

ST. FRANCIS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Whyteleafe Road
Caterham
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CR3 5ED

Policy Document for
Religious Education



In God's love and inspired by our faith, we respect, reflect, achieve and grow together.

St Francis' Catholic Primary School - Religious Education Policy

Religious Education (RE) in our school is based on the Gospel Values and teachings of the Catholic Church. We aim to be a welcoming community of faith and to develop amongst our pupils a strong awareness of the spiritual dimensions of life and to equip them with Christian values which will guide them throughout their lives. We value and maintain strong links with our Parents, Carers and Parish who support us in the education of their children. Our Mission Statement and aims encompasses our vision for the school.

Vision

To provide an excellent education and wider opportunities where all members of our school community will grow and realise their potential through encouragement and perseverance in a safe environment.

In God's love and inspired by our faith, we respect, reflect, achieve and grow together.

Mission Statement

Through God's love and with guidance from the Holy Spirit, we the St Francis' Community, share our Catholic Faith. We seek to nurture in our school family an understanding of the importance of Christian values, forgiveness and reconciliation and a deep love and lifelong commitment to God.

At St Francis', all members of our school community value and develop the unique strengths and gifts of one another and of our pupils. We strive to provide an excellent education and wider opportunities for the children entrusted to us, so that all our pupils may grow and realise their potential through self-belief, perseverance and resilience.

Staff, Families, Governors and Parishes work in partnership and, inspired by our faith, we support the children of St Francis'. We encourage everyone to shine, to have pride in their achievements, to show concern for others and to contribute to society as responsible citizens.

Values and Attitudes

Religious Education takes pride of place in the school curriculum. It compliments and builds upon experiences children gain in other areas of their academic, social and spiritual development, inside and outside of school.

Through our Religious Education programme we:

- Promote each child's innate capacity for wonder, awe and reverence and inauguration for the spiritual
- Deliver a curriculum in accordance with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church
- Foster a spirit of tolerance, respect and understanding of other cultures and traditions represented in the school and in the wider community
- Encourage individual responsibility for one's own Faith journey by promoting independence in learning

- Show a systematic understanding of Christ, The Christian event, the message and the “Way of Life”
- Provide a climate where Christ can reveal himself
- Value the contribution each child makes to the spiritual community
- Provide opportunities for affirmation and growth of faith.

Aims of our school

To develop and achieve our Mission and ethos through the partnership and commitment of all Staff, Families, Governors and Parishes in our St Francis’ Catholic Primary School community.

Together, we aim:

- To appreciate that we are all uniquely created and loved by God.
- To work in partnership with our whole school community to deepen everyone’s understanding of the Catholic faith and to create a Christian atmosphere enriched through prayer.
- To nurture in our whole school community an understanding of Christian values and how these help shape our lives and the lives of others.
- To understand the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation.
- To provide an excellent education and positive learning environment so our pupils realise their potential and have pride in their achievements.
- To encourage our pupils to participate fully and take responsibility for their learning, and to persevere, develop as resilient and independent learners, learn through their mistakes and always try to do their best.
- To value and build respectful relationships, bringing together staff, pupils, parents and our governing body with shared goals and aspirations.
- To be mindful of everyone’s wellbeing and to care for one another in a happy, welcoming and nurturing community.
- To ensure all in our St Francis’ community care and respect others, develop an understanding of the world and contribute to society as responsible citizens.
- To provide equal opportunities for all regardless of religion, gender, ethnicity or ability.

Delivery and Teaching of RE

Our RE is delivered in line with the requirements laid out by the Catholic Education Service (CES) in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for England and Wales (2012).

Teachers will ‘plan and teach schemes of work that are engaging and accessible so that all pupils may progress appropriately in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.’ (Curriculum Directory pg 5) To enable this we follow the Come and See Programme of

Work and allocate at least 10% curriculum time to the teaching of R.E. as is required in the Curriculum Directory (pg 5). All teachers use the agreed planning format and planning will identify specific assessment opportunities, linked continual assessment as set by the Arundel and Brighton Catholic Education Commission (CEC). These assessment opportunities will be integrated into our planning and teaching.

Celebrating Diversity

St Francis' has 74% Catholic pupils, which means that we share the common link of Faith, regardless of cultural background, language or tradition. About 21.2% have English as an additional language. Our Catholic children represent a wide selection of ethnic backgrounds. This allows us to understand the ways in which Catholics celebrate their Faith in countries other than our own.

By virtue of our cultural mix, the school provides an arena for each of us to explore diversity through our peers; to challenge each other, to examine prejudice and to work out how we can live cohesively in society - the same but different. Our children 'play-out' the barriers and joys of inter-community living, which characterise British society and which they will rapidly encounter as they grow to adulthood.

In order to more fully understand and celebrate the faiths and cultures of peoples other than Christians, the children are given opportunities to explore other religions; all children study Judaism in the autumn term. Islam is studied across the whole school during the summer term. Similarities are drawn with Christianity, more specifically, Catholicism. Activities and study focuses upon key themes such as feasts, relationships, community, places of worship etc.

Artefacts and other support materials are available for each religion to allow children a more elaborate understanding of the aspects of other faiths.

Values Education: The agreed School Values are taught on a monthly basis through Assemblies and through RE lessons.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is taught in a cross curricular manner through all subjects and as a weekly timetabled lesson, including RE, via the PSHE Association Programme of Work (See PHSE Policy)

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught through the PHSE and Science Curriculum (See RSE Policy)

Prayer

Prayer is a fundamental part of our school life including formal prayers and children's own informal prayers.

- **Formal Prayer:** These are introduced during Class lessons and assemblies and follow those detailed in the Come and See Programme of Work.
Additional formal prayers in KS 1 & 2 include prayers at the beginning and

end of the school day and prayers before meals.

- **Informal prayer** has a very important place in the spiritual life of the children and should include the everyday language of praising, thanking, asking and saying sorry. Informal prayer should encourage reflection by all pupils on their everyday life.

The Liturgical Year: Alongside Come and See we aim to extend the children's knowledge of the following important feast days and occasions for celebration so that they all become familiar with the structure of the Church's liturgical year:

Autumn Term: Harvest, Holy Rosary, All Saints & All Souls Days, Advent Christmas.

Spring Term: Epiphany, Candlemas, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Easter, Holy Rosary.

Summer Term: Ascension, Pentecost, Holy Trinity, Corpus Christi, Saint Peter & Saint Paul.

Contribution to Parish Life

On Holydays of obligation and special days (where possible), we join with parishioners and parents for prayer services and masses, in our parish church. For these occasions, the school prepares the liturgy, including readings, singing, offertory and serving. At other times, our children attend specific services at Sacred Heart Church. Of particular importance is the Advent Service, St Francis Feast Day and Harvest. The end of year mass for the children who are transferring to their secondary schools is particularly special.

We are blessed with immense support from our Parish priests. Regular contact between school and parishes are maintained, this is enhanced greatly by their weekly visits, who are involved in the classrooms and in supporting the staff.

Marking

In line with our marking policy, teachers will use pink for positive and green for growth/next steps. Teachers will tick against the Success Criteria for each lesson, highlighting/underlining in green areas for development.

Monitoring of RE

This will take place in line with the school monitoring timetable. Monitoring of lessons will be via learning walks, drop-ins and formal lesson observations. Planning and books will also be monitored and reviewed. The RECo will provide written and verbal feedback on observations and monitoring to teachers and governors.

Assessment of RE

We recognise that in addition to high quality RE teaching, 'Assessment is a necessary part of the Learning Process' (Curriculum Directory Pg 65 - 2012) in addition to recording and reporting for children to take their next steps in learning and to affirm attainment and achievement. All assessment will take account of the concepts, attitudes, skills and knowledge highlighted in the Curriculum Directory for Schools. In line with the Diocese we assess all Come and See topics continually. Teachers assess against the success criteria for

each lesson, highlighting the next steps a child should take. This is then used at the end of the topic to assess against the year group Standard Targets.

Assessments can be made via a variety of strategies:

- Children's recorded work
- Teachers' marking, questioning and children's responses.
- Teachers' observations of children during role play, carpet time etc.
- Children's own speaking and listening contributions.
- Pupils' self-assessments – for example through mind maps.

Tracking of Assessments

The formal assessment for each term will be marked and levelled by the class teacher and Entered onto Insight for the RE Coordinator for moderation and tracking. Tracking folders with examples of children's assessed work (one example of a Confident, Secure and Hesitant piece of work) will be maintained for each Year Group. Each term there will be one formal assessment (three per year) and the RECo will liaise with the class teacher to monitor the tracking across the year and assign an overall 'end of year' level for each child.

Our children achieve at least as well in R.E. as in literacy and other subjects. The End of Year Report to Parents contains information relating to the child's progress in R.E. over the past year relating to attainment, effort and progress made.

Liturgical Worship

Through worship we aim to join the work of home and parish in developing the Spirituality of children and to develop the concept of worship as an integral part of school life. We also aim to develop an understanding of different forms of worship and to reflect the multi-cultural nature of our children in various acts of worship.

Ways in which we provide opportunity for different forms of worship:

- Careful preparation of and involvement in class and school masses.
- Whole school Assemblies, separate Key Stage Assemblies, Class Assemblies
- Special liturgical services to celebrate feasts of the Church's liturgical year.
- Assemblies focusing on Values
- Classroom Worship supported by focal areas where the children can reflect and pray.

Collective Worship

See Collective Worship policy

Witness to our Faith

Our children, through our school council raise money for charity. Groups organise fundraising days spaced through the year. In this way, we donate to organisations such as: RSPCA, Missio and Macmillan

In addition, at Christmas, families donate to CAFOD through the World Gifts initiative, we buy goats, education packs, water for a village and other items. We also send shoeboxes abroad to celebrate our faith. We donate to the local Foodbank each Harvest.

Focal Areas

These are set up in each classroom and should always include the key words for each Come and See topic. The areas are changed regularly to reflect each new topic. Each area will have an 'interactive' element, such as a question box, prayer sheets, a class prayer book, to encourage children to become involved in prayer and spirituality within the class.

Useful items for an attractive display include:

Brightly coloured fabrics, artefacts, pictures, statues, photographs, candles, book stands, bibles, class prayer books/books for intentions etc.

Altar cloths – are provided in the colours of the liturgical year and should be changed accordingly – the RECo will advise teachers on the correct colour.

Altars/Focal Areas

These are maintained and updated by the RECo to reflect the Liturgical Year and Celebrations and Feast Days. Artefacts, icons, statues, candles and religious posters etc. may be used on the two main Altars (Hall and Junior Corridor).

Resources:

Each classroom has an RE box containing Altar cloths, religious items and artefacts for use in class.

A resources cupboard outside the hall, stores artefacts for prayer and worship. A full range of books to support teachers with RE, prayer and liturgy are available in the cupboard and PPA room. The library has many books for children.

Resourcing RE and liturgy is prioritised at St Francis and we invest well in this important area of our community. We have heavily invested in the new revitalised Prayer Garden which is available for all to use and which supports the development of spirituality across the school.

Resources (including artefacts, icons, books etc.) reflect multi-cultural nature of our school's intake. Each class is resourced with Bibles suitable to each age group and God and Church's Story Books 123. Resources are reviewed and updated as necessary by the RECo.