




RE Policy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Part of the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust

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Approved by the Committee/Governing body	<i>Local Governing Body</i>
Signature of Chair of Governors	
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Mission Statement

'Living and learning through Faith'

St Mary's School endeavours to give all children the best educational opportunities within a Catholic Christian community that values the individual, recognises the worth of each person and welcomes everyone.

We aim to combine excellence in teaching with enjoyment in learning through the provision of an inclusive, balanced and broadly based curriculum that promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares children for the opportunities and responsibilities of secondary education and later life.

At St Mary's Catholic School we live out our Mission Statement and in doing so, are committed to the belief that the outcome of excellent Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. (RED 2023)

Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" in a Catholic school (Pope St John Paul II). Placing RE at the core of the curriculum in Catholic schools helps the school to fulfil its mission to educate the whole person in discerning the meaning of their existence, since "Religious Education is concerned not only with intellectual knowledge but also includes emotional and affective learning. It is in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of what it is to be human truly becomes clear. Without religious education, pupils would be deprived of an essential element of their formation and personal development, which helps them attain a vital harmony between faith and culture." (Religious Education Curriculum Directory p4). Furthermore, religiously literate children and young people are able to engage in a fully informed critique of all knowledge, "leading, for example, to an understanding of the relationship between science and religion or history, and between theology, sport and the human body." (Religious Education Curriculum Directory p4). (CES)

The aims of religious education are:

1. to engage in a systematic study of the mystery of God, of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold, the basis for them and the relationship between faith and life;
2. to enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
3. to present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching to provide pupils with a sure guide for living and the tools to critically engage with contemporary culture and society;
4. to give pupils an understanding of the religions and worldviews present in the world today and the skills to engage in respectful and fruitful dialogue with those whose worldviews differ from their own;
5. to develop the critical faculties of pupils so to bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture;
6. to stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. to enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through religious education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum.

At St Mary's we seek to:

- Be a welcoming school where we recognise, affirm and develop the unique gifts and talents of each individual
- Provide a safe, purposeful and stimulating learning environment where all children can flourish through a broad and balanced curriculum
- To value childhood as an intrinsic right of all children and enable every child to learn, grow and reach their full potential
- Help children develop high self-esteem, confidence and a strong sense of identity
- Teach Christian values to children, inviting them to build their own lives upon them
- Provide a place where all are offered an opportunity to come to know Jesus better through their learning, through worship, through the daily life of the school and their relationships with each other

- Recognise and value parents as the first educators of their children, fostering positive relationships and strong working partnerships between the school, parents, and all those responsible for the children's welfare and education
- Be inclusive, inspired by gospel values through service to others
- Teach the children to value and celebrate diversity
- Live out our drivers of community, communication and whole child.

At the heart of every Catholic school is the person of Jesus Christ. This presence of Christ is in the present tense: it is a real presence, in the here and now. Recognition of it impacts on everything a Catholic school is and does, not least its religious education (Religious Education Directory 2023)

To provide a community that fosters and creates opportunities for children to develop these fundamental skills and attitudes, we aim:

- to be a school community reflecting the love of God in its relationships, standards, teaching and way of life in promoting the development of the whole child.
- to build on and extend the foundations of religious education begun in the home. In partnership with home and parish, we strive to deepen the children's knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith
- to provide opportunities for formation that will allow the children to develop skills needed to reflect upon and explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition and of other faiths
- to enable children to love and respect themselves and one another and to respect the religious convictions of others in a challenging and complex society so that they are confident in their own identity and purpose
- to extend the children's understanding of God's family across the world by building a global dimension into prayer, liturgy and the curriculum whenever appropriate.
- to stimulate children to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose and reach an understanding that some questions are difficult to answer.
- to develop in the children an understanding of the importance of celebration within the Catholic tradition – the prayer and liturgical practices.
- to encourage children to develop an understanding of sacraments as privileged encounters with Christ and a means of revealing God's love for us through celebration
- to encourage children to develop an understanding of sacred writings, events, key religious figures and their significance for believers of all faiths today.
- to create and maintain an environment where prayer is valued, fostered and developed.

Prayer and Liturgy

The challenge for Catholic schools is to present in an authentic way our tradition of Catholic prayer and liturgy, whilst at the same time providing a welcoming environment for all pupils and staff. This challenge demands that we understand our tradition and maintain an approach that respects the integrity of all. (Prayer and Liturgy Directory 2023)

See Prayer and Liturgy policy

At St Mary's, everyone is expected to have regard for the unique nature of a Catholic School and be open to promoting a journey of faith embedded in tolerance, respect for others and an understanding that a deeper relationship with God is established through meaningful worship in its many forms.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective Worship – There is a form of collective worship each day:

- Monday – Whole School Liturgy Assembly linked to Sunday’s Gospel
- Tuesday – Whole School Assembly
- Wednesday – Whole School Assembly
- Thursday – Liturgical Music Assembly
- Friday – Pupil led assembly- pupil leaders

Prayers are offered at the beginning and the end of the school day and before and after lunch.

- Opportunities for prayer and worship are planned as part of the RE curriculum.
- Opportunities are made for children to respond to the prayer focal point in the classroom.
- Children are encouraged to compose their own prayers to say privately or to share during prayer times, assemblies or masses and services.
- Children are encouraged to realise that prayers can be said at any time and in any place.
- Prayers are offered at the beginning of staff and Governors’ meetings.
- Children recognise that singing hymns is a form of prayer.

Masses and Services

Masses and services are held to celebrate events within the liturgical calendar.

Children have the opportunity to celebrate Mass in a variety of settings for example at St. Mary’s Church and in school. Children in EYFS and KS1 celebrate Class Celebrations of the Word.

Pupils from Y3 upwards take part in a Reconciliation Service during Advent and Lent with confession and absolution available to all Catholic pupils who have made their First Holy Communion.

Children contribute to each liturgy in a variety of ways; by preparing the setting, composing prayers, selecting and performing music, making visual resources, serving and reading. There is a Worship Group who have responsibility for both leading and preparing for Celebrations of the Word and Liturgies.

Preparing Prayer and Liturgy

The Headteacher/RE Leader works with the parish priest, to create a termly programme of Masses and liturgies to develop the pupil’s formation and experience of the Eucharist within school.

When preparing, staff can seek support from the Headteacher/RE Leader to create prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, of a consistently high quality and are accessible, meaningful and relevant for the whole community.

Curriculum

Teaching and Learning

At the heart of our schools, as at the heart of our faith, there is a commitment to a paradoxical wisdom that can seem like foolishness to the world (1 Cor 1:23): a person who is fully God and fully human.

The purpose of both Catholic schools and Catholic religious education reflects this wisdom.

It is focused on integral formation of its students and at the same time prepares them for full participation in civic life. It teaches subjects with methods proper to them and at the same time imbues the whole

curriculum with a Christian outlook. It is established for Catholic students and at the same time draws others to its doors.

Religious education in a Catholic school also bears witness to the same mystery: it is both fully religious and genuinely educational. (Religious Education Directory 2023)

At the core of our Religious Education Curriculum are the beliefs and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and we aim to lay a foundation of understanding and belief that will remain with our children throughout their lives. Our lessons are rooted in the requirements of the Religious Education Directory - To Know You More Clearly and follow the cycle detailed below.

Autumn 1: Creation and Covenant

Autumn 2: Prophecy and Promise

Spring 1: Galilee to Jerusalem

Spring 2: Desert to Garden

Summer 1: To the Ends of the Earth

Summer 2: Dialogue and Encounter

This includes the teaching of other World Faiths (Dialogue and Encounter) which helps our children to develop an understanding of and a respect for the beliefs of others in our multi-faith society. Our teaching provides cross-curricular opportunities, celebrating our learning in RE through RSHE, Art, Drama, Dance and Music

Religious education is a rigorous academic discipline and as such it is taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as other subjects.

In accordance with the guidelines from the Bishops' Conference 10% of the curriculum teaching time is dedicated to RE.

Work in RE is marked in accordance with our Marking and Feedback Policy. Children can identify what they have done well and what their next steps are in their learning.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Each teacher has the responsibility for maintaining records on the children in their class. Work is assessed against expected outcomes for each unit and the attainment recorded in the Diocesan assessment grid and uploaded to the school tracking system (Insight).

The subject leader then analyses attainment and progress at whole class and group level. This information will then be used to inform action planning. RE is reported formally to parents in the annual report.

The Catholic Life of the School is reported to the Local Governing Body on a termly basis.

Parents are informed about the RE Topics through a termly class Newsletter, posted on the school website.

The Role of the RE Leader

The RE leader/Headteacher is responsible for the monitoring, evaluating and development of all areas of RE and Collective Worship.

These areas include:

Catholic Life of the School:

- ❖ Pupil contribution and benefits

- ❖ Quality of Provision
- ❖ Promotion, Monitoring and Evaluation

Religious Education

- ❖ Pupil's achievement and enjoyment
- ❖ Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- ❖ Promotion, Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and Liturgy

- ❖ Pupil's responsibilities and participation
- ❖ Quality of Prayer and Liturgy
- ❖ Promotion, Monitoring and Evaluation

These are used to inform the Catholic School Evaluation Document (CSED) for Catholic Schools Inspectorate which is revised annually by the Headteacher/RE Leader.