

St Alban's Catholic Primary School



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*'Inspired by God's love we celebrate our gifts as we learn and grow together'
St. Alban pray for us.*

Religious Education (RE) Policy

February 2021

To be reviewed – Feb 2023



'Inspired by God's love we celebrate our gifts as we learn and grow together'

***St. Alban pray for us.
(Mission Statement)***

Religious Education (RE) Policy

"The noblest activity of all is surely helping others to listen to God and to respond in prayer and action".

(Forward by Anthony Bullen – Assemblies for Infants – Rosaleen Falkner)

The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education

The primary purpose of Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school is 'a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation.' 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. Hence 'the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.'

Religious Education is central to the curriculum at St Alban's.

Religious Education is central to the curriculum of the Catholic school and is at the heart of the philosophy of Catholic education. Religious Education has developed in a way that reflects the particular identity of our Catholic schools in England and Wales. It teaches about the faith in the context of a school which proclaims the Gospel, and invites the individual to respond to the message of Christ. As the individual responds to this invitation, growth in faith and knowledge helps the pupil to respond to the call to holiness and understand the fullness of what it is to be human. For some, then, Religious Education will also be received as evangelisation and for some, catechesis.

Aims

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions of life. At St. Alban's School, we aim to fulfil our mission statement through working with the children, their families and the wider Parish

community. We allow children to explore and reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We enable children to develop as a valued individual within our community and grow in the knowledge that they are unique. We aim to teach the core Christian message and how to live by and foster gospel values through the '**Come and See**' programme and through our example. We develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences by providing children with frequent opportunities to pray and reflect. We aim to develop investigative and research skills and to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious issues. We develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions found in Britain. We promote respect for others' views and celebrate diversity in our society.

Therefore the aims of Religious Education are;

- To present engagingly a comprehensive content which 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.

The legal position of religious education

Our school curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA stipulates that religious education is compulsory for all children, including those in the reception class who are less than five years old. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from religious education classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the school governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach religious education, but only after they have given due notice of their intention to the school governors. The religious education curriculum forms an important part of our school's spiritual, moral and social teaching. It also promotes education for citizenship. Our school RE curriculum is based on the '**Come and See**' Diocesan Syllabus and it meets all the requirements set out in that document. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Teaching and learning

We base our teaching and learning on the '**Come and See**' Diocesan programme for Catholic schools. We cover three topics in each term and at least two weeks study of other faiths each year (Judaism and Islam).

Programme of Study

To fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, 2012 – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - the '**Come and See**' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese.

Process

Religious Education is taught through the process of *Explore, Reveal, Respond*. This follows the pattern of: the human **search** for meaning, God's initiative in **Revelation** and the **response** in faith. This pattern is outlined both in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the Curriculum Directory.

As the Directory states:

'Teaching in Religious Educationshould 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.' ⁶

Methodology

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

We teach the curriculum using a variety of teaching and learning styles including discussion, drama, computer research, written work in a variety of forms and presentation from the children. Children work individually or in groups and have shared their learning with larger whole school groups.

Inclusion

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

- We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:
- setting common tasks, which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting differentiated tasks;
- grouping the children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;

- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

We encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the '**Come and See**' programme. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values and promotes their spiritual growth and development.

- Our teaching and learning styles in RE enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding of religious traditions.

- Curriculum planning in religious education

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the '**Come and See**' Diocesan programme. We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

We carry out the curriculum planning in religious education in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the religious education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The RE subject leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. We teach religious education topics in conjunction with other subjects.

The class teacher writes and annotates the plans for each lesson and lists the specific learning objectives for that lesson. S/he keeps these individual plans and often discusses them on an informal basis with the RE subject leader.

Foundation Stage

We teach religious education to all children in the school, including those in the reception class.

In reception classes, religious education is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the religious education aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which underpin the curriculum planning for children up to the age of five.

Contribution of religious education to the teaching of other subjects

English

Religious education contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in literacy have religious themes or content, which encourages discussion, and this is our way of promoting the skills of speaking and listening. We also encourage the children to write in a variety of genres.

Computing (ICT)

We use ICT where appropriate in religious education. The children find, select and analyse information, using the Internet. They also use ICT to review, modify and evaluate their work and to improve its presentation.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) /Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour in conjunction with RSHE (see RSHE policy). So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our society. Wherever possible, we link to the RSHE Scheme Ten 10 programme to our teaching in lessons and assemblies and through Diocesan RSE Journey in Love programme.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through teaching religious education in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and, in so doing they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Assessment and recording

Assessment is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines, using Age-Related Standards in Religious Education for each year group.

We assess children's work in religious education by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary. On completion of a unit of work, we make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the Age-Related Standards in Religious Education. We record the attainment grades, which we use as a basis for assessing the progress of each child, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year and for reporting to parents.

Resources

We keep resources for Religious Education in a central store so it is easily accessible. We have a collection of Religious artefacts to enrich the teaching of Christianity and other faiths.

Monitoring and review

We have a comprehensive monitoring programme which links closely with our SID. The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of religious education, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The RE subject leader presents the head teacher with an annual report, which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. She also provides two reports each year for the RE governor, outlining progress against targets in the SID. S/he reviews samples of the children's work, visits classes to observe teaching in the subject and provides feedback to staff.

We recognise that parents are the first educators of their children and involvement from them is welcomed. Parents 'are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their children, and therefore must be recognised as the primary and principle educators but in this primary task, parents need the subsidiary help of civil society and other institutions. The family is 'the primary, but not the only and exclusive educating community'. Among those who cooperate in the task of education, the Catholic school assists in the delivery of a programme of learning in Religious Education appropriate to the age and particular learning needs of the pupil.
RECD,2012

Prayer and Worship

Children are provided with numerous opportunities to develop their faith. We hold celebrations as part of the Church's year in school and at St Alban's Church throughout the academic year including liturgical assemblies, class assemblies, Lent club, school masses in school and class masses at the Church. Year 6 attend a retreat at Walsingham House.

The outcome of Classroom 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 theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life" (Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6).

Curriculum time allocation

In line with the Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education.

Signed:

Date: