

# *St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School*

## *Religious Education Policy*



### ***Our Mission is ...***

*To ensure a loving and faithful learning community in which our children can become the person God created them to be. A community where we celebrate the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual. Where we grow and learn together with joy, in the love of Jesus. In this love, we strive to be courageous stewards of creation.*

# **St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School**

## **Religious Education Policy**

### **Introduction**

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School our Religious Education Policy encompasses our mission statement and our School Aims.

We believe that the whole of the educational provision in a Catholic Primary School is rooted in a religious understanding of life based on the Gospel. Worship and Religious Education in the classroom constitute the specific, but not exclusive, Religious Education provision. For the purposes of this document, Religious Education is considered as the professional area of the curriculum flowing to and from the life and values that the school seeks to proclaim and celebrate. As a Catholic school we offer Religious Education as an important contribution to the faith development of pupils. It may also be received, in our classrooms, by some pupils, as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith, or for some as evangelisation, this being the first time they have been presented with, personally, with the truths of living faith.

### **Rationale**

*Religious Education is the formation of religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life'. (Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools. p. 10).*

At St Bernadette's School we believe that Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum as we strive to proclaim and live the Gospel Values. We see our role as supporting parents in leading their children to a greater understanding of who God is and to celebrating, with deeper faith and more understanding, the liturgy of the Church. We believe that Religious Education provides children with opportunities to recognise, affirm and celebrate the gifts and talents they and others have been given and to develop the skills which will enable them to think and question more deeply and lead, ultimately to a greater understanding and appreciation of their faith.

In proclaiming the Gospel message we endeavour to share the Gospel spirit of love in all that we do and say by providing a warm, family atmosphere reflecting the fact that all children need to feel respected, trusted and loved. We believe that Religious Education is about the 'meaning' and the need to discover answers about human existence. Love and security are the most basic human / religious needs. We teach that God is love and faithfulness, but understanding of this concept can only grow from our own experiences of kindness and love. Therefore every effort is made to create, in our school and in our classrooms, a community where the children know they are loved and

feel confident and secure. Through our teaching of Religious Education we endeavour to enrich the lives of the individuals in our school.

### **Aims for the Teaching of Religious Education**

Our subject specific aims for the teaching of Religious Education, complementing our general curricular aims, are to enable children to:

- gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church and the ways in which it seeks to express the significance of human life while respecting the rights of people to hold beliefs which are different from their own.
- develop the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to think spiritually, ethically and theologically in their everyday lives.
- examine their own feelings views and responses in the light of their knowledge and understanding.
- Be helped towards an awareness of who they are – a unique person endowed with the gifts of the spirit.

Towards the realisation of these aims we have regard to the guidance provided by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors.

### **Curriculum Organisation**

The content of the Religious Education curriculum is provided in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (RECD).

At St Bernadette's School we are in the process of writing our own, bespoke curriculum which will ensure complete coverage of the programmes of study contained within the new RE Curriculum Directory.

As far as possible RE matches the abilities, attainments, interests and experiences of the children and helps them to develop their knowledge and understanding in a structured way. As well as understanding scripture based on knowledge it develops concepts, skills and attitudes with the children that will enable them to question, reason, explain and debate.

### **The structural elements of the programme of study - Adapted from the new RECD '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.

Knowledge lenses set out the object of study for pupils; they indicate what should be known by the end of each age-phase. They are referred to as lenses, since they are the things we are looking at and they divide the content of the programme of study into four sub sections for the study of Catholicism and two additional lenses for the study of religions and worldviews, which together comprise the six knowledge lenses of:

- hear
- believe
- Celebrate
- live

(the study of the Catholic religion)

- dialogue
- encounter

(the study of other religions and worldviews)

## **Assessment**

Ways of knowing set out the skills that pupils should be developing as they progress through their curriculum journey. Whenever we know something, we always know it in more than one way: we remember it, we critically assimilate it, and we put it into practice. All three are ways of coming to know the things that are the object of our study. The ways of knowing are an evolution of the Age-related Standards in Religious Education, which were themselves an evolution of the Levels of Attainment in Religious Education. The three ways of knowing are:

- Understand
- Discern
- Respond

Expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing. Each age-phase will have a prescribed set of outcomes that will indicate what pupils are expected to know, remember, and be able to do, using the language of the ways of knowing and applying it to the discrete knowledge within each lens.

## **Content**

Curriculum branches are the way this programme of study presents its model curriculum. The model curriculum presents the expected outcomes in six curriculum branches that correspond to the six half-terms of a school year. The model curriculum is rooted in the narrative of salvation history and leads pupils on a journey in each year of schooling that gives a sequence to the learning. As they revisit each branch in each year of school they come to a deeper understanding of its significance for Catholic belief and practice, which allows them to make links between the four knowledge lenses within the context of the narrative of salvation history. The six curriculum branches are:

- Creation and covenant
- Prophecy and promise
- Galilee to Jerusalem,
- Desert to garden
- To the ends of the Earth
- Dialogue and encounter

***Teaching Styles:***

As in other curricular areas the range of teaching styles may vary and are used as appropriate. These may include whole class teaching, co-operative group work, or individual tasks. There is no specialist teaching in RE. Each class teacher is responsible for the planning, teaching and assessment of RE in their own class.

***Resources:***

Classroom resources are the responsibility of the classroom teacher. As in other curricular areas class teachers often use their own resources dependent upon the needs of the specific topic and their own particular style of teaching. The school has a class set of bibles which are kept centrally for use of Key Stage 2 classes and each of the key stage 1 classes has its own picture bible.

CDs and posters are also kept centrally for use when required.

A resource that is much appreciated and valued is the time and energy of the Priest- in-Charge and Parish Deacon as well as the parishioners themselves who support and assist the school. The church is also visited regularly by all classes as part of the teaching of Religious Education as well as for Mass and other services throughout the year.

***Time:***

As a Catholic School, in accordance with the Bishops' requirement we dedicate 10% of our curriculum time to the discrete teaching of Religious Education. Collective worship and hymn practise is timetabled separately. (See class timetables and Collective Worship Policy Statement).

**Planning**

Medium term planning will be written into our new bespoke curriculum, but it remains the responsibility of each teacher and may be adapted as necessary. Assessment for learning is ongoing and is incorporated into our planning.

As in other curricular areas, Short- Term planning is also the responsibility of each class teacher who will:

- allocate time for each learning outcome to be achieved
- select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children
- indicate the focus and method of assessment.

However, short-term plans may be informal and some of the above information may be included in the more formal Medium Term Plans.

### **Adaptive Teaching**

As with all other areas of the curriculum, teachers at St Bernadette's apply the Universal Design for Learning guidelines when planning lessons to improve outcomes for all learners and adaptations are made to enable all children to succeed by anticipating any barriers to learning and planning adaptations to enable pupils to overcome these. Thus:

- enabling children to succeed in the set task or activity;
- challenging children beyond their comfort zone of knowledge, understanding and skills;
- enabling children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these.

See the Ambition For All document on the R.E. page on the school website for further information.

### **Pupils with Special Needs**

At St Bernadette's School the curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If a child is identified as having a special need we do all we can to meet these individual needs in accordance with current school policy which follows the guidance contained in the DfE's Code of Practice.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is continuous and formative; pupils are assessed against the Expected Outcomes for their age-phase (5-7yrs, 7-9yrs, 9-11yrs). The expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing. Each age-phase will have a prescribed set of expected outcomes that will indicate what pupils are expected to know, remember and be able to do, using the language of the ways of knowing and applying it to the discrete knowledge within each lens.

## **Expectations**

Pupils are expected to work within their own Age Related Standard and may be below, at or above this.

## **Recording**

Recording provides evidence of achievement. This may take many forms:

- notes from observations;
- written comments on children's work;
- visual evidence – photographs, displays, videos or recording of drama or celebrations;
- class/school portfolios;
- pupils' self-assessment.

## **Reporting**

There are four dimensions to reporting in Religious Education.

### **Reporting:**

- provides feedback to pupils on their achievement and progress;
- informs colleagues of the achievement of individual pupils and the areas studied by a class and year group;
- informs parents of the progress and achievement of their children;
- informs parents, governors, parish and external agencies of the content and quality of Religious Education being provided and the achievements of the pupils.

## **Pupil Voice and Leadership**

In every lesson children are encouraged to ask questions to clarify thinking and to deepen understanding. These may be recorded in the class 'Life in Christ' book to form a basis for further reflection and discussion.

Pupil views are obtained annually by questionnaire. These views are used to inform and plan for future developments.

Pupils in Y6 are expected to write letters of application for roles and responsibilities including Head Pupil and Prayer Leaders who will take some responsibility for planning and leading prayer and liturgies in school

## **Role of the Subject Leader**

Primarily, to offer support with planning and teaching RE whenever it is required.

The subject leader will also undertake a book scrutiny each term to monitor standards and ensure progression throughout the school.

The subject leader is responsible for regular moderation of work and for taking the required examples of work to cluster meetings and to the yearly diocesan subject leaders meeting.

Each term, as for other curricular subjects, the subject leader will collect evaluations of each topic from class teachers. These will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the planning and the teaching and learning strategies used in RE, throughout the school. The subject leader will use this information to inform future school improvement planning. Teachers receive verbal feedback from the subject leader.

The subject leader also observes the teaching of RE in each class. This is followed by a discussion between the teacher and the subject leader, noting the strengths and areas for development.

## **Reviewing the Religious Education policy.**

The head teacher, staff and governors will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure it is being implemented appropriately and to take account of changing circumstances.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Position</b>
<i>January 2027</i>		Head
		RE Governor
		RE Co-ordinator

