

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School

Religious Education

Agreed By Staff: Autumn 2017
Approved By Governors: Autumn 2017
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Signed by Chair of Governors M Rowlands Date 21.11.17

Rationale

"The outcome of excellent 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."

Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools 2012

"Catholic schools are guided in all they do by an important and coherent vision of education. This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour, centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who is our Way, Truth and Life".

"Catholic schools.... will develop a range of attitudes and activities that promote and support the dignity and worth of everyone. The commitment of the Catholic Church to interfaith dialogue and to working with other Christians provides a further basis for young peoples' contribution to peaceful social cohesion".

(Joint Pastoral Letter on Catholic Education:, Bishops' Conference September 2007)

Religious Education at St Bede's is not regarded as one subject among many, but is considered to be the very foundation of our children's education and the core subject in our school. *"Come and See* is an invitation to exploration and a promise of life for everyone. The invitation is open to all."

According to the National Curriculum, 'Religious Education' is a statutory requirement for all pupils. Parents are informed in the School Prospectus that they have the right to withdraw their children from RE and Collective Acts of Worship.

Aims

- To study the mystery of God, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic faith
- To develop an understanding of the relationship between faith and life
- To encourage investigation and reflection and develop appropriate skills and attitudes which will result in a full response to God's call in everyday life
- To deepen and enrich the children's understanding and living of their faith

The Religious Education programme aims to take into account the religious and educational needs of the children

- Those from supportive Catholic homes
- Those for whom the School may be their first and perhaps only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions
- Those from other Faith backgrounds

Objectives

In order to achieve our aims we shall ensure that the teaching of Religious Education in St Bede's will:-

- Provide opportunities for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills across the curriculum to deepen their understanding of the religious truths and think creatively.
- Emphasise the importance of every individual
- Promote the Catholic ethos by offering the children a sense of worth through their own experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Encourage the children to express their own opinions, leading them to a deeper knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life.
- Explore the questions "Where do I come from?" "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" in The light of the Catholic Faith tradition;
- Help the children understand that Christ is the revelation of God who loves us;
- Help the children realise that life and faith belong together;
- Lead the children in prayer and provide opportunities for celebration and reflection;
- Present a systematic presentation of the Christian event, message and way of life in ways appropriate to the age and stage of the development of the child;
- Consider the child's own experience helping each individual to act in response to Explore, Reveal and Respond;

Organisation of Religious Education

There is an RE co-ordinator Mrs Towell who:-

Leads the staff by example and good classroom practice;

Co-ordinates the development of the School's RE;

Attends relevant in-service courses which will help in the teaching of RE;

Is available to support other members of staff in their delivery of the RE syllabus;

Provides information and support to members of staff unfamiliar with the Catholic tradition.

The Religious Education Programme 'Come and See'

To fulfil our aims and objectives, we deliver the 'Come and See' Programme. This provides meaningful and appropriate religious experiences for all children, taking account of different needs, abilities and learning styles. Central to this programme is the exploration of the religious dimensions of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition.

Links are made with pupils' own experiences and with universal experience. Links are also made with the experience of other religions.

For all children the programme raises questions and provides material for reflecting on their own experience. It will help them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition and where appropriate, of other faith traditions.

The programme is arranged in themes and topics. The whole School explores each religious theme through different topics aimed at each year group on an annual basis as set out in Come and See. Three topics are covered every term and each topic lasts approximately 4 weeks.

- Two hours 10 minutes (10% of curriculum time) are set aside for the teaching of RE.
- For each level there are clear foci, learning objectives and learning outcomes allowing pupils to work according to ability.
- The process for delivering 'Come and See' has three elements that enable the development of skills and the fostering of attitudes.

In the three-fold process the teacher helps the children to:-

Search - Explore:

Look at and become aware of an aspect of life experience. The introduction to the topic provides the opportunity to explore the children's life experiences and the questions it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon.

Revelation-Reveal:

The heart of the programme where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living. Links are made with Christian understanding of the life experience.

Response-Respond: (Remember, Rejoice, Renew)

In this part of the process the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life.

Other Religions

“Within our schools we are seeking to educate all pupils of whatever religion to be able to live a way of life that integrates their beliefs with all aspects of what it means to be human. As part of this, they must learn to live alongside others who are different and hold alternative views including religious views.”

(Meeting God in Friend and Stranger, Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2010)

Two weeks are devoted to the teaching of Other Faiths. The pupils at St Bede's will be introduced to the teaching, beliefs and practices of Judaism and Islam.

Autumn Term Judaism 1 week. All year groups.

Summer Term Islam 1 week. All year groups.

Planning

Staff planning covers the Come and See programme. They plan as Year Groups to ensure progression and continuity. Planning is based on guidance provided by the CED following an annual cycle as set out in Come and See.

Planning includes:

- Activities clearly linked to objectives set in the Come and See programme
Learning Foci/Intentions, enabling identified Learning Outcomes
- Range of activities including ICT
- Differentiated activities providing support/challenge as appropriate.
- Reference to support provided/independent work
- Home/school/parish links
- Creative use of resources
- Reference to key words/driver words
- Reference to appropriate attainment target and level
- Opportunities for assessment
- Cross curricular links

Teaching and Learning

Teachers have high expectations of the children in their engagement and response to their learning. A variety of teaching and learning strategies are employed to support progress and meet the individual needs of all pupils. Questioning and activities presented are appropriately differentiated and challenging. Activities are creative and engaging and delivered through high quality resources. All teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Cross-curricular links are identified and enriching. The children learn in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect and are fully affirmed. Children are enabled to be confident, independent, engaged, motivated learners achieving their potential.

Expectations

In each topic in Come and See, teachers are provided with a “level summary” of what children are expected to know, understand and be able to do relating to. These expectations provide support for differentiation, assessment, recording and reporting.

Assessment

Assessment in ‘Come and See’ is related to the concepts and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of themes and learning outcomes for each topic. Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do. It does not assess faith or practice of faith. In accordance with the Catholic Schools belief in upholding the dignity and value of each individual, any method used to assess the performance of pupils must respect the individual’s worth. A variety of strategies are used including oral or written assessment, informed observation and classroom discussion. Teachers evaluate the children’s learning and their capabilities on a daily basis, by listening to what the children have to say and from their work. Evidence of this learning is kept in the children’s RE books and in teachers’ RE log books. Significant progress and important achievements are highlighted on the topic planning sheets and in ongoing assessment books.

Formal Assessment

Each child is assessed formally each term by the class teacher, as recommended by the Archdiocese. Formal assessment takes place during RESPOND in Remember. The CED informs the school which topic to assess and which activity to use as an assessment task which is included in the Come and See programme.

The Record of Attainment is completed for each child after each formal assessment or at end of each term, as appropriate. Information gathered from discussions, observations, class work and assessments included in the RE Log Book are used to find a “best fit” level for the child. The Record of Attainment goes with the child’s other records to their next year group/school to celebrate where the child is at in their learning and to enable further progress from the appropriate starting point.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and in RE according to an agreed timetable by:-

Monitoring planning

Observing lessons

Scrutiny of children’s work

Analysis of all assessment records

Discussion with pupils

Consideration of displays

Evaluating topics on completion (this takes place at staff meetings)

Moderation

- Staff moderation meetings are held after each assessed topic to agree levels and context sheets are completed.

- Each teacher provides three samples of work from each topic (one each from HA, AA, LA).

When moderation is complete the samples of work are kept in a school portfolio.

Reporting

Reporting is an integral part of the Come and See programme. In St Bede's there are 4 dimensions to reporting Religious Education. Reporting:

- Provides feedback to pupils
- Informs teacher colleagues of the achievement of individual pupils
- Informs parents of the progress and achievement of their children
- Informs parents and governors of the content and quality of Religious Education and the achievement of the pupils

A written report is given to parents each year. Care is taken to ensure a positive comment about the child's achievement and progress throughout the year. Verbal reports are also given on Open Occasions.

Special Educational Needs

The teaching of RE is fully inclusive. Differentiation is planned for by activity and outcome and resources are deployed as appropriate to ensure inclusion and the achievement of each individual's potential.

Home/School Partnership

Children's religious knowledge and understanding and reflection on their own experience in the Come and See programme is enhanced through home/school/parish links

Equal Opportunities

All children have access to all parts of the RE Curriculum in line with the Schools Equal Opportunities Policy.

Continuity and Progression

Continuity and progression is enabled through:

- The structure of the content of the Come and See programme including the thematic approach
- The cohesive planning, delivery, assessment and moderation of Come and See within and across year groups

Appendix 1

Opportunities For Spiritual Development

We aim to promote the Spiritual Development of our children by providing them with the opportunity to: -

- **acquire insights into their personal existence**
- **make sense of their life experience**
- **develop a sense of wonder, awe, reverence, imagination**
- **develop the human capacity to go beyond physical, tangible reality**
- **develop a sense of the presence of God in their lives**
- **reflect on and respond to this presence**
- **become familiar with the life, words and actions of Jesus.**
- **become familiar with the life, words and actions of the saints and significant Christians**
- **hear of how people of other faiths respond to the spiritual dimension of life**
- **understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations**

We achieve these by:

- **revealing gospel values which underpins everything that we believe to be important**
- **fostering quality relationships within our school**
- **reflecting on and responding to God in their lives**
- **recognising and valuing the worth of each individual**
- **acquiring personal beliefs, especially about religion, through the ‘Come and See programme**
- **enabling the children to express thoughts and feelings, for example, through art, music, dance and drama**
- **experiencing positive and relaxed silence**
- **promoting sensitivity**
- **questioning at deeper levels**
- **allowing children to grapple with something beyond their experience and grasp**
- **reflecting upon complex questions where there are no easy answers**
- **building confidence in the children’s ability to persevere with difficult questions/tasks/problems**

Appendix II

Opportunities For Moral Development

We aim to promote the Moral Development of our children by providing them with: -

- **a secure community in which the Gospel spirit of freedom, justice and love permeates every aspect of its life and work**
- **opportunities to develop a personal sense of morality in relation to self, others, local, national and world issues**
- **opportunities to decide what they hold as right and wrong, why they do so, and how they should act**
- **opportunities to consider questions of intention, motives and attitudes**

We achieve these by:

- **discussing the moral teaching of the Catholic Church in language and levels appropriate to the children's age and stage of development**
- **helping children to understand complex and human relationships, conflict, tension, love, hate, justice, fairness, bullying, support**
- **discussing dilemmas, sharing scarce resources, recycling, taking care of the environment**
- **discussing supporting/serving others and commitment to the common good e.g helping in practical ways, for example, Operation Christmas Child, CAFOD, FAIRTRADE**
- **considering decisions, choices, intentions and attitudes**
- **offering stories or personal histories which challenge accepted values or the status quo**

Appendix III

Opportunities for Social Development

We aim to promote the Social Development of our children by providing them with opportunities to recognise the purpose and value of being:-

Independent

Confident

Empathic

Respectful

Truthful

Compassionate

Responsible

Thoughtful

Amiable

Co- operative

Perseverance

We achieve this by:

- **delivering PSHCE across the curriculum including**
 - ~the SEALS programme which includes home/school links
 - ~health Education, which incorporates personal hygiene, healthy life styles, physical well-being, health issues
 - ~ relationships and sex education
 - ~valuing others viewpoints
- **expecting children to follow the behaviour policy, understanding rules and consequences**
- **providing contexts in which the children can work individually and as a member of a group/team/class/school**
- **opportunities to develop good communication skills**
- **expecting the children to work hard and do their best**

Appendix IV

Opportunities For Cultural Development

We aim to promote the Cultural Development of our children by providing them with opportunities to: -

- **understand and respect their own culture and British Values**
- **understand and respect other cultures and traditions**

We achieve this by:

- **providing opportunities across the curriculum to appreciate and value their own and other cultures including music, art, dance and drama**
- **providing a range of literature appropriate to age and stage of development**
- **using ICT to support research, knowledge and understanding**
- **displaying range of images**
- **visiting museums, art galleries, theatres, concerts, places of worship and a variety of places of interest with the school**
- **inviting visitors into the school from a range of cultures**
- **developing links with schools from other countries**