b) To make worship relevant.
Themes are chosen through which links can be made between the Gospel and children's own lives. Children's suggestions are used whenever possible. Themes of acts of worship are explored beforehand by the class which prepares the Mass or assembly. Class Assemblies involve much use of children's own prayers, Scripture accounts, stories, poems, music, dance, drama and their work in other subjects such as science and geography.
- c) To build a worshipping community.
Teachers ensure that no child misses the same assembly regularly for any other commitment such as SEN group work or music lessons.

Parents are invited to class masses and assemblies by their children. Voluntary classroom helpers and trainees of all kinds are encouraged to take part in acts of worship with the class. Members of staff are released to attend acts of worship prepared by their own children's classes.



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Responsibilities

Headteacher:

- To ensure that the school's management style supports the Catholic ethos.
- To enable members of staff to enrich their own spiritual lives.
- To foster and maintain parish links.
- To liaise with other Catholic schools in the Authority.

RE Lead:

- To lead and monitor teaching and learning in RE
- To oversee collective worship across the school
- To support the Chaplaincy Team
- To take part in the induction of all new teachers in matters concerning RE and worship.
- To provide or arrange support for any non-Catholic class teacher.

Spiritual Development of Pupils.

The growth of the spirit in children is promoted not so much by words as by experience. At St John Fisher, our strong spiritual ethos permeates everything we do both in and out of the classroom.

The Chaplaincy Team is selected from Years 5 and 6. The team is becoming increasingly active in leading the prayer life of the school. They take responsibility for leading assemblies, acts of worship and prayers. They meet with the Parish Sister termly to plan how to celebrate or mark Liturgical Events.

Spiritual Development of Staff

In order to develop and maintain the school's Catholic ethos, staff members also come together to pray regularly; staff meetings and briefings have shared prayer or reflection. Members of teaching and support staff attend Monday and Friday assemblies. The members of staff also attend the Deanery Mass/event. A large proportion of staff members attend special Parish events such as Education Sunday Mass and the Holy Communion Masses which are spread over three weekends.



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Moral Education

Moral education concerns value judgements and choices of courses of action. In a Catholic school such judgements and choices are necessarily informed by the teachings of the Church. Discussion of moral issues therefore takes place in many RE lessons and assemblies. Children are encouraged to reflect upon possible actions, to make judgements and to commit themselves to making right choices in the future. The RE programme provides many opportunities for this.

The Behaviour Policy is based upon the Catholic ethos of the school. It sets out positive expectations of children's behaviour and puts them in a moral context.

Children are encouraged in their daily school life to assume personal responsibility: for their belongings; for tidying their work area; and for following class routines. All children are encouraged to accept responsibilities for their own actions.

Moral issues which arise naturally in subjects such as English, Geography and Science are discussed by the children. The teacher provides guidance on the Church's teaching and promotes the acceptance of responsibility for the care of the earth, and all its peoples, and the establishment of justice and peace.

The school's policy for involvement with charities also offers children opportunities to develop a sense of social concern.

British Values

The Department for Education introduced a statutory duty for schools to promote British Values from September 2014.

At St John Fisher we are proud that, as a Catholic school, we promote values that are both Catholic and British including: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. As a Catholic, Rights Respecting School, these values permeate all that that we do. Children learn about the Rules of the Church and God and how these enable us to live out the values of Christ

Resources for RE and Worship

Each class has a Come and See programme appropriate for the year that they teach and access to the website. They also have a basic set of resources, including an appropriate Bible or sets of Bibles, a copy of 'God's Story' and Church's Story. A digital copy of these books is also saved on the internal hard drive. In the staffroom there is a selection of Resource Books and artefacts. There is a selection of Assembly Books in the Staffroom and also some in the Head Teacher's Office.

The RE Lead is responsible for resources which are kept up to date and stored in a central area.

This policy is reviewed annually by the RE Lead, it is ratified by the Quality of Education Committee of Governors.