

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Catholic Academy Trust in East Berkshire

*Learning and loving on our journey with
Jesus.*



To the greater glory of God

Religious Education (RE) Policy

STATEMENT

This policy supports the distinctive nature of our school.

The mission of St Mary's school is to educate our children for life as Christians in this community. Jesus and His teachings are at the heart of all we do.

“In the life of faith of the Catholic school, religious education plays a central and vital part. At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process.” (Religious Education in a Catholic School – a statement from the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales, 2000)

Therefore, religious education at St Mary's, is not confined to the timetabled religious education lessons but is fundamental to the life and learning of the school, stimulating growth and development along with academic progress.

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 At St Mary's we aim to:

Promote

- Bearing witness to the teachings of Jesus;
- Taking responsibility for creating a climate in which all will feel welcome;
- Developing pupils' sense of self worth;
- Encouraging respect for others;
- Recognising that faith development begins at home with the parents as the primary educators – we will work in partnership;
- Enabling our pupils to know Jesus and be aware of His presence in their lives;
- Providing a programme of RE that will give our pupils an opportunity to hear and reflect upon the word of God.
- Knowledge, respect and tolerance of other religions and cultures.

The objectives of teaching RE in our school are to provide education of the highest quality through:

- Providing a curriculum that fulfils all statutory requirements as stated by the Diocese of Portsmouth and meets each pupil's needs;
- Providing a structured and stimulating learning environment;
- Encouraging and promoting cultural awareness and knowledge of other religions and their practices;
- Providing relevant training for all staff;
- Monitoring and striving to continually improve the quality of teaching that we provide;
- Fulfilling our endeavours as stated in the Home/School Agreement.

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2 Teaching and Learning

2.1 At St Mary's we use the programme "God Matters" as recommended by the Diocese of Portsmouth. The aim of the programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose through the related theology, within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupils' own experiences as well as universal experience.

The pupils are taught about and to show respect for other faiths through a focused study of a major world faith each year.

2.2 We recognise the fact that pupils have different learning styles and ensure that we use a range of teaching approaches in RE to enable all pupils to learn from and about religion through the use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic stimuli and activities.

2.3 We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have pupils of widely differing abilities, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all pupils by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the pupil. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all pupil to complete all tasks);
- grouping the pupils by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the pupil;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of pupils.

3 Curriculum planning

3.1

We plan our religious education curriculum in accordance with the Diocesan programme "God Matters". We ensure that the topics studied in religious education build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for pupils of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the programme offers the pupils an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

3.2 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 throughout the school.

3.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. These are laid out in each God Matters book. As we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that pupils have complete coverage of "God Matters".

3.4 Short term plans for individual lessons are planned collaboratively within teams and lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes. These are kept electronically on the school network.

4 The Foundation Stage

4.1 In reception classes, RE 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 Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. In addition, RE is also taught as a discrete subject twice a week in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.

5 Cross Curricular links

5.1 We aim to nurture religious growth and development in all areas of the curriculum.

6 RE and Computing

6.1 Computing enhances religious education, wherever appropriate, in all key stages.

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7 RE and inclusion

7.1 At our school we teach RE to all pupils, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all pupils. Through our RE teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Equality; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

8 Assessment for learning

8.1 Pupils demonstrate their ability in RE through a variety of different ways. Younger pupils might, for example, act out a famous story from the Bible, whilst older pupils might produce a *PowerPoint* presentation based on their investigation of sacred texts. Teachers will assess pupils' work in RE by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives the pupil written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Older pupils are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future.
The teacher will record the attainment grades awarded at the end of a unit of work on an assessment sheet. This information is used to assess the progress of each pupil, for setting new goals, and for passing information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

9 Resources

9.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our RE teaching units. We keep resources for RE in a central store (RE subject leader's room and outside the staff room). There is also a box of equipment for each world faith which is stored in each team leader's room. There is a set of Bibles for both key stages, and a collection of religious artefacts which we use to enrich teaching in RE. The school library has a supply of RE topic books and computer software to support the pupils' individual research.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 The RE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the pupils' work and the quality of the teaching in RE. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school. The subject leader presents the head teacher with an annual report which evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. She regularly spends time carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of the pupils work, assessment, planning, conducting pupil conferences and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.
The subject leader is also responsible for preparing a written report each term for governors which is presented to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

10.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

This policy was ratified by the Governing Body on:

Date.....

Signed.....

It will be reviewed by spring 2020