



RE Policy

*At St Mary's we live love and learn with the
guidance of God.*

The Aims of Religious Education at St Mary's Voluntary Catholic Academy

“The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.”

Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools 2012

The aims of Religious Education in St Mary's are;

1. To present engagingly a comprehensive content which 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.

3. Objectives

Our objectives flow from our aims.

- To deepen knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life.
- To provide opportunities for children to apply and use their understanding of religious truths and think creatively
- To engage with their own and other's beliefs and values and develop good attitudes and dispositions, so instilling a love of learning.
- To engage and reflect difficult questions of meaning and purpose.
- To offer a sense of worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

We will achieve them through;

- Analysis and reflection and critical appreciation of sources.
- Marked progression through the different stages of education.
- The unequivocal support of the management of St Mary's Catholic Academy .
- 10% of the length of the taught week for each Key Stage of education.
- The encouragement of investigation and reflection.
- Development of appropriate skills and attitudes which allow for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life.
- The use of skills in other areas of the curriculum.

4. Religious Education Programme

To fulfill our aims and objectives we use the *“Come and See”* scheme recommended by the Archdiocese of Middlebrough.

Overview of Content

Themes

“Come and See” is developed through three themes based on the four constitutions of the Second Vatican Council.

They are Church, Sacraments and Christian Living.

Autumn

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

Church Theme – Domestic Church, Family

Sacramental Theme – Belonging, Baptism, Confirmation

Christian Living Theme- Loving, Advent, Christmas

Spring

The three spring themes are developed on the light of Incarnation.

Church Theme – Local Church, Community

Sacramental Theme – Relating, Eucharist

Christian Living Theme – Giving, Lent/Easter

Summer

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

Christian Living Theme – Serving, Pentecost

Sacramental Theme – Inter-Relating, Reconciliation

Church Theme – World, Universal Church

Each theme is explored by class topics in four weekly blocks. Each class has their own set of topics which open out the themes through tasks appropriate to each stage of learning.

In addition, the study of **Other Faiths** is also a part of the Scheme. The school takes one week in the Autumn Term and one week in the Spring Term to explore another religion/faith.

New Curriculum

Through our planning of the new curriculum the themes of Easter and Christmas are celebrated and explored in school. This cross curricular approach is used from Nursery – Year 6.

A number of 'Be spirited' events are planned through the year to give the children to reflect on their own beliefs in a number of creative ways.

The Process

Knowledge/ Understanding/ Skills / Attitudes

The process for delivering the topics in "Come and See" has three stages,

Explore, Reveal and Respond, which enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

Explore (One Week)

This introduces the topic where the children's life experience is explored, the question(s) it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon.

Reveal (two weeks)

This is the heart of the process where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living.

Respond (one week)

This is where the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life. The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. This new understanding will enable them to make a personal response in their daily lives. Children will be invited to remember, rejoice, renew and respond to their learning.

The process encompasses a variety of teaching and learning styles, which enable the needs of individual pupils to be met.

5. The Approach Chosen

Each class works on three topics each term as stipulated in the “Come And See” programme, together with the teaching of another faith/ religion in the Autumn and Spring terms.

The Foundation Stage layout comprises,

Whole Class input

Adult directed group activities

Continuous provision

Years 1 to 6

The Structure within both **Explore** and **Reveal** from years 1 to 6 comprises of the following sections;

1. Learning focus: the overall focus of the session.
2. Content: some suggestions for input to develop the focus.
3. Some key questions follow the input. These are suggested questions which will encourage children to wonder and reflect on what they have heard or seen, or other questions may also arise.
4. Some suggested activities. These are guidelines and may be adapted.

The **Respond** structure is the same for Foundation stage as well as Key stage 1 and 2.

1. Remember : Children will be prompted to demonstrate what they wonder about and remember.
2. Rejoice : The opportunity to celebrate children’s knowledge and new understanding of the topic.
3. Renew: Children will make an individual response to what they have learnt and experienced and consider how they might apply it to their daily lives.

Planning

The senior management is responsible for:

- Choosing an approach
- Ensuring that 10% of curriculum time is allocated to teaching of Religious Education. This amounts to 2 hours 15 minutes at Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 2 hours 30 minutes at Key Stage 2. This does not include collective worship other than the Rejoice section.
- Monitoring of timetables to ensure quality time for Religious Education
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Medium-Term

The Religious Education Coordinator is responsible for:

- Allocating the starting date for each theme
- Allocating the appropriate amount of time for each part of the process
- Allocating time for the exploration of another Faith (Judaism) or Religion (Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism); if it is being covered this term
- Hi-lighting significant feast days, relevant celebrations and global dimension e.g. Mission Together
- Indicating which classes planning, teaching, assessment and books are to be monitored
- Indicating which formally assessed theme will take place each term and then collating the assessment data and transferring it onto 'whole school' tracking.

Short-term

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Selecting appropriate activities to ensure the achievement of the learning focuses and overall learning outcome
- Stating the days on which these activities are to take place
- Indicating groupings to show how the differing needs and abilities of children are to be met
- Planning time for formal assessments as necessary
- Evaluating own teaching
- Hi-lighting the activities chosen for formal assessment of one topic per term
- Following the school tracking procedures for information gathered during on-going assessment
- Completing the Record of Attainment sheet at the end of each term
- Passing on assessment data to the Religious Education Coordinator
- Passing on the Record of Attainment sheets to the next class teacher

Differentiation

At St Mary's we aim to provide meaningful and appropriate religious education for all children, taking account of different needs, abilities and learning styles. The purpose of differentiation is;

- to enable children to succeed in the set task or activity and to challenge them to take the next step in learning.
- to challenge children to be self-motivated and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- to enable children to recognize and celebrate their achievement.

Additional learning needs and /or disabilities

It is essential to take into account all children with a variety of learning needs and plan accordingly. Some ideas will be found within the topics. The widget symbol indicates a supported text web site which has resources referred to in the programme.

Multi-sensory approaches may be used and Plevels provide differentiated performance criteria. A range of learning experiences including music, different materials, and media will be used.

1. Assessment

Assessment is focused by the overall aims & objectives of Religious Education. In the Come and See Scheme it is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of the themes & learning outcomes for each topic through Attainment Targets. Assessment establishes what the children know, understand & can do. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith.

At the beginning of Explore and Reveal there is an indication of the Areas of Learning and the Attainment Levels which are covered. At the end there is a summary of the levels of that topic. Regular assessment, individual pupil tracking and record keeping are carried out according to the direction given by the diocese to ensure pupil progress.

Assessment in “Come and See” emphasizes a wide range of achievement.

In our school it involves:

Informal Assessment

- General observation of children engaged in classroom activities
- Observation of classroom displays & individual contributions made to these
- Talking to the children
- Review of objectives of lesson / task / topic.
- Marking and feedback

Formal assessment

- A topic per term is assessed and moderated, using the model provided by the Archdiocese.
- Reference is made to Attainment Targets & Levels using level descriptors. An assessment sheet is filled in for each child, recording their progress. These sheets are passed on through the school and on to Secondary Schools.
- Scrutiny of books / planning by the Coordinator, Head Teacher, staff representatives and RE Governor.
- RECO keeps examples of work/ moderation from each class for each topic assessed, as well as a portfolio of samples of work for each level.

Attainment targets & Levels of Attainment

See sheet.

Records of attainment are kept for every child and highlighted each term following formal assessment. A grid of children's levels is used to track progress across the school.

2. Recording

Recording provides evidence of achievement. It involves:

- ROA's
- Tracking of progress by teachers which then informs RECO about trends and the progress of groups within the school.
- Class assessment folders
- Moderated examples
- Records of book/ planning scrutiny and observations
Self assessment by the pupils eg,. pupils talking, responding to questions
- Written comments by teacher in books
- Visual evidence eg. display, dance, celebration
- RECO portfolios

3. Reporting

Reporting is delivered via:

- Feedback to the pupils / classes through marking and discussion
- Feedback to teachers via coordinator
- Information given to parents at parents evenings and annual school report
- Ofsted reports
- Governors meetings

4. Evaluation Of Teaching

Teaching is evaluated through;

- Scrutiny of books
- Scrutiny of plans
- Monitoring of teaching
- Observation of teaching
- Monitoring of displays
- Monitoring of resources

5. Evaluation Of Learning

Children are enabled to evaluate their own learning. Marking and feedback encourage a personal response and sets challenge to promote learning.

At Respond, they remember and celebrate all they have learned. They will begin by reflecting on what they wonder about followed by the opportunity to remember what they have understood and learnt. At Renew they will think about how they can apply their learning to their lives.

Staff Development

Procedures for staff development comprise;

- Regular staff meetings/ INSET
See SED for INSET over the last two years, and Action plan for forthcoming training.
- Use of Handbook, Policy for Acts of Collective Worship, Spiritual and Moral Policies
- Coordinator's attendance at regular coordinator meetings.
- Staff attendance at relevant training – see CPD Policy for procedures.
- Whole staff training in related areas such as Rainbows

6. Staff Induction

Newly qualified staff attend relevant Archdiocesan training. The RE Coordinator and SMT provide formal and informal support.

The school handbook offers guidance for all new staff.

The SMT and RE coordinator work with class teachers to support all new staff in procedures and expectations.

CPD opportunities are available for all staff. (See CPD Policy)

7. Staff Communication

Teachers attend weekly staff meetings where information is disseminated and where communication and consultation take place. There is a longer staff meeting on Wednesday nights and a shorter briefing on Friday mornings. Minutes are passed to staff via email.

Key Stage meetings also take place.

All support staff attend INSET when relevant.

Regular SMT meetings take place.

See Staff handbook & CPD Policy

8. Resources – Teaching

All classes have a copy of the “Come and See” file at the appropriate level, with access to the web site.

In addition all classes have copies of God’s Story 1, 2 or 3 – dependent on age group – to be found in appropriate classrooms.

Also all classes have access to Church’s Story and God’s Story CD and on the school shared drive.

All classes have focus areas and resources to support class Collective Worship including CD from the Archdiocese.

Other Faith resources are also available.

9. Relationship of RE to the Whole Curriculum

- The RE policy relates to the school's policy for Acts of Collective Worship and should be read in conjunction with the latter & the rota for Class Masses, Key Stage & Whole School Assemblies, all of which provide opportunities for Spiritual and Moral development.
- We have Moral and Spiritual Policies.
- Links are forged with parents by inviting them to class led Masses, Assemblies and Special Celebrations eg. End of year Mass. Parishioners are also invited to Masses or Services celebrated in church.
- The School works to support the parish in preparing the pupils for the Sacraments of Reconciliation & Holy Communion.
- We take every opportunity to link the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school with agencies such as CAFOD, Mission Together SVP and Mini Vinnies.
- The aims of our mission statement and our Religious Education policy are inter-related with school policies for Education for Personal Relationships, Citizenship, Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs and ICT.
- The RE Curriculum incorporates many aspects of PHSE, Circle Time, SEN and Equal Opportunities. Literacy, History, Geography, Numeracy, Drama, Art & ICT are also very much in evidence through the study of RE. For example:

Writing an account from a particular point of view

Planning Collective Worship

Writing / saying prayers

Making up own prayers

Designing a poster

Role Play

Using ICT

Locating books in the Bible

Using talents for the good of others

Discussing problems

Learning about different places and times