



St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Policy: Religious Education Policy

Review date: September 2021

Next review: September 2024



MISSION STATEMENT

Growing Together in God's Love



Give love in all we do and say

- We live out our school values of:
 - Love
 - Peace
 - Forgiveness
 - Fairness

Which are based on Gospel teachings (The Beatitudes).

- We welcome everyone into our safe and caring family.
- We always try to be positive role models.

Rejoice in God's friendship

- We pray together every day and in many different ways.
- We continue our journey in the Catholic faith and develop our own personal relationship with God.
- We celebrate the awe and wonder of God's creation and look after our world.

Open our hearts to others

- We share our time and talents to enrich the lives of others.
- We build positive relationships within our school family and extend this to the wider community.
- We celebrate our culture whilst exploring and respecting the beliefs and cultures of others.

Work at being the best we can be

- We understand that each of us has been made in the image and likeness of God with our own unique talents and gifts.
- We have high expectations: listening, reflecting and always trying our hardest.
- We value, encourage and support everyone in our school family.

The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spirituality, and to think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

(Religious Education Directory for Catholic schools 2012)

Rationale

“Catholics believe that R.E. is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life”. (Bishops Conference of England and Wales)

Aims

To live out this belief, the staff at St Thomas of Canterbury’s aim to:

1. Create a Christ-centred environment which enables each member of our school community to grow into the person we are called to be.
2. Help each other grow in our personal relationships with God and each other.
3. Create an environment of mutual respect in which healing and forgiveness can be experienced.
4. Develop dynamic links between home/school/parish/governors to enable the Catholic faith to become significant in all our lives.
5. Bring a Catholic dimension to all teaching and learning.
6. Ensure pupils’ experiences in school have a positive influence on their understanding of relationships.

Our priority is to establish a happy and secure environment, which encourages personal growth and a love of learning and develops the child’s personality and potential as they journey through life.

In line with our School Values, we expect the children to:

- Forgive when people hurt us
- Stand up for what is right
- Cheer up those who are sad and lonely
- Share our time and our things
- Treat people gently
- Talk to God often

Objectives of R.E. in St. Thomas of Canterbury School

1. Provide opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection in implicit and explicit ways.
2. Provide children with the language of religious experience ie become 'literate' in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, people and objects.
3. Present a 'systematic presentation of the Christian event, message and way of life' in ways appropriate to age and development of the child.
4. Understand and respect the beliefs of people of other faiths.
5. Ensure that R.E. is given equal status and academic respectability as other core subjects, utilising appropriate strategies from the National Curriculum.

The R.E. Programme

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use the 'Come and See' programme recommended by Liverpool Archdiocese, which explores the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with both the pupils' own and universal experiences. Links are also made with the experience of other faith traditions. The programme is, therefore, objective and subjective, and for all children will raise questions and provide reflection material for their own experience.

A termly newsletter outlining the work to be covered by each year group that term is posted on the website.

Planning

Long Term

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that 10% of curriculum time is allocated to R.E. teaching. (Collective worship and hymn practice are not included in this time).

Medium term

The overview is the medium term plan for the start of each topic. It is important that teachers are given the opportunity to reflect on the topic at its start, preferably as a whole staff.

Staff update a termly topic planner for their class. These include:

- The basic question --- Christian doctrine for the term
- The starting dates for each topic
- Feast days/celebrations that will take place during a topic
- Opportunities for Global dimensions
- Prompts for including differentiation and use of IC

Short term

This is the responsibility of the class teacher. Using the planner provided by the Archdiocese, s/he will

- Allocate time for each learning outcome to be achieved.
- Include driver words and key religious vocabulary for each topic
- Select appropriate activities for the class/group to ensure achievement of the three learning outcomes.
- Carry out the termly assessment programme and provide R.E. coordinator with samples of work for portfolio.
- Keep a Religious Education Portfolio to record evidence of the children's experiences and learning during the Renew part of each topic.

Differentiation

We aim to give each child an education appropriate to age, aptitude and ability. Aware of the differing needs and abilities of the children within the class and with reference to IEPs of children on Special Needs Register, each class teacher will select appropriate activities from those provided in 'Come and See'.

In addition, a multi-sensory approach will be employed where possible for children with additional learning needs or disabilities.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral aspect of all teaching and learning. Assessment in RE is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through learning about and learning from religion. Assessment establishes what children know, understand and how to get there. It offers support and motivation to the learner. It does not assess spirituality or the practice of faith.

At the beginning of *Explore and Reveal* there is an indication of the Areas of Learning and the Attainment Levels which are covered. At the end there is a summary of the levels for that topic. Regular assessment, individual pupil tracking and record keeping is carried out according to the direction given by the Archdiocese.

Informal assessment

In addition to formal assessments, assessment is an ongoing process and teachers comment on their planning formats if pupils experience difficulties or demonstrate that they are exceeding expectations.

Formal assessment

Assessment follows the guidelines provided by the Archdiocesan Education Team. There is one formally assessed and moderated Come and See topic per term.

- Each term, every child must be assessed formally, as indicated on the assessment cycle sheet.

- Assessment tasks are on the Archdiocesan website but will also be distributed by the coordinator.
- A staff moderation meeting is to be held termly.
- Each teacher uses the standards context sheets to assess and evidence is kept in a whole school assessment folder. Work is moderated to ensure consistency.
- It is still useful for the children to record achievement at the REMEMBER stage of the process.
- Individual assessments should also take into account information gained from discussions, observations, class work and assessments etc.
- Marking of work should be positive, encouraging and developmental, using the language of the Driver Words to move learning forward.
- Reception class will develop a portfolio of annotated work from each topic including photographic evidence needed.
- Assessment should be used as the basis for reporting to parents at the end of the year.

Learning Journals

A Learning Journal is used in each class to record evidence of work during the Rejoice, Remember and Renew stage of learning. This is passed up to the next class and is a valuable resource for revision of topics before moving onto new concepts.

Recording/ Reporting

- Provides feedback on achievement/progress
- Informs colleagues of achievement of individuals and areas studied.
- Informs parents of progress/achievement of their children
- Informs parents, governors, parish and external agencies of the content and quality of R.E. being provided and the achievement of pupils.

In order to inform parents of RE topics, a newsletter is issued each term, including:

- possible activities for parents to share at home with their children
- dates of religious significance

Evaluation of teaching and learning

The R.E Coordinator will monitor work through regular observations, book scrutiny, displays, pupil interviews and by collecting samples of work for a school portfolio. Planning is submitted to the coordinator termly. The standard of work will be compared with expected learning outcomes. This information is presented to the governors annually in a report.

Time Allocation

For R.E. this is 10% of curriculum time

K.S. 1 = 2 hrs 10 mins

K.S. 2 = 2 hrs 30 mins

Staff Development

The R.E. co-ordinator will lead and support staff by:

- Providing up to date material and resources,
- Ensuring with SLT that RE is a regular/weekly agenda item in staff meetings
- Through attending in-service courses and having an involvement in staff training,
- Sharing information and knowledge gained at co-ordinators meetings with the Christian Education Department,
- Support development of good practice in the classroom,
- Formal/informal discussions with the staff,
- Having an input in ensuring that R.E. has an important section of the School Improvement Plan.

Staff will be encouraged to participate in In-service training provided by the CED on a rolling programme. All will have Come and See Training.

The RE coordinator will provide in-house In-service training on matters such as Assessment, Collective Worship and other areas which are manageable without the CED.

'Come and See for Yourself' will be used at the start of staff meetings where appropriate and at the start of each new topic.

Resources

Our best resources are the members of staff who are responsible for the R.E. of the children in their care. The parish priest, catechists and members of local community are a valuable resource and their involvement is encouraged and greatly appreciated.

A list of resources is available separately.