

St Thomas of Canterbury RC Primary School



Religious Education Policy

INTRODUCTION

The policies, planned curriculum, ethos and climate of St Thomas of Canterbury RC Primary School are reflected in our mission statement that expresses the philosophy of education and community living in our Catholic school.

We are a Catholic family and welcome all into our vibrant community. We strive to make Jesus the centre of our lives. Each person is unique and we seek to inspire each other towards knowledge and joy as children of God. We nurture everyone to reach their full potential.

Together with God we reach for the stars.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST THOMAS'

As faithful builders of the Kingdom, Governors and staff at St Thomas' ensure Christ is central to the vocation of our teaching and informs all decisions. We share the pastoral commitment with the Church's mission to focus on Jesus Christ's love and we view it as our mission to proclaim and affirm that we are created in God's image. Leaders encourage all to walk in the ways of Jesus Christ, encapsulating deep faith, which motivates the direction of the school.

Aiming to empower young people to move forward in life with courage and purpose, we strive to nurture the strength of faith required to meet challenges of our modern world and to care for the world around them. It is our wish that all pupils, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or academic strengths, see themselves as missionary disciples with fabulous plans.

The Word, permeates every aspect of school life, consciously and unconsciously. By creating a nurturing, inclusive environment rooted in Gospel Values, there is a distinct community of deep care in which children experience a sense of true belonging; they feel safe, able to trust and valued.

We see ourselves as one part of a wider home-school-parish community that is mutually encouraging. We support parents and carers in their roles as their children grow in their faith journeys and develop in their faith experiences.

At St. Thomas of Canterbury Primary School, in line with our mission statement and through our teaching, we hope that Religious Education will help children to:

- Engage with their feelings and develop their emerging awareness of faith, spirituality, morality and responsibility.
- Bolster their reflective curiosity whilst on their journeys of faith; engaging with scripture so that they feel trusted to blossom through faith and mission.
- Inspire individuals to shine brightly with open minds, capable of caring for today's world.
- Recognise their own significance within the joyous story of Jesus Christ at the centre of everything in or school.

COME AND SEE PROGRAMME

Come and See is one of the programme of Religious Education recommended by Salford diocese, and in order to achieve our aims and objectives at St Thomas of Canterbury, we follow this recommended programme. This was introduced September 2019.

Central to the programme are three themes which stem from Christian belief and the churches response in faith. The three themes are;

- The community of faith – church
- The celebration of ritual – sacramental
- The way of life – Christian living

Each year group has its own set of topics within the programme. The process of each topic is opened up through Explore, Reveal and Respond.

Explore helps children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives- concerning themselves, their relationships and their world and lasts for one week.

Reveal is the heart of the process. This is when the children discover the Christian understanding of the mystery of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explore the mystery of human life as revealed in the person, life and gospel of Jesus Christ Christians. It will involve learning about Scripture, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians.

Respond lasts for one week and has three parts; Remember, Rejoice and Renew. At this stage of the process, children are given the opportunity to remember what they have been taught and think about how they will apply this teaching in their own life in order to serve others. There will also be a time for reflection and celebration within this part of the process.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Catholic Social Teaching is taught is to be taught in all year groups. CST is based on the life and words of Jesus Christ, who came "to bring glad tidings to the poor...liberty to captives...recovery of sight to the poor" (Luke 4:18-19).

At the core of Catholic Social Teaching are a number of key concepts and principles. These are; **Family and Community, Solidarity and the Common Good, Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the poor and Vulnerable, Dignity of Work, Dignity of the Human Person and Stewardship.**

Catholic Social Teaching is based on the belief that God has a plan for creation, a plan to build his kingdom of peace, love and justice. It holds that God has a special plan for every single one of us, whoever we are. Our part in this plan isn't just limited to things 'spiritual', or times when we do "religious things." It involves every aspect of our lives, from the things we pray about, to how we live as a responsible global citizen.

PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION

The curriculum experience in Religious Education is engaging, well matched and sequential' bringing learning alive and producing high quality outcomes that pupils treasure. We aim to provide stimulating teaching and learning experiences that lead children to reflect on their growing faith and religious literacy.

RE lead, Mr Stenton is responsible for the management and co-ordination of Religious Education. In KS1 and the FS 2 hours are spent teaching curriculum RE.

In KS2 2.5 hours are spent teaching curriculum RE.

Long term and medium term planning is set out within the Come and See Framework.

Short term planning is the responsibility of each class teacher. Each teacher will ensure their planning suitable for all learners in their class. This may require adaptation to ensure that all learners are able to participate effectively.

Toolkits will be made that reflect the appropriate learning focus(es), skills area,

driver words and levels of attainment. Salford's updated Age Related Expectations are to be implemented in Spring term 2020 to reflect recent updates.

Monitoring will be a continual process throughout the academic year.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

The progress and attainment of all pupils, especially the most vulnerable, is carefully watched so that achievement can be challenged, supported and celebrated.

Each year group use 'Big Books' to document the learning journey of each topic. This supports the recording of discussions, group work and gives an overview of the range of methods used to explore a topic.

In KS1 and KS2 a toolkit is created for each lesson which reflects the appropriate learning focus(es), driver words, skills area and levels of attainment. After discussion with teachers, pupils will self-assess against the toolkit. Teachers will also assess against the toolkit. Furthermore, teachers routinely use informal methods of assessment as this ensures that planning and teaching is reflective, thus allowing children to achieve their full potential. This may take place through displays, discussions, marking and observation.

RE assessment for Foundation stage takes place within the Learning areas of Communication, Language and Literacy, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Creative Development using the Foundation Stage profile.

Children's progress informs future planning.

At the end of the academic year, Salford's assessment grids are used which assess children as 'working towards' 'working at' or 'working above' age related expectations. This information will be passed up to the next class teacher so that they can continue to assess each pupil against the relevant attainment target.

Attainment targets are not used in order to assess spirituality or faith practise.

Teachers are responsible for their own record keeping and assessment. We assess children's work in Religious Education by making formal and informal judgements; observing them during lessons. We assess them orally, and through their own writing and drawings. Teachers attempt to illicit a personal response from children, so that knowledge of God will help them to understand

themselves and the consequences of their actions. We mark a piece of work once it has been completed and we comment as necessary.

Achievement can be analysed during AP3 to establish that pupils are progressing and reaching the standard in religious education that they are reaching in other core subjects. Pupil attainment and the tracking of attainment levels is the responsibility of the RE lead.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

LITERACY

Religious Education contributes significantly to the teaching of Literacy in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children use a variety of writing genres when recording their Religious Education work.

I.C.T. (Information, Communication, Technology) We use ICT where appropriate in Religious Education.

P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social and Health Education)

Through our Religious Education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. Links are made with aims set out in our PSHE policy.

This links closely with British Values; we promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be positive members of our pluralistic society.

S.E.N.D (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

The Governing Body and the staff of St. Thomas' School firmly believe in the value of each individual as a child of God. The school therefore, welcomes pupils with

Special Educational Needs. In our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability. The teaching of RE is a vital part of our School Curriculum Policy, which states that we provide a broad and balanced education for all our

children. When teaching RE, we ensure that we provide learning opportunities matched to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and the gifted. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s).

MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our belief in the value of each individual encompasses a mutual respect for differences. Our Admissions Policy states that we are a Catholic school. Regular monitoring of the Admission's policy takes place. Both Multi-cultural Education and Equal Opportunities permeate the whole education process and can be found in all aspects of school life. Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Relevant courses, notably those provided by Salford Diocese, will be advertised and made available to staff members by the RE lead to support continuous professional development. It is the role of the RE lead to provide in-service opportunities.

All members of staff are offered support by the R E lead in planning, teaching, assessing and evaluating. They will be offered the courses available for new teachers in Catholic Schools. The whole staff is involved in upholding the Catholic Ethos of the school and the R E policy reviewed every two years.

COMMUNICATION

The R E Lead is always available for advice and discussion and will regularly update staff in regards to subject requirements via email. Termly newsletters include curriculum content for the coming term. These are also be made available for all staff and can be found on the school website.