



St. Charles Borromeo
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND NURSERY

POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This policy has been approved and adopted by
St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School

Next review – January 2023

St Charles Borromeo Mission Statement

We will **grow** in our Catholic faith by praying and worshipping together.

We will work hard so that we can **learn** and be the best that we can be.

We will **work** together in our families, school, and parish and with those both near and far to make our world a better place for us all.

We will **follow** the example of Jesus and his teachings in all that we say and do.

Policy for Religious Education

In keeping with our Mission Statement, we at St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School aim to provide a Religious Education (RE) that attends to the needs of every pupil. Within this environment we 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*)

“For the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings.” (*The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium 1998*)

This policy should be read in conjunction with our PSHE statement.

Our Mission Statement is central to the life of our school. All members of the school community are encouraged to think of ways in which they can strive to live out the Mission Statement in their everyday lives.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

“The first educators in the faith are parents. It is they, above all others, who establish in their children the first sensitivity and responsiveness to the presence of God, to the practice of prayer and to the patterns of life in the community of faith, the parish. By their example in the home and, their participation in the Mass and the other sacraments, the foundations of a life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down.”

Statement from the Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales on Religious Education in Catholic Schools 2000.

It is, with this statement in mind that we recognise and acknowledge the importance of the partnership with the home and parish communities to which our children belong. As the General Director for Catechesis affirms: “This partnership between home and parish is enhanced by the role of the Catholic school in which the educational mission of the church finds a particular and important expression.”

AIMS

We aim:

- to lead children to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, other religious traditions and the ways in which they seek to express the significance of human life,
- to challenge children to examine their own lives, to deepen their personal faith commitment and to respect that of others,

- to ensure that children acquire a deeper understanding of themselves, their relationships with others and with the natural world,
- to promote spiritual and moral development in all aspects of school life, since God is present in all things, thus enabling children to make sense of how God is active in our world,
- to encourage the children to develop Catholic Christian attitudes and values,
- to help the children understand and value people whose customs and beliefs differ from their own,
- to support parents in the faith development of their children,
- to help the children to develop a range of skills including the ability to investigate, interpret, communicate, criticise, evaluate and socialise,
- to foster attitudes of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, right judgement, courage, reverence, awe and wonder,
- to deliver a curriculum that fosters excellence and enjoyment for all pupils.

OBJECTIVES

Within the context of our Mission Statement, Learning and Teaching, Special Educational Needs, PSHE, Assessment, Marking, Recording and Reporting, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety Policies, the teaching of RE will give children the opportunity to:

- appreciate that God's love and presence are made real and celebrated in the seven sacraments of the Church,
- develop the appropriate skills and attitudes to promote an informed and full response to God's call in everyday life,
- reflect, discuss and question their thoughts, feelings, emotions and attitudes,
- study, investigate and reflect upon their learning,
- develop ways of expressing themselves through the various types of informal and formal prayers,
- familiarise themselves with the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments,
- take part in a variety of celebrations including non-Eucharistic liturgies, Masses and assemblies,
- come to know and understand the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.

THE ORGANISATION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHING

We follow "Come and See," the Catholic scheme for primary schools, in line with Diocesan guidance and The Curriculum Directory. Teaching in RE is based upon the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council.:

REVELATION – God speaks – finding meaning in life.

CHURCH – Christ the light of the nations – Community of Faith

CHRISTIAN LIVING – Joy and hope – Way of Life

SACRAMENTS – Liturgy: Celebration – Celebration in symbol and ritual

THE THEMES

Come and See is developed through three themes based upon the above documents of the Second Vatican Council, which are gradually explored each time at greater depth. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian Living. The basic question – belief for each season time is explored through three kinds of themes:

- Community of Faith – Church
- Celebration of Ritual – Sacraments
- Way of Life – Christian Living

Each of the themes occurs in each season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme. The themes for each season are as follows:

AUTUMN

The three autumn themes are developed in the light of an understanding of Creation.

Family - Domestic Church focuses on life as a gift, myself as a unique and loved creation, the creative love and care that can be expressed in family groups.

Belonging – Baptism/Confirmation focuses on the call to belong. Baptism and Confirmation, sacraments of the gift of God's life and friendship.

Loving – Advent/Christmas focuses on the capacity for entering into loving relationships and the perfect gift and revelation of God's love, Jesus, born to Mary, born as one of us.

SPRING

The three spring themes are developed in the light of an understanding of Incarnation.

Community –Local Church focuses on the people of God gathered in Christ, united in the journey of faith, in care for one another, in sharing their story and in celebration.

Relating – Eucharist focuses on the invitation to know Jesus, to live in communion with him and one another.

Giving –Lent/Easter focuses on Jesus' loving self-giving On the cross, the Father's love that raises him to new life and the challenge of Christians to follow Jesus' example of self-giving.

SUMMER

The three summer themes are developed in the light of an understanding of Redemption and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Serving –Pentecost focuses on the on-going mission of Jesus Christ in the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Inter-Relating – Reconciliation focuses on love, compassion and forgiveness of God the Father revealed in Jesus and poured out by the Spirit to bring forgiveness and reconciliation in the sacrament of Reconciliation.

World– Universal Church focuses on the same love revealed in the diversity of the world and its people, and the gifts of the Spirit that bear fruit in love, joy, justice and peace for all people.

COMMUNITY OF FAITH - CHURCH

The children will be encouraged to:

- understand that we are all made in the likeness of God and are called to be members of the community of the Church,
- understand the roles of the people of the Church, past and present and that to be a member of the Church is to follow the example of Jesus Christ,
- reflect upon the benefits and responsibilities of belonging to a community by becoming active members within it,
- explore the relationships between the Catholic Church and other denominations and faiths.

Our links with the community include:

- work in the parish with St Vincent de Paul,
- inviting elderly members of the parish and local community to join us for various liturgical and non-liturgical celebrations,

- collecting for various charities,
- joining with the parish for various celebrations during the liturgical year,
- Sixth Form pupils from St George's College supporting children in their 'Come and See' work as part of their catechetical programme,
- supporting the Parish Catechists in the preparing children for their First Holy Communion,
- sharing our Christian message through song at a range of venues in the parish local community.

The priest within the parish acts as the school chaplain and is available to help staff and children with the principles of different topics. On occasion, visiting seminarians spend time in the school working with staff and children during RE lessons and liturgies. Other local clergy are also sometimes involved in the liturgical life of the school.

CELEBRATION OF RITUAL - SACRAMENTS

We will help the children to explore the meaning of celebration in the following ways:

- Preparing and participating in the Mass. This will take the form of Masses at the beginning and end of term and on holy days of obligation. Masses may also be organised to celebrate special occasions.
- Every class take a turn to prepare an assembly and / or Mass each year.
- There is a daily act of collective worship for each class/key stage or the whole school, led by the Headteacher, a member of staff or by the children.
- Years 4 to 6 will lead a service for the school as part of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- The assemblies incorporate a religious or moral theme.
- There is a weekly hymn practice in which the children learn music and songs that will be used in worship and liturgy.
- Prayer is an integral part of everyday school life. The children are given the opportunity to pray formally and informally and to experience personal and communal prayer at various times of the day.
- The children will learn certain prayers from memory and be introduced to other prayers which they will use for different occasions. There is also opportunities provided for spontaneous prayer in acts of worship. The children can also write intentions and put them onto the prayer tree in the corridor.
- Through the topics in "Come and See" the children will develop an understanding of the ways in which other people worship and pray.

WAY OF LIFE – CHRISTIAN LIVING

The children will be encouraged to:

- see Jesus as the model of the Christian way of life,
- form moral judgements based on the values which Christ expressed in His life and teaching,
- understand the traditions and values of other world faiths,
- examine core values and their impact upon themselves and the whole community

TEACHING AND LEARNING

One of the main purposes of classroom RE is to draw pupils into a systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the saving mystery of Christ, which the Church proclaims. The following strategies and aims underpin the delivery of religious education in our school.

- In our school, RE will be taught discretely and developmentally. It will include the deepening of knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their applications to life. It is the policy of this school to give 10% of the timetable to the teaching of RE in accordance with Diocesan guidance.

- Ample opportunities will be offered for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross-curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively.
- Engagement with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face will enable them to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose.
- Offer the children a sense of self-worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

At St Charles Borromeo we believe in providing the children with rich and varied learning opportunities. Teachers are encouraged to be as creative as possible in their lesson planning and to employ a range of teaching styles including:

- whole class discussion and teaching
- group discussion and feedback
- differentiated activities according to ability
- children are given the opportunity to choose how they respond to the learning
- partner work
- individual research and study

Staff are also encouraged, where appropriate, to conduct lessons in the church. This would be particularly relevant when teaching about the sacraments and the order of the Mass but may support other aspects of the RE curriculum.

HOMEWORK

R.E. homework is set where appropriate and is linked to the R.E. being taught in the classroom or to special feast days and events in the church.

MULTIFAITH PROGRAMME

As part of the 'Come and See' programme, two weeks are set aside for the study of other faiths, one in the autumn term and one in the summer term. Judaism, the root of our faith is studied every year along with one other world faith. The other faiths studied are: Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. They are studied in a rolling three year cycle.

During our Faith Weeks, pupils are given the opportunity to explore aspects of these faiths through practical activities and, wherever possible, from input by representatives of other faiths as well as trips to their place of worship.

PRAYER

Prayer is a central and ever living part of our school day. Through prayer, we seek to deepen the children's relationship with God in a way that is relevant and meaningful to them. We feel that at every stage the children in our care should be encouraged to spontaneously express their joy, wonder, awe, concern, thanks, sorrow, sadness, anger, fear and disappointment through prayer (see Collective Worship policy).

Prayer forms an essential part of all acts of collective worship and liturgical celebrations. Each class has their own prayer table which is a focus for the children's prayer. More formal prayers are shared too, such as morning and evening prayers, grace before and after meals. Children are also encouraged to compose their own prayers. There is a crucifix in every classroom.

Staff and Governors pray together before every meeting. Our parish priest comes into school to celebrate liturgies with the children and is available to lead the staff and children in prayer.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

At St Charles Borromeo, we believe that spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which the children acquire insights into their personal existence. It is the experience of love, of goodness and beauty. It is a sense of being taken out of oneself; the sense of wonder, of questioning, of awe, or simply the instinct that there must be more to life than this. We believe that enhancing spiritual development helps children to create increasingly coherent narratives about themselves. Through spiritual development, the children are encouraged to grow in self-awareness and in awareness of their responses to experience, seen especially in the light of faith.

At St Charles we aim to provide a safe environment in which our children feel confident to open themselves to the truth of their own experience and feelings. We encourage children in their spiritual development by encouraging a questioning and searching attitude about the self which will include “Who am I?” “Where do I fit in?” and “How do I relate to others?”

Staff are also encouraged to develop their awareness of their own spiritual journey and that, like the children, they can experience the excitement of discoveries and should be prepared to risk sharing their experiences with the children.

Moral education at St Charles is promoted through the R.E. curriculum, PSHE, core values and all other subject areas. It is promoted in interpersonal relationships, enlivened by the whole school Catholic ethos and is concerned with personal decision making on the basis of what is right and wrong.

Spiritual and moral development is promoted in all aspects of school life, since God is present in all things: curriculum subjects (see Appendix A), extra-curricular activities, interpersonal relationships, collective worship – each are avenues into understanding and experiencing God, thus enabling pupils to make sense of how God is active in our world. Therefore, every member of staff in our school has a role to play. All share in the nurturing of the whole person and by their witness to Christian values, help create the ethos in which all can grow, spiritually and morally, and be formed in the likeness of Christ.

Children’s spiritual growth is aided by opportunities for religious experiences, meditation and reflection; collective worship allows pupils to explore and share beliefs, appreciate the discipline of silence and prayer, raise and address moral, personal, social, national and international concern (see policy for Collective Worship).

Our values led education is uniquely placed to promote spiritual and moral development because they both reflect and structure the sort of person we become.

RESOURCES

Each teacher has access to the relevant resources from the “Come and See” website to inform their planning. Children at both Key Stages have access to Bibles in their classroom. Other resources, including DVDs, topic stories and artefacts are stored centrally in the staffroom.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A wide variety of strategies are used by teachers in order for each child to participate in the learning of RE to the best of their ability. These are outlined in our Special Educational Needs Policy.

MARKING, ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

Each class teacher is responsible for the marking of work. Marking is carried out in accordance with the school guidelines (see Assessment, Marking and Recording Policy).

Assessment is carried out in line with Diocesan guidance and this can take the form of observations by teachers and self/peer assessment by students. One topic per term is formally assessed and moderated within school. The new assessment standards are used to moderate learning on a termly basis and this is used to inform assessments for all children. External moderation of these assessed topics also takes place at the Deanery/MAT R.E. Co-ordinators meetings. The standards will be recorded using Target Tracker in line with school practise. This will allow the progress of each child to be tracked and for comparisons to be made with the pupil's performance in writing.

Careful consideration is given to children's verbal responses, particularly in class and group discussions, their willingness to contribute ideas and relevant material and the quality of their written work when retelling and interpreting stories. Parents are informed on a termly basis of topics to be covered and comments from parents and pupils are encouraged.

In EYFS, the staff also use Tapestry to record observations.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

An induction evening, in the summer term for Reception and Nursery and early in the Autumn term for Key Stages 1 and 2, provides parents with an outline of the R.E. curriculum and how parents can be involved. A termly curriculum overview is sent to parents providing them with information about the topics for that term and any other relevant information.

There are parent evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms when parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and see their child's work. A full written report is sent home during the Summer term. In the core subjects, targets to support the children in their future learning are suggested.

MONITORING

The Senior Leadership Team/ RE co-ordinator regularly take samples of children's work. General feedback and examples of good practice are given at staff meetings. Individual feedback is also given if appropriate.

The Co-ordinator is also responsible for carrying out other monitoring activities such as lesson observations and pupil interviews.

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored by the RE Co-ordinator together with the RE Governor and is evaluated and reviewed by governors every year.

Any additional policies referred to can be viewed/downloaded from the school website (www.stcharlesb.surrey.sch.uk). All policies should be read in conjunction with central policies of Xavier CET which can be viewed/downloaded from xavercet.org.uk