

# St Philip's Catholic Primary School

## Religious Education Policy



### Mission Statement

St Philip's is a welcoming community where everyone belongs.  
With Christ at the centre, we pray together and show our love for God by living the Gospels.  
Showing care and compassion for each other, we are kind and sharing; treating each other fairly and with respect. We value everyone as unique children of God.  
We create a caring, stimulating environment where everyone feels safe and secure.  
We foster a love of learning, embracing challenge and never giving up. With support and encouragement, we learn from our mistakes and always strive to do our utmost.  
We find the best in all, nurturing our individual strengths and developing the confidence to allow everyone to reach their potential, preparing ourselves for the journey ahead.

Let your light shine.

**Responsibility for implementation:**

Michael McCurdy

**Date of next Review:**

Autumn 2024

**The Mission of St Philip's Catholic Primary School** is to recognise the unique dignity and worth of each individual and to enable all in our community to be Christ in our world.

We aim to achieve our mission by:

- ❖ providing a foundation of knowledge, skills and experience which stimulates and motivates children and staff to strive for excellence
- ❖ creating a caring environment founded on values of love, hope and faith
- ❖ striving to live out the Gospel in our interactions with others as well as by our commitment to prayer and worship
- ❖ nurturing in children an understanding and respect for all people
- ❖ guiding children so they are responsible and active citizens
- ❖ continuing to support staff, Governors and parents in serving St. Philip's School and the local and wider community

St. Philip's School will be a beacon of faith in the wider community.

## **POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **Introduction to the Policy**

Religious Education is a core subject in our Catholic School and is central to all that we do and are. We use the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic School and Colleges in England and Wales to support our Religious Education curriculum which follows the 'Come and See' programme. Through our Religious Education curriculum we hope to gain knowledge and understanding about our faith and faith traditions, the sacraments, prayer and worship, the Bible and relate our understanding to our life and the lives of other people. We will provide opportunities to contemplate, reflect, question and to develop a deeper knowledge, appreciation and understanding of God's love. We also explore and develop a respect for World Faiths twice a year.

We have a strong partnership between home, school and parish. We believe that Religious Education begins at home and that parents are the child's first educators. At St. Philip's we aim to work in partnership with parents to support, develop and enrich each child's religious experience. R.E. newsletters are sent home to parents termly. The newsletters inform parents about forthcoming topics and feast days. Parents and carers are invited to all liturgies, masses and religious celebrations. Our parish team is working with us and our parents to develop and extend children's religious education.

### **Inclusion**

Equality of opportunity for all members of the school is very important and is closely related to our mission as a Catholic school and expressed clearly in our Mission Statement. As we believe that all human beings are created in God's image and likeness it is our duty to respect and cherish them all. For our school this means, not simply treating everybody the same but, understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups. It also means that we will recognise value and celebrate the achievements and strengths of all. At St. Philip's we have

consistently high expectations of all pupils irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to strive to reach their personal best rather than measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this way. We identify and support where appropriate children with English as an additional language, children with special educational needs, children who are underachieving and children who show special skills or talents.

### **The Aim of Religious Education**

The aim of Religious Education is to increase and deepen children's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Catholic tradition and its relevance to their lives.

- to foster the development of a meaningful and personal relationship with God;
- to be able to listen and reflect;
- to be able to think critically, spiritually and ethically and to make informed judgments;
- to foster attitudes such as respect for what is right, to be truthful witnesses, to respect the views of others and to respect life
- to develop their spirituality
- to be aware of moral responsibility and of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life;
- to foster an understanding and respect for other faiths and cultures helping children to contribute positively to life in a multi faith and a multi-cultural society.

Religious Education is taught throughout the school in such a way as to reflect the overall aims, values and vision of the school.

### **The R.E. Curriculum**

At St. Philip's we spend 10% of teaching time on R.E. every week following Diocesan guidelines. The framework for Religious Education in Appendix 1 outlines the provision for Religious Education throughout the whole school and indicates the progression and continuity which has been built into the teaching of Religious Education.

Teachers aim to make R.E. lessons special and different to other lessons by including some of the following: lighting a candle, listening to music, spending a few moments quietly reflecting or by experiencing different prayer forms.

All teachers follow the 'Come and See' programme. The aim of the programme is to explore the religious dimensions of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupils' own experiences and with universal experience. Links are also made with the experiences of other faith traditions.

The 'Come and See' programme sets out the curriculum for each year group from Year 1 to Year 6. Within each term there are three topics, each lasting four weeks in Years 1 through to Year 6. Reception will be beginning a new programme (RECD), beginning September 2022, containing six topics across the year. This will gradually be rolled out across the school in line with Diocesan guidelines.

In Years 1 through 6, the first week: Recognise, Reflect and Respect, allows the children to link ideas to their lives and use first-hand experience. Weeks two and three, Relate the theme to the Church's teaching, using Scripture. Week four allows the children to Rejoice, Remember and Renew and to celebrate, through Liturgies, what they have learnt through the topic.

Teachers plan for each Topic using the Come and See or RECD programme. They consult the Interim Assessment Framework when planning to ensure they are asking questions of an appropriate level. In addition, teachers use their own thoughts and creative activities to provide activities which match the levels of expectations and provide the children with the opportunity to show their abilities. The children should produce four pieces of work in Key Stage 2 from each topic (three for children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1). This has been agreed by all staff.

The 'Come and See' programme is enhanced by Bible stories, teaching about the Liturgical Year, the incorporation of important feast days and church celebrations. This is also developed in our prayer tables.

Other "World Faiths" are also focused on with all classes studying Judaism and to different year groups studying Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.

Children in each Key Stage will be asked to undertake some homework activities or tasks related to their work in Religious Education.

We make links between R.E. and other curriculum areas where appropriate. This might include art, recording or presenting using ICT and using drama to enhance RE lessons. Religious Education also provides opportunities for teaching the following cross-curricular dimensions – Equal Opportunities, Personal and Social Education and Education for Ethnic Diversity. At St. Philip's we are committed to using multi-cultural religious images and stories whenever possible.

### **The Approach to Religious Education**

At St. Philip's the teaching of Religious Education according to the 'Come and See' programme is approached with the following principles in mind.

Catholicism is the predominant religious background of the children and the staff. We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. All religions and their communities are treated with respect and sensitivity and we value the links which are and can be made between home, school and our faith community. We acknowledge that each religion studied can contribute to the education of all our pupils. We promote teaching in Religious Education that encourages open enquiry and first-hand experiences wherever possible for both staff and children. The syllabus is implemented in school by means of a highly sensory approach, where children may look at and handle religious artefacts, hear religious music or taste food associated with a religious faith. Work in Religious Education builds on the pupils' own experiences and pupils are given the opportunity to recognise and reflect upon their experiences and the experiences of others in the wider community.

### **Assessing and Recording**

All staff are expected to assess continually in order to use assessment information to plan for further improvement. Teachers use the latest assessment criteria provided by DABCEC to assess the children at the end of each term. Teachers must use their judgements and evidence in work, to record a level. Termly data is handed in to the RE Subject Leader. Children are expected to self-assess their work in R.E, which can be found on the front page of their topic.

Assessment may be made in the following areas of R.E.:

- the acquisition of knowledge;
- the external signs of developing and maturing faith;

- attitudes to prayer
- caring for others;
- the perceptiveness of questions and answers;
- the quality of written work;
- contributions to class discussions.

### **Marking and Feedback**

All learning in RE is marked according to the school's Marking and Feedback Policy. All RE work is marked in a purple pen, including any developmental comments. Written comments, linked to the learning objective, should be affirming, encouraging, thought provoking and challenging. Questions and thoughts are used to develop children's thinking and understanding and if appropriate, children are given time to respond to these and this is expected of them. Grammar and punctuation will be marked but not in the same rigorous way that it is in English. Correct spelling of key religious vocabulary is expected and also aspects such as ensuring that God's and Jesus' name is always spelt with a capital letter.

### **Display and Prayer Tables**

RE displays are given special focus throughout the school and in each classroom. Class displays are changed for each topic and include a mixture of key questions, key words, prayers and examples of children's learning. Displays should be interactive, inviting comments or questions. Prayer table colours should also link with the liturgical year and there should be opportunities for children to choose items for the table. Bibles and candle should be present as well as living things, representing growth, prayer crosses and religious objects for the children to hold whilst praying. Displays in the school hall celebrate special events, reflect the 'Come and See' unit or are linked to the liturgical year.

### **Resourcing Religious Education**

Each class has access to the Come and See website, a copy of the RE teacher's folder and a box of RE resources and artefacts for the prayer table. Each class teacher has their own copy of *the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales (2012)*.

Other resources are kept in the Y3 and Y2 Cupboard. Resources include children's reference books, teacher's resource books, packs and notes, pictorial resources, such as posters, pictures and photographs, magazines and videos, CD Rom's and website access. Resources are shared and all staff, including visiting students, who have equal access to all resources. Staff must speak to the R.E. Subject Leader if new resources are required. The RE Subject Leader is responsible for maintaining RE resources, and for monitoring their use. Resources are purchased following the general school ordering procedures. The purchase of resources is planned each year by the RE Subject Leader.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RE Subject Leader and Head teacher monitor RE planning and children's books throughout the year as part of on-going school evaluation to ensure RE is being taught well, books are well presented and there is progression across the school. Monitoring of teachers' planning is carried out to ensure coverage, differentiation and standards. In addition to this, RE lessons and class worship sessions are observed. This may be for monitoring purposes or to share good practice with colleagues. Monitoring is carried out to enhance the teaching and learning of Religious Education within our school. It is the responsibility of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision made for Religious Education within the School, in order that pupils make the greatest possible progress.

The Subject Leader also talks to children about their work in R.E. Performance is also evaluated through assessment results, collected after each term. RE councils are also set up to ensure we have evidence of pupil voice as well as questionnaires given to staff to assess their understanding of RE teaching and to evaluate its effectiveness.