

# Religious Education Policy

## St Mary's Horsforth Catholic Voluntary Academy



"Happy together in God's family,  
we love, grow and learn."

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| Approved by:        | Aoibheann Kelly-Edwards | Date: September 2023 |
| Last reviewed on:   | September 2023          |                      |
| Next review due by: | September 2024          |                      |

**The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to share this commitment.**

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## Mission Statement

Happy together in God's family,

Happy together in God's family because we enjoy life and we are working together with family, friends, staff and the parish to make St. Mary's best place to learn and grow into responsible people of God.

we love,

We love because we care for each other, we are gentle and help each other, we respect each other, we forgive each other and work for the common good of all

grow

We grow physically, in our faith, in our attitudes and relationships and in our understanding.  
We want to make the most of all our God given talents.

and learn.

We learn about ourselves, relationships and our faith.  
We learn the skills and knowledge that we will need to take a full active part in our community.

## Rationale of Religious Education

- The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human — that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation — is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church.<sup>1</sup>
- Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.
- For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step-by-step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.<sup>2</sup>
- Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and

<sup>1</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 3

<sup>2</sup> *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000, p. 8-9

capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Aims of Religious Education**

- 1 To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- 2 To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- 3 To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- 4 To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- 5 To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- 6 To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- 7 To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- 8 To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.<sup>4</sup>

### **Curriculum time allocation**

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does ***not*** include Collective Worship.

### **Programme of Study**

To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese of Leeds.

### **Process**

Our starting point in Religious Education is **Revelation**. God is always the initiator in the history of our creation and redemption; it is his revealing of himself that makes classroom religious education possible. To begin with revelation ensures that we respect the revealed nature of Christian faith.

From revelation we move onto Church; in other words, we consider how revelation gives life to the Church. The Church is the bearer of God's revelation and the means by which human beings live out their response to revelation, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

From here we focus on two aspects of the Church's response to God's revelation; Celebration – the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and Life in Christ – the moral life and the pursuit of holiness.

However, attempts to make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

<sup>4</sup> *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

<sup>5</sup> *The Way, the Truth & the Life*, Teacher Book 4, CTS, 2004, p. 4

## **Methodology**

Teaching in Religious Education should help people be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible. It 'serves in the examination and acceptance of the truths which are contained in the deposit of Revelation.'<sup>6</sup>

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

## **Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by Bishops' Conference.

- Formative assessment takes place throughout each topic studied. Staff assess each expectation through learning objectives which are taken from the 'I Can' statements. These learning objectives are ticked if they have been achieved or dotted if the child hasn't achieved, and post teach will take place to secure understanding.
- Summative assessment takes place at the end of each term. Children are deemed to be either WTS (working towards the expected standard), EXS (working at the expected standard) or GDS (working at greater depth standard). Staff arrive at these summative judgements based on formative assessment data collected during each topic. Staff record this summative assessment on Otrack.
- The RE Lead keeps an RE folder which contains a sample of work which shows achievement of the RE expectations. These portfolios of assessed/moderated samples of work are available for inspection.
- Moderation meetings are held during the school year, and with the wider Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust schools (BWCAT).
- Monitoring of teaching and learning in RE takes the form of lesson observations and work/planning scrutiny as well as informal learning walks and book looks.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- The RE Lead reports to governors at the end of the year communicating highlights in RE data as well as other achievements in the subject throughout the year. Any barriers to achievement are also noted as well as points for development in subsequent years.

## **Policy review.**

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the RE Lead, the head teacher and RE governor-and updated every 2 years. The next review will take place September 2025.

## **Management of the subject**

The RE Lead has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

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<sup>6</sup> *Briefing*, 26 May 1994, quoting *General Directory for Catechesis*, 74b

### **Other Faiths**

The study of the faith and traditions of other religious communities to foster respect and understanding of World Faiths is an important part of our RE curriculum. World Faiths are taught throughout the year and our curriculum has been designed to allow children to make links and connections with their learning. The Long Term Overview for RE highlights coverage of World Faiths throughout school.

### **Right to Withdraw**

Parents are permitted to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education given at the school and any such request shall stand until such time that the parent's request is withdrawn. However, the school would hope for a dialogue with a parent who wishes to withdraw their child from religious education in order to understand the basis of the request and to explain the practical implications of such withdrawal.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **The Religious Education Lead will be responsible for:**

- Working with senior Leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Organising and maintaining the school portfolio of pupils' work.
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and Leading in-house staff training and development.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.
- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, Governors, parents, the *Office for Education & Schools* on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.