

St. Francesca Cabrini Primary School

Religious Education Policy



'Education of the Heart'

Respect-Love-Trust-Prayer-Excellence



St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

At the heart of Catholic education is the person of Jesus Christ. St Francesca Cabrini school provides an educational framework within which our children can grow in their relationship with Christ in a way that takes account of their individual human development. We profess Christ as saviour of the world with confidence and clarity. In a spirit of openness and dialogue, we also respect the rights of all members of the school community to hold their own beliefs. We encourage all to engage as fully as possible with every aspect of school life, including curriculum Religious Education, worship and liturgy.

Within the curriculum, classroom Religious Education's main purpose is to engage pupils in a systematic study of the mystery of Christ which we believe holds the fullness of the truth that God has revealed. In addition, a sound formation in the Catholic faith will recognise the real, though as yet imperfect, communion that exists between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations. It will also provide the basis for an openness to the 'seeds of the Word' that are to be found in other religions (cf Redemptionis Missio 56, Nostra Aetate 2).

The aims of Religious Education

1. To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
3. To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
4. To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
5. To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
6. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
8. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

“We as Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject amongst 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 1988).

Mission Statement

The Governors and Staff at St Francesca Cabrini School are committed to:

- Providing a caring and spiritually enriching Catholic environment in which all staff, pupils, parents and governors work together to develop their full potential – spiritually, morally, academically and socially;
- Passing on the Catholic faith to our pupils through prayer, example, practice and teaching;
- Ensuring that all relationships within the school are based on mutual respect and trust;
- Providing a curriculum which promotes academic excellence within every child in all areas of the curriculum;
- Ensuring that our work in the life of the school reflects the Gospel values;
- Developing positive working relationships between parents, staff, priests and governors;
- Placing spiritual development, moral education and pastoral care in equal importance with academic progress and achievement.

Our mission statement outlines the distinctive nature of our school as a Cabrinian Catholic school. This school is in the Trusteeship of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As a catholic school we at St Francesca Cabrini aim to provide an environment in which all our pupils develop spiritually, morally, academically and socially. We aim to accompany children on their individual faith journeys and as our Mission Statement states we hope to do this by making prayer, worship and liturgy real educational experiences. A Catholic School has at its heart the Religious Education of its children and Christ is the foundation. Our Religious Education is not confined to our R.E. lessons but is implicit in the day to day life of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School. We are aware that our children come from different backgrounds and we take account of this in our Religious Education by recognising the developmental stage of each child’s journey in faith. This is underpinned by St Francesca Cabrini’s teachings on education, *“each child is a unique child, we must endeavour to educate the heart of each and everyone of them”*. We at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary school aim to do this by ‘Educating the Heart’ of the children in our care in an atmosphere of respect, love and trust with a dedication to prayer and excellence.

In the light of our school Mission Statement in teaching R.E. we aim to:

- Develop pupils' love and knowledge of God through Scriptures and by example.
- Give pupils meaning to their lives by giving each child a value of self as a unique being with dignity created and loved by God.
- Strive to make the Gospel a reality within the lives of the whole school community.
- Ensure pupils have a secure knowledge of their faith.
- Strive for high standards in every aspect of school life.
- Increase the children's awareness of God, the world He created and their place within it.
- Understand that each child must reach their full potential in all areas of school life.
- Educate the 'whole' child as a unique being, developing spirituality and giving them the skills to contribute to a rich and culturally diverse society where everyone feels they can contribute and are valued.

“Go then to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptise them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28: 19-20.)

Aims and Objectives

- ❖ To help children develop a close and personal relationship with God.
- ❖ To help children recognise the spiritual and religious dimensions of life.
- ❖ To lead children to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith.
- ❖ To challenge the children to examine their beliefs and deepen their personal understanding of the Catholic Faith.
- ❖ To challenge the children to develop caring, forgiving and understanding relationship with others.
- ❖ To develop those skills that enable children to become open, reflective and enquiring.
- ❖ To develop attitudes that will promote the child's capacity to wonder with awe and reverence.
- ❖ To co-ordinate R.E. with the Catechesis offered in the parish and family.
- ❖ To encourage children to recognise and respect the Religious traditions of others.
- ❖ To celebrate significant moments in the Religious lives of children including the sacraments.

By fulfilling these aims we endeavour to comply with the following statement from the “Religious Education Curriculum Directory 3-19”.

“The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and engaged 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”.

Curriculum Planning

- The teaching of Religious Education is accorded the status of a core subject at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School and 10% of curriculum time is given to its teaching.

‘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. However it should not be simply regarded as one subject among many, but rather it should engage in interdisciplinary dialogue Religious Education in schools underpins, activates, develops and completes the educational and catechetical activity of the whole school.

Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012

- Religious Education is taught in themes through the school following the study programme “Come and See” but the Religious Education Curriculum Directory provides the foundation for this programme.
- Children are taught in class groups and are involved in activities including speaking and listening, reading and writing, drawing, ICT activities, drama and role play, singing, making and receiving visits.
- Children will be taught in accordance with expectations in all subjects – pupils with Special Educational Needs will be taught in a way that meets their individual needs. Work will be planned effectively to be engaging and accessible so that all pupils may progress appropriately.
- Collective worship through Masses held in the School Chapel for Feast Days, celebrations and other times in the liturgical calendar.
- The R.E. subject leader is responsible for the monitoring, assessments, record keeping and resourcing of the subject across the school.
- The Headteacher works closely with the R.E. Subject leader to ensure the Catholic identity of the school is secure.

Programmes of Study

The RE Curriculum is delivered primarily through the study programme “Come and See” and is underpinned by the Curriculum Directory.

Central to the programme are three basic human questions and the three Christian beliefs that are the Church’s response in faith.

Where do I come from? Life – Creation
Who am I? Dignity – Incarnation
Why am I here? Purpose – Redemption

In the study programme “Come and See”, these big questions are considered in the light of the Scriptures and traditions of the Church, as expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church underpinned by the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. “Come and See” is developed through three themes based on the documents of the Second Vatican Council, which are gradually explored each time in greater depths. They are **Church, Sacrament and Christian Living**.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses ‘the human search for meaning, God’s initiative in Revelation who comes to meet us and our response of faith. This pattern guides the structure of the programme and informs the process of each topic, opened up through; **Explore, Reveal and Respond**.

Explore

The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives and issues concerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of significance and value of the experimental events of everyday life. **Explore** will take **one week** of Religious Education time to complete.

Reveal

Reveal is the heart of the process. The teacher and the children together 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. It will involve learning about Scriptures, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians.

Reveal will take **two weeks** of Religious Education time to complete.

Respond

Remember is the first part of this section, the children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt.

Rejoice is the second part of the section, there will be the opportunity to plan and take part in celebration.

Renew the teacher helps each child to make an individual response, to hold on to and make their own and also what they have understood of the topic.

Respond will take **one week** of Religious Education time to complete.

As part of “Come and See” two comparative religions are taught each year. Judaism is compulsory and the second chosen religion is Islam.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The assessment of R.E. must include some form of recording and reporting that meets the needs of individual children as well as informing teachers of progress and attainment of pupils. Methods of assessment are linked to the Broad Areas of Attainment document. The assessment of R.E. emphasises positive achievement and provides opportunities for children to develop their abilities and to apply and develop their skills. It enables teachers to evaluate the topics covered in “Come and See” as well as their teachings methods in light of pupil performance. Children have their books and R.E. work marked regularly with appropriate comments and guidance given (in line with the schools marking policy). Standards of presentation are in line with the schools presentation policy and children should be encouraged to apply the basic principles of preparing and producing standards of high quality work.

- The purpose of assessment, recording and reporting is to ensure effective learning, celebrate growth and achievement and enable further progress and development.
- Assessment, recording and reporting are related to overall Religious Education aims and objectives, and the specific learning intentions of themes and topics.
- Formal assessment takes place in one theme each term and informs a record of attainment level for each child kept by each class teacher. (Bishop’s Conference Levels of Attainment in Religious Education).
- Individuals and groups are tracked and assessed half termly in line with other core subjects.
- A formal reporting to parents takes place at the end of year term. R.E. is a core subject and takes prominence as the first item above English and Mathematics.
- The R.E. subject leader is responsible for the monitoring and collating of progress data, feeding back to the leadership team.

(see appendix: Assessment, Recording and reporting Policy)

Staffing and Responsibility

The Leadership Team and staff are accountable to the Governors for the teaching of R.E. The Headteacher is required to provide an R.E. update to governors at each full governing body meeting.

Each class teacher:

- Is responsible for planning R.E. within their class.
- Preparing plans and delivers R.E. to class groups in union with year group partner teacher.
- Monitoring, assessing and tracking each child’s attainment and progress in Religious Education.
- Preparing their class for the Liturgical Feasts of the Church.

- Developing the prayer and sacramental life of the pupils.
- Preparing display areas and focal points in their classroom and on occasion around the school to encourage prayer and reflection as well as celebrate pupils achievement.

The Role of the Religious Education Subject leader is to:

- Develop a curriculum map with staff for the delivery of R.E. lessons.
- To ensure the “Come and See” programme of study is being delivered effectively.
- To ensure staff study and link their teaching to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Observe and monitor lessons, assessment and R.E. books and focal areas around the school and draw up a development plan based on judgement and findings in order to improve attainment and progress.
- Lead staff meetings with an R.E. focus.
- Liaise with governors.
- Attend diocesan R.E. subject leader meetings.
- Organise and distribute planning and assessment documents to colleagues.
- Provide guidance to colleagues as and when requested.
- Have an overview of R.E. in the school.
- Assist in the planning of Mission Development Days.
- Be responsible for R.E. resources and the purchase of new materials within the confines of the R.E budget.
- Draft Religious Education Policies in consultation with staff and Governors.
- Liaise with the parish priest to arrange school Masses, classroom celebrations, Reconciliation and any special Feast Day celebrations.
- Attend and give presentations at Parent Information Evenings

Resources

- Each member of staff has a hard copy of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory as well as a copy of “Come and See” relevant to their year group and access to the “Come and See” website.
- Resources for the effective delivery of R.E. are stored in the relevant classrooms.
- Further resources, artefacts and posters are kept in the Sacristy.
- The R.E. coordinator is responsible for resourcing the subject, budgets and submitting a subject ‘development plan’ that fits in to the whole school development schedule.

Collective Worship

“For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them” Matthew 18:20

Assemblies are an important part of school life. They provide an opportunity for staff and pupils to join together in prayer, thanksgiving and celebration. They also provide

opportunities for moments of silence and stillness in order that children can gather their thoughts and reflect upon them. There are assemblies every morning. The assemblies are split into key stages and on Friday there is a whole school assembly that has been prepared and led by a class. Parents are encouraged to come and support their children at these assemblies. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher along with team leaders are responsible for the planning and leading of morning assemblies. The assemblies follow themes taken from the “Come and see” programme of study, the Liturgical cycle and The Gospels. Time is given to present children with awards for their achievements and talents. It is important that these times are shared by the whole school.
(See appendix: Collective Worship Policy)

Masses and Services of Celebration

We gather together as a whole school every Friday to celebrate a class led assembly. Masses are attended by the junior classes with the infants having a ‘special’ assembly covering the same theme, feast celebration or Gospel value. There are school masses throughout the year and particular liturgical times of importance such as, feast days, Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, Pentecost, May service and for the Year 6 Leavers. These are split on occasion by year group, key stage, infant or junior classes.

Children are involved in the preparation of the readings, hymns, offertory procession and bidding prayers. Classes are encouraged to produce display work for masses in order that the children sense that they are bringing something of themselves to the mass. We aim to provide the children with both sacramental and non-sacramental liturgies throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to attend masses and are welcome at whole school, class assemblies and services.

Prayer

At St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School we try to create and maintain an environment where prayer is central and underpins school life. We believe that children should be given the opportunity to respond in prayer to joy, disappointment, wonder, anger and elation in the world around them. Prayers are said daily in class and during assemblies.

The “Come and See” programme provides ideas for prayer in a developmental way for children at different stages. ‘Explore’ strives to lead children to a deeper understanding and a clearer vision, to experience the richer meaning of prayer and the traditional words. ‘Reveal’ and ‘Respond’ create opportunities for prayer and celebration in each topic. Children can use a prayer as a way of remembering a topic. Prayer may take many forms such as, silence, song, writing, art work and dance. We encourage parents to spend time praying with their children on a daily basis. Children are encouraged to write their own prayers for masses and special services and assemblies. They are also encouraged to pray privately and individually. Collective prayers are held in the chapel during Lent – Stations of the Cross and in October – The Holy Rosary, this allows staff and children time to come together and to reflect and experience quiet and stillness together.
(See appendix: Spiritual Development Policy)

Hymns

All year groups attend weekly hymn practices where hymns are learnt and sung in preparation for various services over the liturgical year. The Leadership team, R.E. coordinator, music co-ordinator and team leaders are responsible for selecting hymns for special feast day masses and other liturgical celebrations. Teachers are responsible for selecting hymns and songs for their class assemblies and masses. They are chosen from a variety of books including 'Rejoice', 'Celebration' and 'Songs of the Spirit'. The 'Rejoice' songs and hymns are available on C.D. for teachers to use in class.

Personal, Social and Moral Education

The mutual care and respect for all, supports and underpins all that we do at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School, an understanding of others is an important and positive commitment of our collective faith. Children from the nursery through to Year 6 are encouraged to speak and act towards one another with politeness, courtesy, sympathy and understanding. Teachers encourage children to be reflective of their behaviour when necessary. We want to ensure that children will develop good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. As children grow older they should learn that they are responsible for their own actions and with 'rights' come 'responsibilities' they should learn gradually to become increasingly self-disciplined. Children are encouraged to make sensible and responsible choices in all areas of school life, whether at work or play. Moral guidance is given throughout the day by teaching and non teaching staff helping children to be cooperative and reflective.

Key Stage 2 children and staff each belong to one of four houses: St Joseph's, St Teresa's, St Bernadette's and St Francis'. Each house is overseen by two teachers. Houses elect two house captains at the beginning of the school year to represent their houses and assist the teachers in guiding their members. They are also responsible for the collection of house points and the delivery of inter-house competitions/games and any other house initiatives. House Captains also sit on the 'School Council' alongside class representatives. House meetings provide children with explicit moral education lessons. Each house has two books, 'Choices' and 'Feelings' as well as using relevant topics from the 'Seal' programme used in PSHE lessons. The stories allow children to examine a variety of moral dilemmas and to discuss these as a group. Children are required to give reasons for their decisions and are asked to predict outcomes.

(See appendix: Moral Development Policy)

The Governing Body of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School are considering The Diocesan Policy for Sex Education but at present there is no Sex Education given in this school. This will be reviewed in January 2015.

Religious Education in the Wider Context

- As expressed in our Mission Statement, spiritual values are implicit in all we teach and permeate through the whole curriculum.
- The school is whole heartedly supported by The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The school's Leadership Team attends 'Cabrinian' education and mission conventions when applicable.
- Teaching and support staff attend regular INSET and relevant meetings in line with the priorities in the School Improvement Plan. Annual Mission Development Days are organised off site which all governors, sisters, parish priests and staff working at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School attend.
- The parish priest of St Thomas the Apostle is closely associated with the school and sits on the governing body.
- Mass is celebrated in our school chapel on special feast days and Holy Days of Obligation to which parents are always invited and are warmly welcomed.
- The local parish priests also celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with our children.

Links with the Wider Community

The school ethos is based on 'service to others', which has been adopted from the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as part of a wider 'Cabrinian' community in which each member has a role to play. This is a value that is promoted throughout the school giving it a distinctive 'Cabrinian' ethos with 'Education of the Heart' being at the centre of school and community life.

Children learn about each others cultures, countries, communities and that we are all different, but this difference adds a rich diversity to our community and society at large.

Children also learn about the 'mission' of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mother Cabrini's personal journey, her life and mission. The children also learn about and consider the life of a 'missionary' in today's context. Children explore, discuss and fundraise for the sisters 'Ethiopian Mission'. As a school we raise funds annually for the Ethiopian School as well as other local and national charities.

Each term the school holds a Childrens' 'Mission Day' and we focus on a different mission or charity raising funds, reflecting, praying and celebrating together, this is an opportunity for the children to consider how they can be 'a little missionary'.

Examples of links with the local and wider community include:

- Local speakers in assembly and fund raising ventures include: CAFOD, The Sisters Ethiopian Mission, The Manna Society and St Christopher's Hospice and an annual Poppy Appeal.
- School Council initiatives also fund raise for local and national charities.
- Work experience opportunities for local secondary school pupils, parents enrolled in higher education that may need school based placements.
- Involvement in School Sport Partnerships.

- The ‘Word’ on Wednesday is distributed and features in the school’s weekly newsletter.
- Parish news and notices are also posted in the school’s weekly newsletter.
- The school choir sings at local parish events, St Thomas the Apostle Christmas Fair, International Mass and celebrations.

Policy Monitoring and Review

The policy is monitored by the Headteacher and R.E. coordinator. It is evaluated and reviewed by the whole staff and governors on a three year cycle.

Policy written by: Mrs M. Rutherwood

Ratified by the Governing Body March 2020

Date of next review 2023