



**Policy for Religious Education**  
(February 2018)

# **St Mary's Catholic Primary School Dukinfield**

## **Policy for Religious Education**

### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to work to develop the full potential of each individual in an environment where the Gospel values of love, peace, truth and justice are lived out.

### **Rationale of Religious Education:**

- At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore, at St Mary's, we believe that religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.
- We believe Religious Education is, then, **the** core subject in a Catholic school.
- Religious education contributes to evangelisation and catechesis but its specific contribution to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and so Religious Education will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.
- We understand Religious Education to be the systematic study of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold.

'The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.' (*Religious Education in Catholic Schools, para. 4, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000*)

### **The Aims of Religious Education at St Mary's are:**

- to promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- to promote faith as a response to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose
- to promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice

### **Curriculum time allocation**

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time at St Mary's is allocated to Religious Education. This does *not* include Collective Worship. This equates to 2 hours 10 minutes in the Infants and 2 hours 15 minutes in Key Stage 2.

### **Programme of Study**

To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory (2012) – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - The Governing Body of St Mary's has adopted *The Way The Truth and The Life* programme to be used as the principal resource for the teaching and learning of Curriculum Religious Education.

## **Teaching and Learning in RE**

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum, adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils. These may include whole class teaching, group work or individual tasks. Each class teacher is responsible for the planning, teaching and assessment of RE in their own class. Religion is the core subject at St Mary's and, therefore, at least the same degree of planning, preparation and deep engagement is applied to RE as to all other subjects within the curriculum.

At St Mary's we adopt at least the same rigour, energy and dedication in our approach to the teaching and learning of curriculum RE as we do to all other subjects. Teachers and leaders will pay attention to the amount of progress made by all pupils, and groups of pupils, over the course of each half-termly unit. Whilst no single teaching and learning approach is prescribed, teachers should facilitate learning effectively in order that pupils make good or outstanding progress in RE at St Mary's.

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

- Assessment of standards is carried out using the criteria in the Levels of Attainment booklet agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of pupils' progress.
- Half-termly levels of attainment are recorded on the school's tracking grid in order to track the progress of all pupils across the school.
- Standards in RE work (pupils' books) are scrutinised by SLT on a regular basis. RE is always included in our termly SLT Monitoring Schedule.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning in RE takes place through annual lesson observations.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

## **Policy review**

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the RE Coordinators and the RE Link Governor and will be updated every 2 years.

## **Leadership and Management of RE**

Mr Murray, Mrs Brackenridge and Mrs Carlson are the joint RE Co-ordinators at St Mary's Catholic Primary School. They have responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

## **Opportunities to Reflect**

At St Mary's we recognise the importance of regular opportunities to reflect on what pupils have learned in Religion lessons and what this might mean to them in daily life. As a staff, we start each weekly staff meeting with a period of meaningful prayer, often linked to the liturgical year or significant feast days. In class, pupils are given opportunities to write prayers and prepare and take part in reflections which seek to deepen their relationship with God. Each class in school has a dedicated Reflection area which offers a focal point for the class's reflection and prayer.

## **Whole School Mass**

Each class in school takes it in turn to prepare a whole school Mass – which takes place in the school hall every Friday at 9am. During this week, classes may use their curriculum RE time in order to prepare and practise for Mass. This includes helping to select display work, choosing and practising readings, choosing and singing hymns and practising drama.

## **The Wednesday Word**

Every child is given a copy of the Wednesday Word to take home each week. Parents and carers are encouraged to share this leaflet with their children as another way to deepen their relationship with God and broaden their love, knowledge and understanding of the Gospels. On Wednesdays, teachers are encouraged to use the Wednesday Word to form part of class prayer and worship.

## **Godly Play**

At St Mary's (particularly in the Infants) we use 'Godly Play' as a strategy to enhance the delivery of Curriculum RE. Through Godly Play, religious ideas and stories are given tangible form which encourages children to 'handle' and work out the ideas and their feelings for themselves. This helps children to become immersed in bible stories in a reflective and playful frame of mind. This is the mode in which children often do their deepest learning, engaging with their whole selves, mind body and spirit. Godly Play resources are stored in the reflection area in the Central Resource Area.

## **Other Faiths**

At St Mary's, other faiths are addressed as a consequence of, and in the context of, Catholic Teaching. Just as Jesus was asked who his neighbour was, we feel that our children should develop a respect and tolerance towards other religions and faith traditions.

We help children to learn about other faiths by making links - where possible - during each of the six topics covered by each year group. We give special emphasis to Judaism during our whole school preparations for Easter. We also arrange visits to other places of worship within the local area.

The Religious Education Co-ordinators at St Mary's are responsible for:

- Monitoring teaching, learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Consulting with staff and governors and then updating the school's Self-Evaluation Form for Religious Education (RE SEF) and associated RE Policies, in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- 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 governors, parents and the diocese on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget

This policy was reviewed and revised by a cross-sectional representative group of teachers and teaching assistants on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

It was subsequently adopted without amendment by the Catholic Ethos, Performance and Standards sub-committee on behalf of the Governing Body, on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2018.