



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

RE Policy

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to live in the way Jesus wanted. He told us to "Love One Another as I have loved you"

We aim to fulfil our Mission by:

Living as a good news community, valuing all members equally.

With Jesus as a role model, developing in everyone a sense of self respect, belonging and respect for others.

Striving to enable all children to reach their full potential through a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum.

Working together to achieve excellence in everything we do.

Developing strong home/school and parish links.

Ensuring the success of everyone involved in the school community, nurturing their individual talents and supporting their individual needs.

Having high expectations of everyone.

Nurturing the faith journey of everyone through meaningful prayer and liturgy.

Ensuring a calm and positive atmosphere in all areas of the school.

Date of approval: October 2025

Date of renewal: October 2026

Chair of Governors *CM Ratcliffe*

Headteacher *C. Williams*

Context

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School fulfils its mission of 'Love one another as I have loved you' where pupils learn and reflect on what Jesus Christ taught us. We pride ourselves in our inclusive school environment which is underpinned with our school values of love, honesty, respect, forgiveness, hope and justice.

Our school serves the local parish of St Joseph's Catholic Church in Rawmarsh and is part of the Diocese of Hallam. The school is on a journey to join St Clare's MAT and is currently an associate member. St Joseph's work closely with other schools within the 'Dearne Valley family' to ensure there are opportunities to support each other through networking and sharing good practice so we provide the very best for all of our pupils.

St Joseph's faces a diverse range of challenges the school aspires to overcome. Our school context remains predominately White British however there has been a recent increase in children with English as an additional language and other cultures and backgrounds joining our school community. The ethos of the school and the quality-first teaching has meant that these children have settled quickly, made positive friendships with other children, quickly learnt English and thrive in both their learning and personal development. One of our proudest achievements is harmony within the school as all children learn to celebrate their differences.

There has been a rise in the number of pupils who have SEMH needs and the number of pupils with an EHCP. Many of our children are from an economically deprived catchment area with a number of challenging factors; one of these being pupils living in economically deprived circumstances who experience these pressures on a daily basis. As a result, pupils, parents and carers bring the social and emotional pressures to school and look to us to support them. We currently have 47% Pupil Premium which is higher than the national average. We are very proud to say how successful we are in dealing with those pressures and consequently we place a very high value on the importance of the pastoral care and welfare that we offer. We do this because we firmly believe that every child should fulfil their full potential and achieve well.

Introduction

Religious Education Policy

As a Catholic school we are deeply committed to developing and enhancing the talents and potential of each child by providing an ethos that reflects Gospel values and enables each one to grow in their faith.

We understand that all children have their own unique relationship with God, for some this has been nurtured and developed within the home, whilst others receive their first awareness of the Church community at school.

For all our children the religious teaching will be the foundation of the entire educational process, and the beliefs and values studied will inspire and draw together every aspect of our school community.

Aims of the Religious Education Curriculum at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

As a Catholic School we aim to work closely with the home and parish to create an atmosphere where, through teaching and example, our children will be helped to enter into a loving relationship with God our Father, Jesus and with each other as members of God's family and so continue to lay foundations of the Catholic faith.

Intent of the Religious Education Curriculum

We aim, through our teaching, to show the relationship between life and faith. We shall try to achieve this through;

- Exploring the Mystery of God and His creation
- Sharing the life and teaching of Jesus Christ
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- Fostering a sense of community where each person is respected valued and encouraged to feel confident and supported in their 'faith journey'
- Developing an awareness and appreciation of the gift of faith to which they may respond positively within their daily life

- Developing skills of thinking critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically so that they are able to:
 1. Respect and value the views of others
 2. Appreciate the uniqueness and sacredness of each individual
 3. Develop a sense of commitment and service
 4. Accept the responsibilities and challenges of living in a multicultural and multi-faith society

We aim to enhance the children's spiritual development through:

- The Mission Statement, assemblies and reinforcing positive behaviour – we will help the children to develop a respect for themselves and others
- Engendering a sense of empathy with others through links with other schools in the developing world and through fund raising
- Creating an environment of trust, care and compassion
- Enhancing the children's appreciation for truth, love, goodness and wonder through the delivery of the whole curriculum in our Catholic school
- Seeking to help the children to understand how the impact of their feelings and emotions affects their behaviour and impacts on the feelings and emotions of others
- The Behaviour Policy and Anti Bullying Policy, which provide a clear moral code that is promoted consistently throughout the school and is reinforced through classroom rules and acceptable playground behaviour
- Praise and reward for good behaviour linked to our school values and acts of kindness

'The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. (Religious Education in Catholic Schools, para. 4, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000).

Implementation of the Religious Education Curriculum

Teaching and Learning

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in Religious Education, basing our lessons on the 'Magister' programme of religious study.

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship.

Programme of Study:

To fulfil the above aims and to address the Religious Education Directory, the Magister programme is used and currently supported by the Diocese of Hallam.

In all aspects of their teaching, the staff remain aware of their responsibility to deepen their own faith and be good 'role models'. Their personal response to faith permeates all aspects of their teaching in every area of the curriculum.

This means in Religious Education we are not just teaching a curriculum subject but also a living faith, which we are encouraging our children to share in.

Planning

There are six branches to be covered each year and each topic lasts for a half term. There is also a two-year interfaith cycle to cover the main world faiths as an enhancement to our RE curriculum. Curriculum overviews have been developed by the RE Lead and incorporate the learning objectives outlined in the scheme for each branch with cross-reference to the Religious Education Directory. As in other curricular areas, planning is the responsibility of each class teacher who will:

- allocate time for each learning outcome to be achieved
- select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children
- indicate the focus

Mastery approach to teaching

As with all other areas of the curriculum, the purpose of Mastery in Religious Education is:

- to enable children to succeed in the set task or activity;
- to challenge children beyond their comfort zone of knowledge, understanding and skills;
- to enable children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these.

Dojo points are used to praise children's high-quality work and highlight the three stages of Mastery – skills, fluency and deepening. They are also an acknowledgement to the child's success within the lesson - by both class teacher and the pupil.

Pupils with Special Needs & Equal Opportunities

At St. Joseph's, the curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children. If a child is identified as having a special need, we do all we can to meet these individual needs in accordance with current school policy which follows the guidance contained in the SEND Code of Practice. We use enhancements such as forest school, Godly Play and hands-on learning activities to remove any barriers to learning.

Assessment

Assessment is focused on the objectives of each branch of the Magister scheme.

"... The objective of Religious Education is to include analysis and reflection, critical appreciation of sources and examples, and a real sense of progression through the different stages of education". Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, January 2000.

Assessment provides pupils and teachers with a clear understanding of pupils' attainment, that is their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do improve. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith. Assessment of RE is both formal and informal. Assessment is on-going throughout every branch. Pupils receive verbal feedback and other feedback in their books following the marking and feedback policy.

Assessment of RE may take the form of:

- general observation of children engaged in classroom tasks and activities
- observation of contributions made to classroom displays and class discussions
- review of end of task, activity or lesson
- conversations with individuals or groups
- marking of more formal written work

The standards for Primary Religious Education are:

- Knowledge and understanding (learning about)
- Developing knowledge and understanding

- Making links and connections
- Historical development
- Religious and specialist vocabulary
- Engagement and Response (learning from)
- Meaning and purpose
- Beliefs and value
- Analysis and Evaluation

- Use of sources as evidence
- Construct arguments
- Make judgements
- Recognise diversity

End of Year Expectations

Children are assessed against each branch and end of year assessment judgements are made based on these six assessments across the year. The purpose of the assessment is to support children's learning by offering an account of educational progression. They will help teachers to make accurate judgements on pupil's achievement, to sum up what pupils have learned so far and to identify how pupils can make the next step in learning. They will also contribute to the quality of Religious Education provision within the school.

Recording

Recording provides evidence of achievement. This may take many forms:

- notes from observations
- written comments on children's work
- visual evidence –photographs, displays, videos or recording of drama or celebrations;
- Pupil assessment sheets for every branch taught. These are included in every child's RE book from Year 2 to Year 6. Floor books are used in Foundation Stage 2 and Year 1 with individual assessment trackers used to track each child against the learning objective for each lesson.

Reporting

There are four dimensions to reporting in Religious Education. Reporting:

- provides feedback to pupils on their achievement and progress
- informs colleagues of the achievement of individual pupils and the areas studied by a class and year group
- informs parents of the progress and achievement of their children (end of year reports)
- informs parents, governors, parish and external agencies of the content and quality of Religious Education being provided and the achievements and progress of the pupils

Monitoring

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School monitoring is carried out by talking to the children, looking at their books, scrutinising planning, RE displays and lesson observations. The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching in Religious Education. The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching and for being informed about current developments in the subject.

Links with home, school and parish

The Parish Priest visits the school and celebrates Whole School Mass linked to the liturgical year and Liturgies with the children and staff on Holy days of obligation and at other significant times during the school year. Masses take place both at our Parish church and within school. Members of the parish are invited to all of these events. There is strong links with the parish and other local organisations, including local Food Banks, the local Care Home and St Vincent De Paul's Society (Minnie Vinnies). Together, we fundraise for those in need.

Role of the Subject Leader

Each term the subject leader and the SLT will complete a RE book scrutiny to identify differentiation, progress and attainment. Staff are asked to bring their books to regular training sessions to share good progress and identify progression across school. SLT, governors and the RE subject leader also observes the teaching of RE in classes either through formal observations or through learning walks. This is followed by a discussion between the teacher and the subject leader, noting the strengths and areas for development.

Collective worship

Whole school assemblies take place on Monday and Friday. On Tuesday's classes worship in classrooms. We use the Gospel reading as points of reflection and worship. All classes begin and end the day with prayers and all classes say grace before lunch.

Please see the Collective Worship Policy for more information.