

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



Religious Education Policy

Our School Mission Statement:

"Live, love and learn, in a caring Christian community"

As a Roman Catholic school, we willingly embrace the unique position that 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 Catholic Christian beliefs in daily acts of collective worship, class and school Masses which mark important events and feast days.

- To enable the children to become familiar 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 Carlos Quito.

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. 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.

Planning

Using the termly planning provided by Dr Margaret Carswell as a starting point, teachers produce individual lesson plans which detail the learning objectives, success criteria, teaching activities, differentiated children's activities and assessment for learning opportunities.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

RE assessment tasks are carried out at end of every topic and are used to give a summative statement of each pupil's achievement in each topic. Pupil's work is assessed against the National Levels of Attainment for RE.

Additionally, teachers constantly assess and evaluate the 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 information about their child's attainment and effort in RE termly as part of the termly report card which is shared prior to parents' evening. 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 termly and uses the outcomes to inform our CPD programme and SDP cycle. Furthermore, attainment and progress in RE is monitored bi-annually by the Governors' Curriculum Committee.

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 School 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 studio.

A set of bibles can be found in each classroom.

Sacred vessels, candles and altar cloths are kept in the RE cupboard in the studio.

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 evaluate the RE curriculum throughout the school to ensure high levels of achievement 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 and providing CPD opportunities for staff.

A governor has specific responsibility for RE and liaises closely with the subject leader and other members of staff 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 highest standards and expectations in RE, as we do for all our curriculum subjects. Please see more information in the marking policy.

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.

Relationships, Health and Sex Education

Please see the separate 'RSHE Policy'.

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 with Special Educational Needs. 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 teachers 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 Roman Catholic Christian tradition, we also provide the pupils with an understanding of other faiths, predominantly other Monotheistic religions – Islam and Judaism. The pupils are taught the importance of learning about other faiths as we appreciate how the beliefs and values of other faith communities can enrich our own spiritual existence.

Cross Curricular Links

"We believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but, the foundation of the entire education process." (Bishops 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 2021
Next review date: October 2022

ACJ