

Holy Family Catholic Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Religious Education Policy

With Christ as our guide, together, we love, grow, learn and achieve each day.

This policy is one in a series that makes up the whole school Curriculum Statement from Holy Family Catholic Primary School. This policy states the school philosophy about how Religious Education will make a contribution to our pupils' education.

Rationale

The general aims of Religious Education (RE) at Holy Family Catholic Primary School are to bring pupils into an understanding of the religious and moral dimension of life, to study Christianity, to experience something of the mystery of God, as discovered through the Bible and life and teachings of Christ, to develop some understanding of the religious beliefs and practices that affect the attitudes and actions of people throughout the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the children's own experiences and with universal experience, allowing the children to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition and, where appropriate, of other faith traditions. As a result, the pupil is enabled to grow in awareness of him/her self and develop a confident attitude to life, to develop an interest in and ability to reflect on the world around, to become aware of the relationship between faith and life, and to become aware how and why people commit themselves to beliefs and causes.

At Holy Family Catholic Primary School, RE promotes an understanding that we all share the same core values, although our experiences will vary according to our family background and the emphasis therein placed on religious practices and customs. The religious dimension underpins every aspect of school life, touching on personal relationships and beliefs, and enabling an appreciation that religious comes from within, as well as from the sacred writings. We aim to promote this understanding in an atmosphere of tolerance. It is a school policy to ensure that all children, regardless of gender, faith, social or cultural background, intellectual or emotional standing, are offered equal opportunities and catered for as possible.

Aims

Our RE programme at Holy Family Catholic Primary School will:

- Allow opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection in implicit and explicit ways.
- Promote pupils who are religiously literate: "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" (RE Curriculum Directory 2012).
- Provide children with the language of religious experience through places, stories, symbols, rituals, people and objects.
- Impart a systematic presentation of the Christian story and vision, message and way of life, in ways appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
- Support the local parish in the preparation for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.
- Respect the different pastoral needs and practices in the local parish.
- Include appropriate materials about other faiths of Judaism and Islam.
- Provide in service training support for the RE coordinator and all members of staff, through the Archdiocesan C.E. Department, to ensure understanding of the underlying theological and educational principles.
- Develop a social conscience through the inclusion of a global dimension, CAFOD.

The Religious Education Programme

To fulfil our rationale and aims, we use the *Come and See* programme of Religious Education prescribed by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The aim of this programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the child's own experience, with universal experience, and with the experience of other faith traditions. The programme is both 'subjective' and 'objective'.

Overview of Content

Central to the programme is the Christian belief in Jesus Christ, Word and Revelation of God.

Each term, a basic question - belief about the mystery of life is explored within the Catholic faith tradition.

Autumn	Where did I come from?	Life - Creation
--------	------------------------	-----------------

Spring Who am I? Dignity - Incarnation

Summer Why am I here? Purpose - Redemption

Year groups study different topics throughout the year around a central theme. For each level, there are clearly stated aims, achievable learning intentions, and a selection of experiences and activities for each of the learning intentions. These allow for pupils to work according to their different abilities. The basic question - belief for each term is explored through three kinds of themes.

1. Community of Faith - Church Themes

Autumn	Family	Domestic Church
Spring	Community	Local Church
Summer	World	Universal Church

2. Celebration in Ritual - Sacrament Themes

Autumn	Belonging	Baptism/ Confirmation
Spring	Relating	Eucharist
Summer	Inter-Relating	Reconciliation

3. Way of Life - Christian Living Themes

Autumn	Loving	Advent/Christmas
Spring	Giving	Lent/Easter
Summer	Serving	Pentecost

The Process

The process for delivering *Come and See* has three elements which enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. It enables the children to:

1. Explore (1 week)

Look at and become aware of an aspect of their life experience. This can be done by:

- Telling a story (real or fiction)
- Watching a video
- Listening to music
- Looking at pictures/photographs
- Sharing personal experiences

Explore it through practical tasks and activities:

- Ask questions
- Discuss work
- Complete worksheets
- Record experiences
- Dramatise experiences

To discover significance and value and come to a deeper understanding of it. It strives to:

- Evoke a sense of awe and wonder
- Be touched by the mystery of life
- Acknowledge differences
- Ask and respond to big questions
- Explore feelings and attitudes
- Reflect on the significance of life experiences

2. Reveal (2 weeks)

To make links with the Christian understanding of the life experiences through Scripture, Church practice and teaching, prayer and the lives and way of living of the Christian community. It makes links with the universal experience and, where appropriate, the experience of other faiths. This aims to:

- Learn and develop understanding of RE knowledge.
- Ask and discuss questions.
- Make links between own experience and the Christian understanding.
- Be open to new perspectives, respecting differences.

3. Respond (1 week)

Remember: The teacher helps the child to select, in order to hold on to, a way of expressing their new understanding. At the celebration, the children focus on and choose a song, hymn, story, photo, etc, which encapsulates their own understanding, and helps to bring it to mind again.

Rejoice: To celebrate in worship what has been explored and revealed. This takes place in the classroom where the children are given opportunities to:

- Bring together the work that has been done.
- Select something meaningful from their work.
- Choose an appropriate song/hymn/drama etc.
- Be prayerful, thoughtful and still.
- Respond to an atmosphere which engenders joy, sorrow, thanks, praise, etc.

Renew: To look back and evaluate, to look forward and plan. This is done by helping the children to:

- Recognise and express new insights, skills and attitudes.
- Apply their learning to their own life.
- Make written or pictorial records of their promises.

Planning

Long Term Planning: Topics being explored in the *Come and See* and Other Faiths being studied are clarified, dates set and confirmed by the Senior Leadership Team.

Medium Term Planning: Medium term planner, including themes, topics, dates and time allocation, provided to all teachers by coordinator. All classes allocate 10% of curriculum time to teaching RE and timetable it appropriately.

Short Term Planning: The Archdiocese of Liverpool planning format completed by all teachers, with a copy provided to the coordinator. Planning is evaluated by the teachers.

Differentiation

The teachers at Holy Family Catholic Primary School are aware of the developing stages and levels of maturity being experienced by the children and aim to ensure that the children are enabled to progress through these stages and are catered for at their own particular stage. The *Come and See* programme has built in progression in the nature of the planning of topics and in the driver words used within learning intentions. We recognise that differentiation in RE will enable children to succeed in set tasks, challenge children beyond their comfort zone of knowledge, skills and understanding, and enable children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these.

Differentiation opportunities are provided in Explore and Reveal to meet the differing needs and abilities of the children, eg. those on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities register. The planning of the Sacramental Programme is aimed to coincide with the developing maturity of the children, with First Holy Communion and Reconciliation in Year 4.

Assessment

Assessment is focused by the overall aims and objectives of RE. In Come and See, it is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of the themes and the learning intentions for each topic. Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith. Assessment in Come and See emphasises a wide range of achievement, presented in a variety of ways.

In Holy Family Catholic Primary School, we carry out both formal and informal assessment.

- **Informal Assessment:** General observations of children involved in classroom tasks and activities. Observation of contributions made to classroom displays. Marking of formal written work, applying a policy of positive and challenging comments, linked to the religious nature of the work and the driver words in the learning intention.
- **Formal Assessment:** Formal assessment is planned into one topic each term at the Reveal part of the process, and is linked to learning intentions, outcomes, expectations and attainment targets from Come and See. Each child is formally assessed using the assessment model recommended by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The results are kept in a file for each child that follows them throughout their Catholic school life. At each assessment, the RE coordinator retains a copy of two higher attaining pupils, two middle attaining pupils and two lower attaining pupils.

Reporting

At Holy Family Catholic Primary School, we recognise that reporting is a natural part of teaching and integral to the learning process.

- It provides feedback to pupils on their achievement and progress: discussion/marking.

- It informs parents of the progress and achievements of their children: annual written report and parents' evenings.
- It informs parents, governors, the local parish, the Archdiocese of Liverpool and external agencies: curriculum documents, Head teacher Report, displays of work, assessment monitoring file.

Evaluation of Teaching

Reviewing and evaluating the teaching of Come and See at Holy Family Catholic Primary School is carried out through:

- Observation of class teaching
- Monitoring of pupils' written work
- Monitoring of displays and resources

Observations of lessons focus on the extent to which teachers:

- Have a secure knowledge and understanding of Catholicism, RE and the programme in use.
- Set high expectations so as to challenge pupils and deepen their understanding, knowledge and skills.
- Plan lessons effectively, with clear religious learning objectives, meeting the learning needs of all pupils.
- Use teaching methods and strategies which match pupils' needs.
- Manage pupils well and have high expectations of pupils' learning, attitude and behaviour.
- Use time and resources efficiently and effectively.
- Assess pupils' work effectively and use assessments to inform teaching.
- Use resources to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

Observations of lessons focus on the extent to which pupils:

- Acquire new knowledge or skills, develop their ideas and increase their understanding in RE.
- Consolidate prior learning and apply it in new contexts in RE.
- Apply intellectual or creative effort in their work.
- Are productive and work at a good pace.
- Show interest in their work in RE, are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves.

- Understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve.

Evaluation of Learning

At Holy Family Catholic Primary School, our pupils are enabled to evaluate their own learning at the Respond stage of the process. Teachers aim to encourage the pupils to recall and review the work done in the topic, then hold on to and make their own what they have understood of their experience and the experience of the Church community. This is done by:

- Giving children time to remember what they have done in the topic.
- Asking questions to discover what learning has been achieved.
- Summarising and reinforcing learning that has taken place.
- Recording statements of new knowledge on a concept map.
- Giving children time to reflect on what they would like to hold on to.
- Helping children to focus on that which encapsulates their understanding and enables them to bring it to mind again, eg. a song, hymn, prayer, photo, reading.
- Exploring the potential for living in a fuller and deeper way.
- Identifying ways of applying this in life.

Staff Development

We aim to ensure that staff, including the RE coordinator, are kept abreast of changes and developments in *Come and See*, and are given opportunities to develop their own knowledge, understanding and skills in RE through whole school and individual in-service training and courses provided by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The RE coordinator is also a part of a local cluster group of leaders, facilitated by the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

The responsibility for the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers rests with their mentor though assistance and support is provided by the RE coordinator, in order to help plan topics and with reference to any specific problems. New staff to the school are informed of curriculum and assessment, and are given appropriate training in *Come and See*. Additional help with planning is offered to non-Catholic teaching staff, including exemplar planning and the RE coordinator modelling lessons.

Come and See for Yourself: Staff are encouraged to focus on the *Come and See for Yourself* section of each topic prior to planning and delivering a topic. Where possible, this is achieved through sharing the content at staff meetings, or in groups.

Opportunities for raising issues and concerns in RE are available in staff briefings and meetings, along with during the RE coordinator's management time.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Holy Family Catholic Primary School strives to be a welcoming, caring school at the service of the community. We endeavour to serve the needs of each pupil, recognising their value in the school, the home and the community, enabling each to fulfil his/her potential.

Each person should experience understanding and forgiveness, based on the principle that each person is valued as an individual, and given the dignity and respect afforded throughout the Gospels. Parents, children and all visitors should experience this welcome on first coming into the school. All teaching and non-teaching staff members should provide good role models. Throughout the school, and in all areas of the curriculum, opportunities should be taken to develop social skills and discuss the moral implications of action.

Evaluation of Religious Education

The RE policies are reviewed and updated by the RE coordinator in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team. Any policy changes are put to the whole staff before being implemented.

Reviewing and updating the Mission Statement is carried out in consultation with staff, pupils and governors.

APPENDIX 1

Religious Education

'Pupils have a right to receive an overall religious education that will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope that is within them (1 Peter 3:15)... Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, January 2000.)

At Holy Family, in line with the Archdiocese of Liverpool we have adopted 'Come and See' as our Programme of Study for Religious Education.

However, where parents prefer their children to receive RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, and they cannot reasonably or conveniently send their children to a school where the syllabus is in use, then the governing body must make arrangements for RE to be provided to the children within the school in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus unless they are satisfied that there are special circumstances which would make it unreasonable to do so.

In Liverpool, the locally agreed syllabus is SACRE, a programme of study which is predominantly Christian based.

'Every locally agreed syllabus must reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' (Religious Education in Britain: non-statutory guidance 2010).

Collective Worship

Holy Family Catholic Primary School has a distinctive nature, determined by its Catholic values, which underpin everyday life in the school as well as all of its policies and procedures. There is a daily act of collective worship, as set out in the school's policy.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from any or all acts of Collective Worship (Education Reform Act, 1988, Section 9 (3)).

- The parent does not have to give a reason for this request.
- The school retain responsibility for the pupil's health and safety.
- Arrangements may be made to provide facilities on the school premises for alternative provision for pupils withdrawn from collective worship.
- These arrangements must not by law entail any expenditure from the school budget.
- It is advisable that schools keep a record of such withdrawals.
- Parents can withdraw their children from collective worship even if they attend a faith school