

# St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

*Our Mission*  
*"Growing together with Jesus"*



*Growing in the gifts, that God has given us*  
*On our journey together*  
*Developing as Jesus holds our hand.*

The complex block has a dark blue background. At the top, the words 'Our Mission' are written in a yellow, cursive font. Below that, the phrase 'Growing together with Jesus' is written in a white, cursive font. In the center is a square logo with a green background showing a tree with roots. The words 'Growing' and 'Together' are written in white cursive on either side of the tree's trunk. At the bottom, three lines of white cursive text describe the mission: 'Growing in the gifts, that God has given us', 'On our journey together', and 'Developing as Jesus holds our hand.'

***"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us"***

***Romans 12:6***

**"A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints." Pope Benedict XVI**

At St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Nursery & Primary School, we aim to provide the highest standards of education in a welcoming and positive Catholic learning environment.

We focus on the growth and development of each person, encouraging each child to realise their skills and talents, and to develop these so that they can use them for good and reach their full potential.

We want our school to be a place where everyone learns to respect, work, play and cooperate with others in a Christian, caring way, whilst fostering close links with our Church, parish and wider community.

## **Aims**

As a Catholic community, St Joseph and St Theresa Catholic Primary School is a place where God and our children are at the heart of all we do, where the Pupil Profile Virtues and Catholic Social Teaching permeate all aspects of school life. As a Catholic school, RE is a core subject of the curriculum and is allocated appropriate time and resources.

- Every child in our care will be supported to grow in Faith, to grow in Hope and to grow in Love so that each child has their own relationship with God. Growing in the Love of God, our children will become confident learners who have a desire to realise their aspirations. Our children will develop a passion for learning and its infinite possibilities in a nurturing, safe and loving environment.
- Everyone is a learner. We provide a life-long and quality Catholic education where all children are provided with challenging learning opportunities that promote a deep understanding of what they are learning. By providing a rich, stimulating curriculum we: enable pupils to reach for and beyond their God given potential; we ensure that our pupils are happy, confident and independent learners who can eloquently discuss their learning and understanding.
- Everyone promotes self-esteem and self-worth by showing mutual respect for others and developing an understanding of self in an atmosphere of trust. We create self-discipline through an awareness of the consequences of our actions, so as to nurture positive behaviour, secure in the knowledge of forgiveness.
- Every person is a valued member of our wider community who can act independently and make a positive contribution for the good of all; this is supported through the building of a caring partnership between home, school, parish and community. We enable the children to develop their physical, moral, intellectual and social qualities harmoniously.

- Every person in our school community is welcomed. We encourage parents, family members and parishioners to attend Masses and religious celebrations within the school. We promote good links with the Parish of St Joseph's, Burntwood. We prepare, alongside our children, their parents, the Parish priest and catechists with the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the sacraments they receive whilst attending St Joseph and St Theresa's.

Ultimately, we aim for our children to receive excellent Religious Education in order for them to become 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.

### **Entitlement and Provision**

RE is a core subject and is allocated 10% of Curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference. RE is taught as two lessons every week.

This is purely curriculum time and does not include time committed to assemblies, Worship Through Song, RSHE, preparation & attendance at Mass etc. A greater percentage of time may be allocated to RE at certain times of the year, such as Holy Week or Advent. EYFS are also taught RE as a discrete subject; they also have the opportunity to take part in charity fundraising events, masses with the rest of the school and other acts of prayer and liturgy such as meditation and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

### **RE Curriculum**

*“Pupils have a right to receive authentic Church teaching and to have a curriculum that draws them into a systematic study of the saving mystery of Christ, which the Church proclaims.”*

*(Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Low Week, 2000, paragraph 7)*

Our school follows the Religious Education Programme “Learning and Growing as the People of God’ devised by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

The aim of the strategy is to explore and secure the link between what Christ teachers and how to relate it to the classroom. The strategy explores the religious dimension of

questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic faith. Links are made with the pupils' own experiences and the experience of other faith traditions.

The programme raises questions and provides materials for reflecting on their own experiences and faith journey; it helps the pupils to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition and to deepen their own theological understanding.

The strategy is divided into four key areas:

- The Liturgical Year
- Scripture - both Old and New Testament
- The Sacraments
- Living as Christians, including prayer. (How we carry out Christ's mission)

### **Learning and Teaching**

Using a template provided by the diocese, the RE Lead creates and shares a long-term plan in accordance with school term dates. Each class is allocated each unit to specific dates throughout the year. These can be flexible as long as units relating to the liturgical year are taught at the correct time.

Medium Term Planning is the responsibility of the class teacher and is done on a unit-by-unit basis.

Short Term Planning is recorded on a separate RE planning sheet, which is based upon Diocesan recommendations. The planning proforma provides opportunities for Prayer and liturgy, key questions and CST links.

### **Marking, Feedback and Assessment**

RE work is marked according to the School's Marking Policy. In addition to this, teacher provides tasks and questions for the children to respond to, which helps them to deepen and explain their learning, focussing on the AT2 and AT3 strands of the Age-Related Expectations. Teachers are also reminded to mark with a RE focus, rather than Literacy. Teachers' expectations of presentation and quality in RE books is high and in line with other subjects taught in school.

As part of the Learning and Growing as the People of God programme there is a four-year cycle for assessment. The diocese sets the assessment focus each year based on the Liturgical season, Sacraments, Scripture and Living as Christians.

The assessment of individual pupils in RE is the responsibility of the class teacher. The RE leader provides teachers with the Excel assessment sheets needed at the beginning of each year. The data is collated by the RE leader and is scrutinised and analysed.

Three mixed ability children from each class are assessed against the Age-Related Standards. Teachers will assess one piece of work per unit and attach assessment sheets to each assessed piece of work. At the end of the year, teachers will make a summary judgement about where the child is working according to their age.

Teachers discuss children's work and progress with parents during book looks and parental consultations. Annual reports to parents are completed during the Summer Term.

### **Equal Opportunities and SEND**

As a Catholic school, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life. All pupils are educated in the beliefs and devotional practices of the Catholic Church.

All children regardless of any impairment will have an entitlement to a broad and balanced RE programme within mainstream education that is relevant to their needs.

We identify those children have special educational needs, become knowledgeable about their learning needs and plan appropriately to meet their needs; concentrating on their abilities and considering how tasks, equipment and access can be modified so that they have a meaningful experience and can participate fully in lessons.

All are made in the image and likeness of God. We believe that every person is a unique individual, and we are therefore committed to equal opportunities. We believe that all children, irrespective of physical ability, race, gender, creed or stage of achievement have the right to reach their full potential in R.E.

### **Study of Other Faiths**

Religious Education should introduce children to the background and beliefs of other faiths so that prejudice and misunderstanding can be overcome from an early age – we endeavour to seize each opportunity as it arises to ensure tolerance, respect and understanding between all cultures and traditions represented not just in the school or its immediate environment but in the world as a whole.

As the children move through the school, they each learn about a different religion, with opportunities to visit places of worship or listen to speakers from other faiths.

## **Monitoring**

RE is monitored by the RE lead following the monitoring schedule set out each term. Monitoring is evaluated and findings are shared through the termly SIP Review with the relevant people including Governors. The impact of monitoring is shared with Governors and used to inform development plans. The RE Link Governor is involved in monitoring activities and meetings are scheduled termly where findings, actions and impact are shared.

Our monitoring cycle includes:

- Regular meetings between SLT to discuss RE
- Meetings with the RE advisor
- Completion of termly SIP Reviews
- Regularly updating and reviewing policy
- Carry out regular audits of resources
- Learning walks
- Lesson observations
- An annual RE budget
- Regular RE INSET days
- Book trawls at least termly
- Pupil interviews.
- Link Governor for RE visits school regularly
- Annual reports to parents contain attainment and comments for RE

## **RE Displays and School Environment**

Each class has an area which provides a focus for prayer in the classroom. This area is changed regularly to reflect the season of the liturgical year (e.g. a green cloth for ordinary time), the topic being covered, a special saint etc. and can include religious artefacts, prayers, candles, and children's work. It should not be cluttered. Children

should be encouraged to help create this area at an age-appropriate level. Various resources are used to encourage the children to stop and pray, reflect, read the thought or write a prayer. Our school mission is on display in all areas and rooms of the school and is known by our children and is referred to often. Catholic Pupil Profile displays are prominent throughout the school environment and in classrooms. Catholic Social Teaching work is displayed throughout the school.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

In addition to following the Strategy, parents of children in Years Three and Six are invited and encouraged to attend sacramental meetings led by the RE lead, the parish catechist and the Parish Priest. Masses of commitment are also planned, where parents and children make commitment promises. Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and Year 6 receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in school, from the parish Priest, during Advent and Lent for Easter and Christmas as part of the season's preparations.

### **The Role of Parents and the Parish**

The child's development of faith begins at birth with the love and care of the family. Parents are encouraged to attend assemblies, masses and concerts and contribute to their child's religious education; particularly in preparation for the Sacraments of First Holy Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation.

Parish links are always encouraged, and parishioners are invited to school masses and other events, as well as school leading family Sunday masses at St Joseph's Church.

### **The Role of the RE Subject Leader**

1. Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in R.E. throughout the school.
2. Support colleagues in the development of detailed work plans and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record-keeping activities.
3. Monitor progress and impact in R.E. and advise the head teacher of any action needed.
4. Take responsibility for the R.E. budget and the purchase and organisation of central resources for R.E.
5. Keep up to date with developments in R.E. and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

6. Run or organise INSET on areas needing development.
7. Work in partnership with the diocese e.g. attend training, conferences and other events.

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