

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING



**ST. URSULA'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Religious Education Policy

"With God at the heart of our St Ursula's family, we welcome all as we learn and grow together"

Autumn 2023

Mission Statement

With God at the heart of our St Ursula's family, we welcome all as we learn and grow together.

Rationale of Religious Education:

The purpose of Religious Education at St Ursula's Catholic Primary School is to nurture the Catholic Faith, and its teachings, in our children. Our mission is to help the children in our school to know God and to recognise his presence in others. By helping them to live this faith, we hope to encourage our children to develop a better relationship with God and others around them.

You will show me the path that leads to life; your presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure forever.
Psalms 16:11

The Religious Education Directory also notes that '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'¹. With that in mind we try to ensure that Christ is central to our ethos through our gospel values and the opportunities for Prayer and Liturgy which lie at the heart of our faith. The ethos of the school is of great importance and we seek to create an atmosphere of love and respect, amongst all in our school community.

Children of other faiths and none, who attend the school are warmly welcomed and nurtured as part of our school learning community. Attendance and respect at acts of Prayer and Liturgy (collective worship) is expected, and seen as support of the Catholic ethos in action.

Our diocese (Brentwood) describes the role of RE in its Catholic schools thus:

*Religious Education in schools sows the dynamic seed of the Gospel and seeks to 'keep in touch with the other elements of the pupil's knowledge and education; thus the Gospel will impregnate the mentality of the students in the field of their learning, and the harmonization of their culture will be achieved in the light of faith.' It is necessary, therefore, that Religious Education in schools be regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge.*²

We place great value on respect for the individual. We encourage everyone to be honest, tolerant, just and forgiving of one another and we recognize that each person who is a part of the St Ursula's Catholic Primary School community; staff, children and parents, is on their own personal journey of faith, and are all at different stages.

With this in mind we recognise that as mentioned in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, the outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.³

¹ *To know You more clearly, The Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools, Academies and Colleges in England and Wales, Catholic Bishop's Conference 2023, p9*

² *Policy for Religious Education in Primary Schools, February 2015*

³ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6*

Our Aims:

1. To provide staff, children and their families with the knowledge, understanding and awareness of the Catholic faith and its beliefs
2. To enable staff, children and their families to communicate with God through Prayer and Liturgy
3. To encourage staff, children and their families to grow spiritually.
4. To help staff, children and their families to explore and express their sense of awe and wonder at the world God has created
5. To encourage staff, children and their families to develop their respect, tolerance and understanding of those holding different beliefs, faiths and cultures
6. To help staff, children and their families grow in awareness of themselves and to develop a positive attitude to their own emotions, life, and learning
7. To encourage awareness of issues involving social justice and the rights of the individual, particularly through awareness of the Universal church and Catholic Social Teaching
8. To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
9. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively including through pupil voice groups e.g. Faith in Action Group and Pupil Chaplains.
10. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.⁴

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Prayer and Liturgy (Collective Worship). 2 ½ hr/Wk.

Programme of Study:

R.E is central to the curriculum at St Ursula's Catholic Primary School. To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory for catholic schools – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - Come and See programme is used as recommended by the Diocese for Years 1- Year 6.

One of the scheme's goals is to improve the children's knowledge of Scripture and each year group and topic has a specific Scripture focus, which builds progressively from year to year, ensuring that the children leave with a good grounding in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.

Each topic follows the Explore, Reveal, Respond process. In Explore the children discuss similar issues in situations of which they have experience. In Reveal the children are introduced to the new knowledge in the unit. While in respond they engage with the new knowledge and reflect on what it means to them and to their lives and actions as

Christians. Each unit ends with a celebration of the new knowledge which contributes to their appreciation of the love God has for them.

In line with the implementation plan of the new RED, EYFS have begun to implement the new Religious Education Directory – To Know You More Clearly. The programme of study for religious education in Catholic schools presented in this directory has a framework with four structural elements: knowledge lenses, ways of knowing, expected outcomes, curriculum branches. The curriculum is made up of 6 branches that correspond to the six half-terms of a school year. The aim of these branches are to lead pupils on a journey rooted in the narrative of salvation history, focusing on the different aspects of Jesus' life and revisiting these each year in order to allow pupils to come to a deeper understanding of Jesus' ministry. The six curriculum branches are: creation and covenant, prophecy and promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, desert to garden, to the ends of the Earth, and dialogue and encounter.

As a school we have adopted a phased approach to the Religious Education Directory – To Know you more Clearly, and we are working alongside schools within our local deanery to develop a scheme of work.

⁴ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in religious education is related to concepts skills and attitudes to be developed through learning about, learning from and evaluating religion. It is these three areas that make up the skills that we look to assess children with in our RE lessons and assessments.

AT1: Knowledge and Understanding ('learning about')	AT2: Engagement and Response ('learning from')	AT3: Analysis and Evaluation
Developing Knowledge and Understanding Making Links and Connections Historical Development Religious and Specialist Vocabulary	Meaning and Purpose Beliefs and Values	Use of Sources as Evidence Construct Arguments Make Judgements Recognise Diversity Analyse and Deconstruct

These skills are built on throughout the children's time at school, beginning with a real focus on AT1 in EYFS before building in AT2 as the children progress through KS1 and LKS2. To the higher level thinking of AT3 that is developed further in UKS2. These skills are outlined further in the Skills Guide.

Within RE teachers are encouraged to make use of both summative and formative assessment. Teachers are continually using formative assessment both in their questioning, through discussion and when marking books. In terms of summative assessment, we have adopted a three-year cycle. This has allowed our teachers to formally assess one topic a term in greater detail enabling pupils to demonstrate their skills to their full potential. Teachers and pupils are aware of the skills they need to develop, and parents are informed of their children's targets in their termly reports.

The children are assessed against the Age-Related Standards (3-19) in Religious Education as set out by The Department of Catholic Education and Formation of The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. These standards have been broken down into Year groups and teachers are required to report on them each term.

Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress and these are used to inform and differentiate future planning. The subject leader also holds this information to help ensure consistency and as an aid to reviewing medium term planning.

Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in the half termly written reports and this is explained to parents at regular parent teacher consultations throughout the year.

Governors monitor pupil progress through annual Book Looks or Learning Walks. They provide written feedback to the Executive Head teacher, RE Subject Lead and staff.

Management of the subject

The R.E subject leader alongside SLT, monitors work through regular observations (including drop-ins), book scrutinies and by collecting samples of work for the school portfolio in order to track pupils' progress over the years.

Regular staff meetings and CPD's are devoted to RE and include a focus on assessment and moderating of pupils' performance. Daily Prayer and Liturgy (collective worship) is also monitored, as is the children's participation and engagement in parish mass.

Other Faiths

We believe that learning about other faiths and cultures is essential for children to have a better understanding of their own faith and culture. It is also fundamental to encouraging tolerance and respect, vital British values to which St Ursula's Catholic Primary School adheres.

The Come and See programme integrates the teaching of Other Faiths, and allows for learning with progression across the year groups 1 – 6. All children study different aspects of Judaism and Islam each year and time is allocated for the study of other faiths, ensuring a good accumulative knowledge by the time they leave primary school. Visits to places of worship of other faiths and visitors are carefully planned into the curriculum.

Within the Religious Education Directory – To Know You More Clearly, children are encouraged to explore what the Church teaches about its relationship to other faiths, religions, and worldviews within Branch 6 – Encounter. Within this branch pupils are also expected to engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews.

"30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' 31 The second most important commandment is this: 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment more important than these two." Mark 12:30-31

Equal Opportunities

St Ursula's Catholic Primary School aims to give all children irrespective of age, background or ability equal access to learning opportunities. For religious education, this means equal opportunity to reflect on their life experiences and to understand their own and other people's responses to those experiences in the context of religious belief and practice. Children with learning disabilities and most able children should be allowed to express themselves according to their ability, for example by using art to record ideas and thoughts where writing skills are less developed.

There are a wide variety of activities through which children are able to convey their responses and new knowledge and understanding can be gained. In considering teaching approaches, it is important to bear in mind the different ways in which children might prefer to make responses, depending on their particular strengths and abilities: -

- a) verbal response
- b) written response
- c) drawing
- d) acting
- e) participation
- f) singing

All work is valued. We are aware of children's various cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds and are sensitive in our approach and the use of materials. Teachers are expected to differentiate learning experiences so that all children can meet their full potential.

Policy review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by SLT and the Governing body and updated every 2 years.

APPENDIX 1

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Religious Education

The Religious Education co-ordinator is responsible to the Head Teacher for the following:

- The co-ordination of all Religious Education work throughout the school.
- Working with senior leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the preparation and implementation of the Come and See programme.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.
- The building of close links between school and parish community.
- The liason with parish priest in organisation of school celebrations.
- The production and evaluation of the school Religious Education Policy Document.
- Collaboration with other Catholic schools to produce an exemplar of RE work.
- Working with RE leaders from KS3 to develop a transition programme of study.
- Meeting with and organising the work of the pupil groups for RE i.e. Faith in Action Group and Pupil Chaplains