

ST. ALOYSIUS' CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Through Jesus we learn, love and grow together.

To achieve this, we aim to:

- 1 Create a stimulating learning environment in which each child can hope to develop her or his full potential, regardless of race, gender, ability or background.
- 2 Encourage the children to be independent, critical learners, enabling them to take full responsibility for their own actions.
- 3 Build upon and strengthen the children's experience and understanding of faith, praying together each day through an act of Worship.
- 4 Teach the children to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of Catholic traditions and other faith traditions which will enrich their faith and help them to respect the beliefs of others.
- 5 Function in an open, friendly and forgiving manner and, through communication, foster links in all areas of our school community.
- 6 Equip the children with knowledge, skills, understanding, self-esteem and respect for others to enable them to handle with confidence each stage of their educational and social development.

PHILOSOPHY

Religious Education is both explicit through the passing on of doctrine and implicit in the way we behave towards others, in our relationships with all and through our own way of life.

Religious Education helps pupils to recognize and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life appropriate to their age and maturity. It allows and encourages opportunities for searching and questioning in an open manner. It seeks to challenge pupils about their own beliefs and encourages them to deepen their faith. It encourages them to respect others in their own personal quest for meaning.

In a Catholic school religious education, while taking account of diversity, seeks to promote a deeper knowledge, appreciation, and understanding of the Catholic faith. At the same time it relates to and respects other faiths and traditions and ways in which they express the significance of human life. It is concerned with the development of the whole person. (Handbook for the Inspection of Religious Education in a Catholic School)

AIMS

St Aloysius Catholic Junior School aim to:

- Put Christ at the centre of the whole Religious Education programme.
- Ensure the Catholic ethos of the School is central.
- Allow pupils to take an active role in the Religious Education programme.
- Provide each child with the fundamentals of a Christian faith, encompassing an ever-deepening understanding of Christ and incorporating the Christian message into everyday life.
- Ensure that the Religious Education programme underpins every aspect of school life, including academic, social and moral behaviour.

TEACHING TIME

Each class have three sessions of RE per week, which is a total of 2.5 teaching hours (10% of curriculum time). This does not include acts of whole school and class collective worship, school and class masses.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The whole school takes part in a collective worship session daily. Every child in our school has the opportunity to join in with:

- One class mass per term on a Monday morning
- At least one assembly per term
- Weekly worship through singing
- Celebration of Holy Days with mass in the Church
- Easter Celebration
- Christmas Celebration

Wednesday and Thursday worship is linked to the Liturgical calendar(Wednesday Word theme)

SCHEME OF WORK

The school uses the CURRICULUM DIRECTORY and the NEW AGREED LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT for assessment, as the driver documents to inform all teaching and learning in Religious Education. The framework used to model the linear teaching of content according to the Attainment Levels, is the Resource Framework for Religious Education in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Westminster, which is produced by Dr. Margaret Carswell. In addition, the planning grids produced by the IREP (Islington Religious Education Project) team are used to support this. These take into account the religious and educational needs of the children, helping them to explore questions about life, dignity, and purpose within the Catholic tradition.

The framework model consists of:

- A Scripture process employing the principles described in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD), and content necessary for achievement of the Diocesan understanding of the Levels of Attainment up to and including AT 1 (i), (ii) and (iii) Level 5 and AT 2 (i) and (ii).
- A three year cycle for Religious Education linked to the Liturgical Calendar:

-e.g. Year 1(2015-2016):
Autumn Term
Year B-Beginning With God
Year C- Advent To Christmas

Spring term:
-Year C-Sacramental People
-Year C-From Lent To Easter

Summer Term:
Year C-Easter To Pentecost
Year C-Virtuous Life

-Year 2(2016-2017):
Autumn Term:
Year C-In the Beginning
Year A-Advent to Christmas

Spring Term:
Year A-People of Prayer
Year A-From Lent to Easter

Summer Term:
Year A-Easter To Pentecost
Year A-Kingdom of God

-Year 3:
Autumn Term(2017-2018):
Year A-Beginning With Church
Year B-Advent to Christmas

Spring Term:
Year B-Jesus at Prayer
Year B-From Lent to Easter

Summer Term:
Year B-Easter To Pentecost
Year B-Discipleship

At the beginning of each unit, the RE Subject Leader gathers staff together for a staff worship session. Individuals are invited to prepare their contribution before the meeting and share at the service.

MULTI-FAITH TEACHING

This area is studied in accordance with the advice received from the Diocese. Two weeks are allocated to the study of other faiths each academic year. These dates are decided upon at the start of the school year. Each year group study Judaism during the Autumn Term and Islam in either the Spring or Summer Term. Lessons for each topic are planned using the 'Here I Am' scheme and are adapted and applied to suit the school situation. To support the study of other faiths, links have been made with the local community. This

includes our contact with the Jewish Museum in Camden. At least one year group per year visit the Jewish Museum or Synagogue.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME

Practicing Catholic children in Year 3 undertake a programme led by the Parish in preparation for their First Holy Communion. All Year 3 children are supported in their understanding of the Eucharist through the teaching of the Spring unit from the Framework(that is linked to the Eucharist).

Year 3 teachers, selected members of the SLT and representatives from the Governing Body attend the First Holy Communion Mass.

ASSESSMENT MARKING AND RECORDING

Formative:

Each teacher observes the pupils and guides them by making formative marking comments (on every third piece of work) and identifying next steps in their work related to the learning intentions/ success criteria. The teacher also uses the pupil's verbal contributions within group and class discussions as an assessment indicator. A further way in which the teacher can assess the child's progress is through one to one discussions. Pupils use these comments as targets for improvement in future work.

Summative:

This is an ongoing record of the pupil's progress in RE. Once a term, all children are assessed against the Diocese of Westminster Agreed Understanding of Levels of Attainment in Religious Education. Every pupil is assessed on outcomes from the units of the framework that are linked to the strands and levels of attainment and are given a level which is recorded on pupil tracking sheets.

RESOURCES

Each class has access to children's bibles and copies of the following books:

- God's Story 3
- Church's Story 3
- Friends of Jesus
- More Friends of Jesus
- Recent Friends of Jesus
- Let the Sea Roar
- The Way, The Truth & Life Series-Pupil Books

IT is a central focus in RE lessons. Chrome books are used to carry out research and interactive whiteboards are used to display visual images and video clips to enhance learning. FLIP and digital cameras are used by staff to record and capture pupils' learning in a variety of ways.

In all classrooms, there is a permanent prayer focus and display which is a valuable resource for creating quiet moments and appropriate atmosphere when needed. These reflect the topic under study and the changing liturgical seasons. There is a selection of religious pictures and artifacts on each table and the children are involved in the planning

and organizing of these when possible. There is an extensive range of other resources, which are stored in the staffroom (maintained by the RE Subject Leader) that can be borrowed at any time (e.g. items necessary for Class Masses, whole school prayers, hymn books, non-fiction books). The RE Subject Leader has a budget each year to add to existing resources.

HOMEWORK

When appropriate, homework linked to the current RE topic/ global Church theme/ liturgical calendar is given to the pupils. This may be a written piece of work, collection of information from family members or gathering together items from home, which are relevant to the topic. In addition, pupils are to read the Parish version of The Sunday Gospel and complete activities from 'The Wednesday Word' leaflet.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At St. Aloysius Junior School, we strive to ensure equality of opportunity in all areas of the curriculum. Through example and carefully chosen activities we encourage our children to treat all people with the care and respect that Jesus showed to all. We recognize that all members of our school community are of equal value and have equal right to religious education regardless of their race, class, gender, disability or specific learning needs.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

It is recognised that each pupil is making their own journey of faith and will be at different stages to some of their peers. The school respects this and encourages children to continue at their own level. Work is carefully planned to meet the needs of every individual.

LIASON WITH THE INFANTS SCHOOL

Regular contact with the infant school is essential to ensure a smooth transition between Year 2 and Year 3 for progression and continuity to take place between the two schools. The way in which this contact occurs is through:

- Regular meetings with the RE Subject Leaders of each school.
- Staff from each school share RE In service training days.
- Classes from both the Infants and Junior schools are invited to share in each others' assemblies and masses.
- The schools join together to prepare for whole school Masses.
- Both schools are invited to share in each other's Christmas and Easter celebrations.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is strongly valued and the school aims to foster links between the parish, school and home. This is achieved through;

- Sending newsletters home each term outlining topics/themes and ideas for prayer at home.

- Distributing the ‘Wednesday Word’ leaflet in order to promote sharing of the Sunday Gospel at home.
- Inviting parents and carers to attend the liturgical celebrations in school.
- Inviting parents and carers to attend celebrations of Feast days in the parish church.
- Welcoming parents and carers into the school, to familiarise themselves with the work their child has undertaken in the RE curriculum.
- Encouraging parents to support their child’s homework, with the sharing of knowledge and experiences.
- Reporting to parents annually about their child’s progress in RE

PRAYER

Prayer is an essential part of the school life and ethos. Through prayer, the children’s natural spontaneous expression of joy, awe, concern, thanks, sorrow, sadness, fear, disappointment can be evoked and their growing awareness of themselves and the world around them. Prayer is a natural way of expressing the above through song, dance, gesture, movement, art, writing, and silence. Having a ‘focus of reference’ develops this, a special experience of awareness, learning to be still and quiet.

Informal words of prayer arise out of the above in the children’s own simple every day language.

Ages 7-8

More formal prayers using set forms of words are introduced.

This is done by hearing them said, joining in, focussing on parts of them, and by learning them by heart.

Age 8-11

Children can be introduced to traditional meditation techniques – stilling exercises, use of breathing, use of a word repeated over and over, prayer imagination, prayer of sense, and forms of rhythmic prayer.

At St. Aloysius pupils will be introduced to the following prayers:

Years 3 and 4

Children will revise:

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory Be to the Father

Sign of the Cross

Grace before and After Meals

Short Responses (The Lord be with You..... and with your Spirit)

Sign of Peace

Eucharist prayer for Children

Phrases from Psalms

Morning Offering

Night Prayers

Simple Acts of contrition and blessings

Prayers for special occasions will be taught including simple litanies, simple magnificat, and simple examination of conscience.

Years 5 and 6

The children will be taught the above prayers and explore;

The Apostles Creed

I confess

Angelus

The Gloria

The Nicene Creed

The Offertory Prayer

More Phrases from the Psalms

Benedictus

The Rosary

Penitential Rites

Lord Have Mercy

Eucharistic Prayer

Holy Holy

Lamb of God

In addition to the above, the school will encourage the pupils to contribute their own prayers, including those from different countries and spoken in other languages.

MONITORING

The Religious Education Subject Leader keeps a record of the weekly prayer/assembly themes and Class masses. The Subject Leader monitors in line with the whole school cycle of monitoring by having a Teaching and Learning Review. This involves the monitoring of pupil books, SMARTS and planning with individual teachers and jointly considering areas for development. Observations then take place of the teaching and learning in the class, with members of the SLT and external RE representative in order to agree on the quality of teaching and learning. If teaching 'requires improvement', then further support, action and monitoring is put in place. The Subject Leader also offers to model lessons for staff, with particular support for NQT's and non catholic colleagues. The Subject Leader reports to the SEN and Curriculum committee of the governing body. The Head teacher reports to the governing body annually, on the overall quality of RE within the school.

Monitoring the Policy:

The Head Teacher and senior Leadership Team will monitor the policy by regular reviews and observations. The Head Teacher will publicise the policy and bring it to the attention of pupils, parents and staff annually.

This policy was updated by Patrea Mossman, the Subject Leader.

This policy was agreed in the Summer of 2016

Review and update by Spring 2019

Signed: _____
Chair of SEN and Curriculum committee.

Appendix 1



An excellent RE plan includes:

- ✓ Planning for all lessons
- ✓ Links to RECD made clear
- ✓ Opportunities for extended writing (to attain higher levels of attainment)
- ✓ Short, specific objectives using child friendly language (aim for 6 words max).
- ✓ Key questions for all lessons in main teaching box.
- ✓ A detailed main activity that links to the objective (including sufficient level of challenge).
 - ✓ A range of activities throughout the topic (including drama).
- ✓ Details of differentiation– support and challenge.
 - ✓ An outline of the plenaries.
- ✓ Opportunities for reflection (personal/ whole class).
 - ✓ Use of IT by children (eg computer/FLIP).
 - ✓ Scripture references.
 - ✓ Use of visual images.
 - ✓ Video/audio links.
 - ✓ Key words.

If fully included on the plan these things can be copied and pasted onto the topic SMART where appropriate to save time.

Appendix 2

What makes a fantastic RE lesson?

- Role play
- Speaking and listening activities
- Use of IT (including flip camera)
- Use of art/visual images/photographs
- Displaying the key words and clarifying their meaning
- Sharing the learning objective (WALT) which should be short and well focused.
- Use of scripture- shared in a variety of ways
- Interrogation of scripture for meaning
- Links from scripture to real life- *eg what would this look like in the playground?*
- Independent activities
- Activities with appropriate level of challenge
- Differentiation in terms of spiritual development, not literacy
- Time for reflection
- Honest reflection
- An open, safe and supportive environment for sharing
- Meaningful context
- Calmness
- Prayerful plenary led by children
- A religious focus in the plenary
- Modelling
- Use of TA to enhance learning
- Teacher/TA/children sharing personal experiences
- Accurate subject knowledge of the teacher

Appendix 3



St. Aloysius' Catholic Junior School Guidance for Prayer Tables and RE displays

Class Prayer Table

A prayer table can add much to your religious education classroom. It serves as a reminder that your classroom is a place of faith, and it can turn any space - whether it's in a school, in your home, or in the corner of your church basement - into a warm, spiritual atmosphere. Your classroom prayer table can be the center of prayer and scripture reading for your class. Be sure it's big enough to hold all the things you want on it and the right size to gather your class around it.

The prayer table should be covered in a white cloth all year round. In the Church's ordinary time a green cloth should be placed over the white cloth. During Lent and Advent, a purple cloth should be placed over the white cloth.

Items that should be on your Prayer Table

- **A Bible (or God's Story/Church's Story books):** A beautiful prayer table has a Bible propped up slightly and lying open on scripture relevant to the time.
- **A candle:** A lit candle will provide a soothing, peaceful atmosphere.
- **A cross:** Preferably a crucifix, a cross will add perspective. If your cross doesn't stand upright, place it in a ball of clay and flatten it to make a stand.

Themes and Additions

At certain times it may be appropriate to add something new to the prayer table temporarily. These are some ideas:

- In the spring, a small **potted plant**, to remind your class to thank God for the new life you see all around you.
- Have your class scan the newspaper for people who need prayers. The children can place their **newspaper clippings** on the prayer table during prayer time.
- Place a **globe** on the prayer table and pray for people all over the world who are suffering.
- When discussing communion, add a **loaf of bread and a cluster of grapes** (real or fake from a craft store).
- Place a box (covered with contact paper and decorated) on the prayer table and use it as a **prayer box**. Children can write prayers on small strips of paper and place them in the box as they come into class. At prayer time, take out the prayer requests and pray for them as a class.

Try to get children involved in the planning and arrangement of the prayer table as much as possible.

RE display

The class RE display should change for each new unit.

The display should include:

- The name of the topic.
- Key words for the topic (taken from front page of the Margaret Carswell Resource Framework)
- Some questions and statements related to the topic (these can be taken from the IREP Planning Grids)
- Examples of children's work.

Appendix 4

Expectations for RE books

Presentation

- ❖ A title page should be stuck in at the start of each topic.
- ❖ Each piece of work should be on a new page.
- ❖ The full date should be written on the top line of the page.
- ❖ The WALT should be written underneath the date.
- ❖ Both the date and WALT should be underlined using a ruler.
- ❖ Children should only be writing with a handwriting pen if they have exceptional handwriting (and once they do get a pen license they shouldn't swap between pencil and pen for writing).
- ❖ Pictures should be drawn with pencil not pen.
- ❖ When sticking in A4 sheets please trim the edges so they fit flat into the book neatly.

Children's work

- ❖ Work should be of sufficient challenge for the children- please use the levels of attainment to check that activities are appropriate for your year group.
- ❖ All children should be given the opportunity to complete tasks using IT.
- ❖ Work should not be left unfinished (as much as possible).
- ❖ There should be at least 6 pieces of written work in the books for each topic that include evidence of meeting the Agreed Understandings for AT1.

Marking

- ❖ Should be in accordance with the St Aloysius Marking Code.
- ❖ Every third piece of work should be marked with a comment that provides next steps for learning or allows pupil to reflect.