

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
Bishop's Stortford



## Religious Education Policy

Our School Mission Statement:

*"To live, love and learn, in a caring Christian community"*

As a Roman Catholic school, we willingly embrace the unique position Religious Education holds at the centre of our school curriculum.

### Values and aims

Our values and aims are rooted in the school mission statement,  
"To live, love and learn in a caring Christian community."

### **Our primary aim**

To encourage our children to know, love and serve God. In a desire to achieve this we aim:

- To provide a Christian environment, where mutual care and love of each other, respect for life and love of God are encouraged and developed.
- To celebrate our Christian and Catholic beliefs in daily acts of worship, class and school assemblies, class and school masses which mark important events and feast days.
- To familiarise the children with the Gospel message.
- To enable children of all abilities to develop their full potential in an environment where they know they are loved and can love others.
- To enable our children to search, question and examine their own personal lives in the light of what they are learning.
- To grow into a united community inspired through prayer.
- To recognise and respect members of other religions and cultures.
- To encourage our children to grow in understanding, love and respect of the sacraments.
- To encourage positive self-esteem where each individual can recognise their importance within the school and home and in the wider parish community.

### **Objectives - Learning**

Each child is unique and comes with their own gifts of the Holy Spirit to develop and to share with others. We aim to draw out these gifts and help the children value each other and their opinions and accept and appreciate that everyone has something to offer.

At St Joseph's School our children are encouraged to learn in an environment where all aspects of mutual care and love of each other, respect for life and love of God are continually promoted.

### **We seek to achieve this through:**

- Living the church's liturgical year using our RE programme which explores the beliefs, values and way of life within the Roman Catholic tradition.
- Becoming familiar with the church's liturgical year through our RE scheme, school and class assemblies and school masses.
- Our teachers who model examples of Christian values.
- The school and classroom environment containing prayer corners and religious artefacts or objects.
- Our children learning to appreciate and respond to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of life, through a variety of mediums: discussion, personal experiences, written work and practical activities
- Our close links with our parish church and Father Peter Harris.

## **Teaching and Learning in RE**

RE is a core subject in our school, alongside English, Maths and Science, and therefore we devote 10% of our curriculum time to its delivery. At St Joseph's School our children are taught according to the Diocesan requirements as set out in "Teaching in a Catholic School". We adhere to the Curriculum Directory guidelines and learning outcomes. This provides a cohesive approach and opportunities for whole school assemblies and celebrations as well as displays which are relevant to every child.

## **Planning**

Each teacher produces a medium term plan incorporating the scheme of work and liturgical events and feast days.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

RE assessment tasks are carried out at the end of every topic. A class achievement record and examples of the work produced are handed to the RE Subject leader. These are used as records by the teachers and in the annual report to inform parents.

Additionally, teachers constantly assess and evaluate their own children's work through discussion, circle time, questioning and observing role play as well as evaluating written work. This is an integral part of the process, with levels decided over a number and range of activities.

Teachers gather evidence by keeping or photocopying work, by taking photographs; recording drama, role play, dance etc. and by keeping their own records.

Parents receive a termly information sheet specifically for RE which explains the units to be taught and how they can support these in the home. Parents also receive a written report annually where there are clear indications of what their child has learnt, understood and achieved.

## **Self Evaluation**

The school reviews the SEF form annually and uses the outcomes to inform our CPD programme and SDP cycle.

## **Resources**

Each class has a prayer corner reflecting the liturgical season, with a selection of books, artefacts or objects which can be the focus of our daily acts of worship. Pupils also can use this area for quiet times of their own.

The KS1 library has a selection of religious books for children. A larger selection of reference, religious festivals and multi-faith resource books and assembly books are available in the Resource Room and from the RE Subject leader.

Artefact boxes for the main world faiths can be found in the corridor opposite the Headteacher's room.

A set of bibles can be found in the KS2 library.

Sacred vessels, candles, altar cloths etc. are kept in the main hall cupboard.

### **Management**

Management of Religious Education at St. Joseph's School is the responsibility of the RE Subject leader and the Headteacher. Their role is to monitor and assess the RE curriculum throughout the school to ensure continuity and progression. They also ensure that the aims and learning outcomes in the curriculum directory are identified and fulfilled. The RE Subject leader is responsible for obtaining resources.

A governor has specific responsibility for RE and liaises closely with the staff of the school to fulfill their monitoring duties.

### **Presentation**

Children will present their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways:

- By discussion and written work.
- Research and collating of evidence.
- By visual presentation including drama and role play.
- By whole school and class celebrations, liturgies and masses.
- By art and written displays in class and around the school.
- ICT

### **Marking**

At St Joseph's School we expect and encourage the same high standards and expectations in RE as we do for all our curriculum subjects. However we always take into account the wide ability range, which exists within each class. (For detailed general information see whole school feedback policy.)

Key words, which are introduced in any lesson, are corrected in pupils work if they are spelt incorrectly. The names of God and Jesus should always have a capital letter.

### **Health and Safety**

Health and Safety in RE is concerned mainly with the use of candles and incense in the classroom. Each class has a prayer corner and care is taken by the teacher to ensure that the candles and incense are held by the children under careful supervision.

### **Education for Personal Relationships including Sex Education**

The policy "Education for Personal Relationships including Sex Education" embraces all that underpins the school's Aims and Objectives and School Mission Statement, in its desire to provide our children with an education which helps them prepare for life. We use a combination "All that I Am" from the Diocese of Birmingham and the Channel 4 series "Girls/Boys Talk".

### **Special Education Needs including Able and Gifted**

In Religious Education we recognise the need for resourcing, careful planning and differentiation to cater for children of all abilities ranging from the very gifted children to those of low ability. Staff are reminded to clearly identify pupils who are achieving at a high level in RE in their planning and adjust their teaching and pupil learning accordingly. RE presents a particular challenge to teacher in that all classes contain pupils who may not have good literacy skills but are very able and insightful in RE. These pupils are catered for at an appropriate level.

### **Other Denominations and Faiths**

Whilst Religious Education at St Joseph's School is specifically of the Christian Roman Catholic tradition, we welcome input from other faiths and denominations. We appreciate how the beliefs and values of other faith communities can enrich our own spiritual existence.

Each year two other faiths will be studied during RE time. In the Autumn term we will study Judaism and Islam will be studied in either the Spring or Summer term (depending on which term is longer).

### **Cross Curricular Links**

"We believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but, the foundation of the entire education process." (Bishop's of England and Wales)  
In accordance with this statement we believe that Religious Education is at the heart of what we teach and therefore permeates the whole curriculum. It is reflected in our prayer life and liturgy, in our personal and extended relationships and through developing awareness in our children of the need to appreciate and care for the wider community and world in which we teach.

Date of this review: October 2013

Next review date: October 2015