



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Proudly and joyfully, we love, live and learn as God's children

Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement is:

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Introduction

As a Catholic School we strive to bring faith and culture together, relating and applying the freshness of Christ's message to human living today. As a Catholic School our identity is not exclusively related to religious instruction but is integrated throughout academic studies into a unified whole. "Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject amongst many, but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life." (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1988). We offer the possibility not only of exploring the mystery which God is, but also demonstrating and living the Gospel values. The School strives to be consistent throughout and in every aspect reflect the Christian faith, which is its inspiration and its justification. Religious Education comes into every aspect of School life, particularly into the need for a secure and caring environment which will encourage a positive attitude to life; foster satisfactory relationships with others and facilitate attitudes which characterise the School.

Religious Education will take as its starting point the child's individual appreciation of an inner world of meaning and reflection - the spiritual dimension of being human. Our aim in school is to promote the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God and to develop, nurture and deepen each child's faith journey, no matter what stage of that journey they are at.

We recognise that our children come from a range of backgrounds and abilities and that our teaching of Religious Education will reflect this. Through the teaching and way of life we hope to promote in the school, we aim to actively implement our school's mission statement, fulfil the aims of our school and live the gospel of our Blessed Lord within our school.



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Aims of Religious Education:

Religious Education in our school should:

- Nurture children's faith.
- Promote in a gradual way their understanding and appreciation of Catholic teaching and practice.
- Develop their involvement with the Church and School Community.
- Help pupils to develop personal, spiritual and moral values, respect and tolerance for others and an understanding of interdependence between groups and nations.
- Develop the skills required to be able to examine and reflect on religious belief and practice, including those from other faiths and cultures.
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder.
- Involve parents in the spiritual development of their child.

Curriculum Planning

St Mark's Catholic Primary School has adopted the Archdiocese scheme: Learning and Growing as the People of God. The scheme provides progression from Reception to Year 6 in the key areas of Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life of Christ. It also allows opportunities for monitoring and assessment. The scheme is intended to link in with other curricular areas and it should be resourced by using Bibles, Sacramental programmes, Multicultural resources and other resources appropriate to the programme of study.

RE is allocated 10% of the curriculum in line with the expectations of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Please see table below:

	Foundation stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Total Curriculum time per week	22 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours	22 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours	25 hours
Total RE Curriculum time per week	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours
% of time spent on RE per week	10%	10%	10%



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All teaching staff plan for and teach a multi-faith scheme of work according to their Year group. This allows the children to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths in the world, as well as exploring similarities and differences between and within religion. Through these lessons, they are given opportunities to reflect on the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-cultural and diverse society.

When a thematic approach is adopted, RE is effectively brought into other areas of the curriculum such as Literacy, Creative, Art and Design, Science etc. This will ensure that RE is encountered across the curriculum. Furthermore teachers will provide, where appropriate, opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their Computing Skills through RE.

Assessment in RE

Assessment for learning

Each child has an R.E. exercise book, which is marked after every R.E. lesson. Throughout the marking, the children are provided with opportunities to answer 'close the gap' questions to further develop their understanding. As well as marking in books, teachers make observations during the RE lessons to assess children's next steps and adapt planning appropriately to cater for children's needs. Recording of children's work takes many forms - pictorial, written, wall display, assemblies, discussions etc.

End of unit Assessments

The Monitoring and Assessment Focus follows a four year rolling programme, where one strand each year is assessed. Three units of work are assessed each year. Teachers assess each child in the class against the criteria provided in the diocesan scheme. The assessments are recorded and kept centrally on the school's teacher shared area. Samples of work from these assessed units are collected and stored in an R.E. Assessment folder, monitored regularly by the R.E. Co-ordinator. It is also the responsibility of the RE Co-ordinator to monitor and review progress of groups of children in RE across the whole school and share the findings with the whole staff so that improvements can be made. Staff moderate RE judgements on a regular basis and moderation of RE work takes place between other Catholic Primary schools.



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Reporting to parents

Each child's progress in R.E. will be reported to parents three times a year, through parental consultations in the Autumn and Spring terms, and through an end of year report. During Parental consultations, the Class Teachers discuss the child's R.E. work, learning, progress and targets with parents.

Display

In order to highlight the importance of Religious Education and the Catholic ethos of the school, displays of a religious nature are evident in each classroom throughout the year. Similarly, such displays are presented in corridors and at appropriate times of the year in the school entrance and around the school building. Each classroom has an R.E. / Prayer focus area and it is updated with the appropriate liturgical colour on a regular basis. A crucifix, a candle, a Bible, statues, artefacts and posters are prominently displayed whenever possible and changed on a regular basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

The RE Co-ordinator will work in close consultation with the Headteacher, Phase Leaders, Parish Priest and RE Link Governor.

The RE Co-ordinator will:

- ✓ be familiar with each year group of 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' and be available to individual teachers for guidance and support and keep staff informed of current thinking in RE and any new materials / publications
- ✓ distribute and provide training on relevant assessment proformas
- ✓ attend RE courses and cluster meetings and share the information gained with staff
- ✓ arrange and organise INSET training to meet staffs' needs
- ✓ monitor the progress of the Birmingham Diocesan RE programme and assessment in line with the second edition of "Levels of Attainment in Religious Education" (Bishop's Conference 2007) throughout the school through evaluating planning, assessments and where possible classroom observations



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- ✓ organise rotas for Masses in consultation with the Parish Priest and rotas for assemblies and liturgical displays
- ✓ be responsible for cataloguing materials and the management of the RE budget
- ✓ provide information and support Sacramental preparation and meetings with parents
- ✓ establish and work closely with St. Mark's Spiritual Council' to choose. Plan and lead appropriate faith activities across the whole school.
- ✓ Monitor and evaluate prayer corners and RE related activities e.g. Rosary clubs, prayer bags with children and look to improve such activities based on feedback given.
- ✓ Liaise with other local Catholic Primary Schools to moderate work to quality assure RE judgements.
- ✓ Organise whole school Masses and Sunday Masses in consultation with the Parish Priest

Class teacher:

- is responsible for daily collective acts of worship within the classroom
- is responsible for promoting home/school links via the prayer bag system and for updating the prayer bags to make them relevant to unit of work
- is responsible for seeking the opportunity to assess the children's knowledge and understanding
- should seek to attend courses and inform the RE Co-ordinator if they feel further development is needed
- responsible for delivering the programme of study ' Learning and Growing as the People of God' and utilise RE resources.

Collective Worship

Collective worship is an integral part of school life at St. Mark's Catholic Primary School. Different forms of collective worship that take place at our school include:

- * During the week pupils from all year groups gather together for Whole School assemblies and key stage liturgies.
- * Mass is celebrated on a weekly basis in school and classes take it in turns to lead the Mass. Many members of the Parish and School Community join us to celebrate Mass as the Mass dates and times are published in the school and parish newsletters.



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- * As a school, we gather for Whole School Masses on Holy Days of Obligation.
- * Every weekly the children take part in hymn practice.
- * Each classroom has a dedicated prayer area where the class pray at regular intervals throughout the day.
- * Time and opportunities are given for personal prayer and reflection.
- * Our Spiritual Council gather together on a regular basis to discuss the faith in our school and they actively lead faith and spiritual activities in school.

Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist currently takes place in Year Three and preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation takes place in Years Five and Six every two years.

In addition to the Strategy which is followed by all pupils, the school provides extra resources, sessions, Masses and spiritual retreats for the Catholic children and their families to support them and enable them to take an active part in preparation for these sacraments. All Masses and Sacraments take place at Holy Name Catholic Church in Great Barr, Birmingham.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the RE curriculum, regardless of religion, gender, culture or special educational needs. Full participation in all aspects of RE is expected.

We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

With regards to the sacramental preparation in Years 3 and 6, all children follow the units of work in the Strategy and extra support is provided for those who will be receiving the Sacraments.

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