

ST BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Updated Oct 19

Religious Education Policy

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School Religious Education Policy

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Updated : October 2019

Date for review: October 2021

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1. St Bernadette's Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement

At St Bernadette's we aim to:

ACHIEVE

Provide learning experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of all children.

Enable every child to achieve success and good self-esteem.

Make learning a positive and enjoyable experience for all children.

Celebrate the achievement of children in all areas of school life.

Continue to develop our own learning and skills.

BELIEVE

Place Christ at the centre of our school community. To develop in our children an attitude of prayer and worship which is the foundation for all that we do in school.

Give children an understanding of their Catholic faith and living experience of the Church.

Nurture in our children a mature understanding of their beliefs.

Develop a strong sense of home, school and parish community.

Show by our own example the principles of Christian living: to treat the children and all members of our school community with love, care, respect and forgiveness.

Encourage respect and tolerance for other faiths and cultures.

CARE

Value every child in our care and to be committed to supporting their needs- academic, spiritual and social.

Show patience, tolerance and compassion for children and families experiencing difficulties.

Encourage the children to co-operate and respect each other; to develop an ethos of care and respect for all in our classrooms.

Encourage children to care for the school and the local environment.

Encourage care for others in the wider community through prayer and charitable action.

In the school community we live by the motto:-

ACHIEVE, BELIEVE, CARE

2. A Curriculum Statement.

2.1 RE is the process of developing each child's relationship with Christ, according to the truths and practices of the Catholic faith as expressed in our mission statement.

2.2 RE supports, extends and clarifies the faith of the children at home and in the parish. If the children do not experience faith at home their only experience of what it is to be a believer may come from school.

2.3 RE takes into account the age of pupils and their capacity to learn.

2.4 RE is vital for the child's development in moving from an awareness of self to an awareness of others and their needs, becoming an adult, who is a responsible and caring member of society.

2.5 RE is founded in the Gospel values with Christ at the centre of everything we do.

2.6 RE at St Bernadette's is based on the diocese curriculum strategy 'Learning and Growing as the Children of God'.

2.7 This policy statement is designed to support the RE scheme of work. All staff and Governors have contributed to this policy and will review it every two years.

2.8 The Legal Framework

RE is an entitlement for all pupils (5-19) at school. RE must form part of the school's basic curriculum but it is not part of the National Curriculum.

RE should account for 10% of curriculum time (2hours 15 mins for Foundation and KS1, 2 ½ hours for KS2 per week). Once a week Mass celebration may be considered the equivalent of thirty minutes RE.

A central message of the Catholic faith is that although we are all different, God loves each one of us equally, regardless of background, gender or ability. It is therefore vital that we recognise and cater for the individual needs of all children, acknowledging that all children have different gifts and talents and that these should be celebrated.

It is important that children are provided with images and experiences that reflect the multi-cultural society in which we live, enhancing their awareness and knowledge of faith and cultures. This is essential in preparing children to take their place in a multi-cultural society.

3. Aims

3.1 Most importantly of all to give pupils the opportunity to develop a living and personal faith in Jesus Christ. To bring children to know and love God.

3.2 To develop an awareness of God's presence in individuals' lives and to elicit a response to the presence.

3.3 To develop a well formed conscience allowing the individual to make sound moral judgements in the light of personal commitment to God.

3.4 To enable the children to develop their physical, moral, intellectual and social qualities harmoniously.

3.5 As a catholic school, RE is a core subject of the curriculum and must be allocated appropriate time and resources.

3.6 To encourage parents, family members, friends of whatever faith and parishioners to attend Masses and religious celebrations within the school. To encourage pupils to be involved in parish activities outside of school time

3.7 To promote good links with the Parish of St Bernadette's.

3.8 To prepare our children, and their parents, with the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the sacraments they receive whilst attending St Bernadette's.

3.9 To ensure RE plays a central role in school's work on spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

To develop the spiritual life of each child through prayer and reflection.

To prepare pupils for life in a multi cultural society by fostering respect for and understanding of rich cultural diversity.

To provide a program of family life education which conforms to the teaching of the Catholic Church and follows Diocesan guidelines.

4.The main areas of study.

We follow the agreed syllabus from the Birmingham Archdiocese 'Learning and Growing as the Children of God'. This document covers the four main areas of study identified by the Bishops' Conference in 1996. These are:

Revelation: God's self revelation

Church: Communion of life in Christ

Celebration: Mystery in worship and prayer

Life in Christ: The search for holiness and truth.

Each year group has a number of units to study over the year. The units are developmental, building on previous knowledge and experience and taking into account of the children's age and understanding. The topics covered by each year group are as detailed on the curriculum overview.

OBJECTIVES OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING

Objective

As a Catholic School we base our whole ethos on the teaching of the Catholic Church and the principles of Christianity. These teachings govern everything we do and say in school and are not confined to the teaching of religious education even though this is an important subject in our curriculum.

In teaching Religious Education we aim to foster and deepen the faith of the children, so that they see themselves and all things in relation to God our Father.

To encourage the development of a living active faith, where God is seen as being present in our lives, not separate from us. Something we live out daily with real commitment.

To foster growth in faith and develop knowledge and love of God, as children mature.

To prepare children and their families for the reception of three Sacraments:

- i. Reconciliation
- ii. Eucharist
- iii. Confirmation

Means of Achieving These

The Curriculum Strategy "Learning and Growing as the People of God" is the Scheme of work.

By the example of their teachers and parents, by praising God for all of creation, by use of the Scriptures. Through fostering a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus his Son, in whom he revealed himself to us.

By adult example and by using particular local situations to demonstrate 'our faith in action' actively driving us to help those in need. Also by learning about others who have used their lives to glorify God eg. The Saints, Mother Teresa etc.

Through the reading of and understanding of the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church.

The preparations for Reconciliation and the Eucharist are based on the Curriculum Strategy "Living and Growing as the People of God" and "Jesus Comes to me."

There are meetings for parents to help them, not only with their child's preparation, but with their own faith development and knowledge.

Learning about the Sacrament of Confirmation is based on the Curriculum Strategy "Learning and Growing as the

People of God" and "Gifted in the Spirit." It involves meetings for parents to help them support their children in the commitments they are asked to undertake.

To reach the wider Christian Community through the children and the school.

Through the sacramental programmes of preparation. Through inclusion in and invitations to meetings, discussions, Masses and assemblies and religious Celebrations. Through our yearly multicultural week where other faiths are celebrated.

To create a framework of learning in which a deeper exploration of faith is possible, so that the children develop a positive attitude of enquiry towards religion.

Through religious language, used and explained, through open discussions, through prayer and worship. Through Masses and assemblies when the whole community come together to worship, to praise, to petition and thank God.

To help children to explore the religious dimensions of life both Christian and World faiths, where appropriate.

Through the Curriculum Strategy "Learning and Growing as the People of God" and through the person of Jesus as they come to know him. Through our Family Life scheme. Through studies of other faiths and, where appropriate, in other curriculum areas.

To help each child to acquire a set of moral values, which correspond to Christian morality and will guide his/her personal behaviour.

By clear and consistent examples and standards set. By reference to Christian codes of behaviour. By discussion of choices and decisions made. By an insistence on acceptable codes of behaviour, in a caring atmosphere. By children and staff making joint decisions about consequences to actions.

To help each child to form moral judgements.

The themes in the Curriculum Strategy, "Living and Growing as the Children of God", bring out the importance of living in the way Jesus showed us, living moral lives as a response to God's love. By discussion of incidents which require disciplinary action.

To help each child to maintain and

By a constant reference to Jesus and

defend his/her moral decisions and code, even when in the minority.

To develop in each child a respect for the individual and for the rights and responsibilities of others based on Christian principles.

To help each child become sensitive to others, to respect them as individuals, treat their views and feelings with consideration and to form sound caring relationships with them.

To encourage each child to develop as an individual, to grow in confidence, to know themselves.

To learn how to deal with difficult emotional and social problems based on faith and love.

To help each child understand and acknowledge the need for authority.
To foster respect for those in authority.

To develop religiously literate children.

his life and suffering and his faith in his father's love. By adult example.

Through assemblies and lessons looking at the world family and our responsibility for one another. Through supporting a variety of charities, local and worldwide, learning about their work as part of citizenship.

Through mutual respect between pupils and staff, through the maintenance of consistent standards, Through the caring community of the school and parish.

Through teaching methods used.
Through prayer and through the person of Jesus.

Through an encouragement to prayer and a real growing relationship with Jesus. Through example and advice built on trust and love. Through implementation of our Family Life scheme.

Through the development of a caring authority which they have faith in, based on love and moral standards.

Through the R.E. teaching and learning provided. Through staff knowledge and example.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The Religious Education provided at this school is intended to help children to know and love God, in order to develop their moral and spiritual nature and deepen their faith.

Children are encouraged to live their faith in an active and positive way, always aware of the presence and love of Christ guiding them. While there is a great deal of knowledge to be gained and skills to be developed in R.E. lessons, it is the growth of understanding and deepening of faith which are the focus of the Religious Education provided here in St Mary's Catholic Primary School. This is to ensure that children properly develop their relationship with God and become religiously literate.

5. How RE should be taught

5.1 RE should be taught through the use of 'Learning and Growing and the People of God', the Archdiocese of Birmingham curriculum strategy for RE.

In his introduction to the document, Vincent Nichols Says, 'This document is the curriculum strategy for the Religious Education in Catholic Primary schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. It lays out clearly the steps to be taken in RE at each stage of every term in the nursery and primary years. For schools it is essential guide and norm. For families and parishes it makes clear what is being tackled in the RE classes. It provides, therefore, the foundations for the improved partnership between school, home and parish, a partnership that lies at the heart of Catholic Education.' The scheme also incorporates units of work for the Sacramental preparation in the primary years.

5.2 There are many opportunities for incidental teaching from daily life situations at home and at school give rise to many and varied teaching opportunities e.g. birth, death, illness, family problems, sharing and working together in the class and on the playground, living and working in a multi-faith society.

5.3 Work on RE topics should be displayed - children's work/ posters/ religious artefacts in the classrooms and communal areas of the school.

5.4 Through religious practice, upholding church traditions of prayer and worship.

5.5 Through celebrations of Mass, feast days, Holy days and collective worship.

5.6 Through celebrations of appropriate liturgical seasons

5.7 Through retreats

5.8 Through the use of visits and visitors in school to enhance the RE curriculum.

5.9 Through the participation in fundraising events for Catholic charities such as CAFOD and Father Hudson's society.

A range of teaching strategies will be employed depending on the needs and abilities of the children and the nature of the activities being undertaken.

Approaches will include whole class teaching, group activities and individual work. Children will have opportunities to work individually as well as co operatively and collaboratively, developing their own knowledge and expertise as well as sharing experiences with others.

6. Teaching RE to Non Catholic children.

6.1 Non- catholic children are made to feel welcome and valued as full members of our school community.

6.2 Non- catholic children take an active part in all religious celebrations.

6.3 Their religious beliefs and practices are respected and where possible discussed.

6.4 All pupils in classes preparing for the sacraments will complete the required work; Non-Catholics will be encouraged to partake in the celebration of the sacrament.

7. Teaching RE to Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's work in the early years is stated in section 4.

In both Nursery and Reception classes, pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Take part in charity fundraising events
- Take part in Masses with the rest of the school.
- Experience collective worship (both in class and during whole school or key stage assemblies)
- Work on displays for their classroom and communal areas of the school
- Have a focal point for prayer in class- a prayer table with appropriate cloth representing the liturgical colour for that season.
- Learn simple hymns and prayers.
- Take part in class assemblies presented to the whole school and parents.

8 Teaching RE to KS1 children.

Children's work in KS1 is stated in section 4

By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Attend Masses in Church.
- Take part in charity fundraising events.
- Taken part in offertory processions
- Read and write bidding prayers
- Take part in class assemblies presented to the whole school and parents.
- Take part in class liturgies.
- Work on RE displays
- Have a focal point for prayer in class- a prayer table with appropriate cloth representing the liturgical colour for that season
- Work, care and worship together

9 Teaching RE to KS2 children.

Children's work in KS2 is stated in section 4

By the end of KS2 pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Lead collective worship
- Charity fundraising
- Events in the wider community eg Masses celebrated in the Parish Church on Sunday, Leavers assembly.
- A visit to Lourdes
- Sacramental preparation
- RE displays
- Have a focal point for prayer in class- a prayer table with appropriate cloth representing the liturgical colour for that season
- Working, praying, caring and worshipping together.

We also run family life and sex education from Year 1 to Year 6 using the In the Beginning scheme from the Salford Diocese.

10. Resources

Resources for RE are placed in classrooms or in Headteacher's Office. All books and videos are stored on shelves. The Re Leader has an annual budget to replenish and broaden the resources in RE.

11. Inset - staff development

11.1 Details of courses run by the Diocesan department for religious education are made available to those members of staff who will benefit from attending.

11.2 If any member of staff expressed an interest in studying for the certificate in religious education they would be encouraged to do so.

11.4 RE is part of the school's annual allowance of in house INSET training days.

12. Differentiation and attainment

Differentiation is provided in RE in a number of ways, according to a child's particular needs and development.

- Written / discussion work can take place in small groups or pairs rather than the whole class
- Support with the work from the class teacher or support assistant.
- By differentiated tasks
- By differentiated resources
- By presentation of texts with different levels of difficulty.
- By outcome
- Emotional support if necessary

Attainment

We use the Diocesan Age Related Expectations to assess attainment in RE. We begin by baselining our children as they come into Reception to see attainment on entry. Then as well as formative, ongoing assessment, we assess at the end of each unit and analyse this. A school attainment summary is produced at the end of each focus strand. There is also a focus child from each class whose work is assessed specifically against the national AREs.

13. Liason

We believe that the school alone cannot undertake a child's religious education. Religious education begins at home at Baptism; the parents are the child's first teachers and support the child with his/her first religious experiences. The school works in partnership with parents and the Parish to enrich the lives of our children.

Liaison with our parish

- The head teacher/RE Co ordinator meets in the September of each year with the parish priest to organise dates for Masses and Sacraments for the coming year.
- On every other Friday, the whole school attends Mass either in school or in Church. These are parish Masses and the children read, sing, serve and bring the offertory gifts.
- Parents are welcome Masses as well as meetings about Sacraments their child will receive.
- The Parish priest visits school frequently and often supports teachers in class to deliver parts of the RE strategy.

Liaison with parents

In requesting a Catholic Education for their children, parents have made a commitment to the teachings of the Catholic Church and are therefore frequently asked to participate in the religious life of the school parish. They are encouraged to attend programmes of preparation for the sacraments of the Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation and are encouraged to help children to complete relevant work at home. Parents are also invited to attend all religious celebrations including Mass, assembly and other religious celebrations. The documentation for Religious Education and Family Life Education is available for inspection by parents.

As the first and most important teachers of their children, parents are urged to witness to their faith by their own commitment to the sacraments, by example in their daily lives and by their willingness to participate in the religious education of their children.

Non-Catholic children and their parents are invited to be part of all the religious activities of the school. Whilst they are not able to participate in the reception of the Sacraments, they are invited to share the celebration.

Parents are invited to-

- Open evenings twice a year
- Class assemblies
- School Mass
- Parents meetings for the family life and sex education classes.
- Parents meetings for sacramental preparation in Year 3 and Year 5/6
- Parent of children who enter Reception class are given a brief overview of the RE curriculum during the new parents meeting. They are also given a school prayer book during the home visit and suggestions of how to help and encourage their child in RE during their time at St Bernadette's and a list of prayers encouraging them to pray together at home.

Parents also receive:

- Access to the schools website
- An annual report on their child's work, behaviour and progress.
- Details of Masses and assemblies

Liaison with other local catholic schools

- We will rsoon become a multi academy with our Wolverhampton family of schools and our feeder school- St Edmund's.
- The RE co ordinator meets with the RE advisor and other RE co ordinators at cluster group meetings each term.

14. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is a crucial issue for our school to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Our monitoring cycle includes:

- *Regular meetings between the Head teacher, Parish Priest and link Governor to discuss RE issues.
- * Regular meetings with the RE advisor
- * Completion on an annual basis of the RE SEF form
- *Regularly update and review the policy
- * Carry out regular audits of resources
- * Learning walks
- * Lesson observations
- * An annual RE budget
- * Regular RE INSET days
- * Review of Re assessment in class assessment folders by RE Co ordinator.
- *Book scrutinies.
- * Pupils interviews.
- * Link Governor responsible for RE
- * Annual reports to parents contain comments on RE
- * Use of attainment targets for levelling RE

Cross Curricular Links

Religious Education is taught as a discrete subject in R.E. lessons. However, as a Catholic school, the content and delivery of every other subject is influenced by Catholic doctrine and the teaching of the Catholic Church. Every opportunity is used to reinforce Catholic doctrine. Links between R.E. and other subjects are made wherever possible. Links with other faiths are made in accordance with the scheme, "Learning and Growing as the People of God".

15. Community Cohesion

The Church has been very proactive in its engagement with the national debate on community cohesion. As Catholics our starting point is not what can be done for me but what I can do for others. Community then is the starting point.

At St. Bernadette 's school we are always looking for new ways to develop links within the community by looking at

- The school community.
- The community within which the school is located.
- The UK community
- The global community.

Signed: J M Keegan-Hobbs(HT)

Signed: M O'Dwyer (Chair)

