

At St Clare's "Guided by Jesus Christ, our teacher, we journey together, learning to dream, believe and achieve"

Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did **1 John 2:6**



St. Clare's RC Primary School

Religious Education Policy Feb 2016 – 2017

This policy document should be considered in the light of our School Mission Statement which outlines all that underpins our work at St. Clare's:

Mission Statement

"Guided by Jesus Christ, our teacher, we journey together, learning to dream, believe and achieve"

WORD (*We are guided by Jesus Christ our special teacher*)

Jesus is our special teacher. He is always with us. Through the gospel readings we are able to follow in Jesus's footsteps, reflect on our decisions and choose the right path. This allows us to shine. At St Clare's we place Christ at the centre of all we do.

WELCOME (*We welcome everyone into God's family*)

Jesus welcomed all people as his message is for everyone. In school we show welcome and warmth to all by inspiring one another to reach their true potential and celebrating our unique talents and gifts. We are a welcoming faith community and remember that our God is the loving Father of us all.

WELFARE (*We show others that we love and care for them*)

Jesus said we should 'love one another as I have loved you.' We do this in school by looking after each other; especially those who are vulnerable and by putting the needs of others first. We are always ready to forgive others and we say sorry with honesty, courage and meaning.

WORSHIP (*We listen, talk and celebrate with Jesus*)

Everything that we do in school is a celebration of God's creation, every subject, every activity, every moment. To help us remember this we have special times of prayer throughout the day, the week and the year. We often celebrate mass and we know that Jesus is with us in a very special way

WITNESS (*We live a life that helps other people know Jesus*)

We are never on our own. Jesus is with us in every place and situation in school. This gives us a special hope now and for the future. We follow Jesus and guide others as one body in Christ Jesus.

Rationale

The purpose of Religious Education in all Catholic schools is to develop "religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically".

- Religious Education Curriculum directory for Catholic Schools (CES 1996).

The intent of this policy for religious education is to guide school practice to achieve this goal.

Promoting British Values

The DfE have reinforced the need “to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.”

The Government set out its definition of British Values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy. At St. Clare’s we reinforce these values regularly through our holistic approach to education and our personal example with the ‘dignity of each individual’ at the heart of all we do.

Aims of Religious Education

“Religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school.”

- Statement from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales (May 2000)

Religious education at St Clare’s is central to the whole curriculum. Growth and development in the Faith is not simply confined to timetabled religious education but permeates everything we do. We aim to nurture every aspect of Catholic life and to provide individuals with opportunities to develop a personal relationship with God by creating:

- An environment that uses Jesus as a role model, thus demonstrating the Christian values of respect, trust, honesty and co-operation.
- A celebrating community, which uses prayer, assemblies, festivals, liturgies, positive discipline and worship.
- A sense of belonging to and participating in a community.
- A real understanding and practise of the Catholic Faith.
- Opportunities to develop understanding, respect and appreciation of other faiths.
- Familiarity with religious language, symbols signs and gestures of worship and prayer.
- A curriculum that develops the whole child, integrating physical and intellectual growth alongside moral, spiritual, emotional and physiological growth.

All members of staff work together; supporting children and each other. We hope that the children educated at our school will grow towards religious maturity, ready to face the responsibilities of a Christian life.

We recognise that St

Clare’s is a very important part of the Mission of the Church. We are called by the Gospel to proclaim and affirm that all are made in the image and likeness of God and to strive to promote their dignity. The school endeavours to enable each person to call forth their unique God-given gifts.

We aim to:

- Use Scripture to enable us to become familiar with the person, life and teachings of Jesus
- Assist our Faith Community to grow in understanding, experience, and knowledge of the Church
- Use the abilities that God has given us to learn, know and make the right choices
- Utilise every opportunity to create suitable conditions for faith development
- To nurture spirituality
- To embrace our Faith Community by loving, respecting and valuing each other and demonstrating this in everything we do

Aims of Religious Education Curriculum.

At St. Clare’s Religious Education is a core subject based on the expectations of religious education given in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools. “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.” (- Statement from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, May 2000)

Childrenwill:

- see their place in God's world and have the confidence to shape their own future hopes and dreams
- appreciate the witness of the living traditions and history of the Church and in particular the parish St Clare's
- express the Word of God beyond the school community
- strive for a spirit of service, justice and charity based on the Beatitudes
- show stewardship towards local, national and international communities
- show stewardship to Creation
- learn to become an agent for change and of social transformation at the service of the common good, as builders of the Kingdom of God
- be taught curriculum R.E through, "Come and See"
- plan, deliver and participate in Church and school celebrations

To achieve these aims in daily classroom practice, through a variety of learning experiences, St Clare's School encourages pupils to:

- use their senses to experience, appreciate and become more aware of God's world
- learn about Jesus' life by listening to stories
- share their experiences with others
- respond to stories and pictures which develop religious understanding
- pray in different ways and make up their own prayers
- grow in awareness of the world and other faiths
- express their religious views through drama, music, art and exploit opportunities to use ICT to present and enhance their religious work
- empathise with others less fortunate than themselves by giving of our time and also by being involved in raising money for charities such as CAFOD and CARITAS (St. Joseph's Penny) and harvest hampers for needy parishioners/local charities.
- distinguish right from wrong by reflecting on their actions and experiencing forgiveness and reconciliation
- promote peace through their own actions and using adults as a good example
- participate in school and parish celebrations

The RE programme

To fulfil our aims we use the Come and See programme of Religious Education which integrates the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Levels of Attainment and the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Children explore the mystery of Faith through Scripture and Tradition. 'Come and See' ensures that our school meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. Lessons are very well resourced with both interactive stimuli, a variety of artefacts and making cross curricular links. The 'Come and See', scheme has been advocated by the Salford Diocese. The scheme is presented in sections – one for each year group. The scheme dictates the learning objectives which the children should be taught, however, teachers are encouraged to find different ways of teaching these objectives rather than following each lesson plan rigidly.

There are three topics taught each term and 2 'other faith' units.

The 'Come and See' programme forms the basis of our scheme of work and teaching. This follows the following process:

Explore – search for meaning.

Reveal – revelation of God.

Respond – our response is faith.

- Search – Explore: introduction to the topic starting with the children's life experiences. AT2 reflection on meaning. 1 week of religious education time.

- Revelation – Reveal: the heart of the programme where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living. AT1 knowledge and understanding. 2 weeks of religious education time.
- Response – Respond: this is where learning is remembered, celebrated and responded to in daily life. Still follows the – remember, rejoice, renew format. 1 week of religious education time.

Each year group has a specific topic linked to a universal school theme as outlined below:

Themes & Topics	Early Years FS 1 and 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Domestic Church Family	Myself	Families	Beginnings	Homes	People	Ourselves	Loving
Baptism/Confirmation Belonging	Welcome	Belonging	Signs and Symbols	Promises	Called	Life Choices	Vocation and Commitment
Advent/Christmas Loving	Birthday	Waiting	Preparations	Visitors	Gift	Hope	Expectations
Local Church Community	Celebrating	Special People	Books	Journeys	Community	Mission	Sources
Eucharist Relating	Gathering	Meals	Thanksgiving	Listening and Sharing	Giving and receiving	Memorial Sacrifice	Unity
Lent/Easter Giving	Growing	Change	Opportunities	Giving all	Self Discipline	Sacrifice	Death and New life
Pentecost Serving	Good News	Holidays and Holy Days	Spread the word	Energy	New life	Transformation	Witnesses
Reconciliation Inter-relating	Friends	Being Sorry	Rules	Choices	Building Bridges	Freedom and Responsibility	Healing
Universal Church World	Our World	Neighbours	Treasures	Special Places	God's People	Stewardship	Common Good

The 'Caritas in Action' scheme is used in conjunction with 'Come and See' to promote a better knowledge and understanding of the social teaching of the Catholic Church. It is the school's policy to study a different theme each term on a designated 'Caritas in Action' day, when the entire timetable is devoted to the exploration of one of the seven themes. The day culminates in a special celebration assembly, in which the children share their work and reflect on their learning.

The school uses the 'Journey in Love' scheme as the basis for its Sex and Relationships Education programme. The scheme has its foundations in the belief that we are all made in the image and likeness of God and, as a consequence, gender and sexuality are God's gift and reflect God's beauty. The programme is delivered during our designated SRE week in the Summer term. (See SRE Policy)

Teachers are encouraged to teach through a range of creative approaches, so that the children can apply their skills and talents in literacy, art, music, dance, computing and drama through RE. RE displays should also be present around the school so that learning can be shared and celebrated with the whole community. The school is committed to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of scripture and the message that it has for our lives today; for example, through class parables; reading the Bible; displays etc.

Curriculum Organisation:

10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship.

The explicit teaching of R.E. is timetabled to take 2 hours in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. In Key Stage Two, R.E. is timetabled for 2 and half hours.

Assessment, Reporting and Evaluation

Assessment in religious education is used to identify difficulties and areas for future development; provide information on strengths, progress and achievement to pupils, teachers and parents; and to inform future planning. A whole school marking scheme is in place and is used in RE books.

Bi-termly, the children are formally assessed in AT1 following the strand focus set out by the diocese. Assessments will take a variety of formats, so that RE knowledge and understanding is assessed accurately and not constrained by a lack of skills in other subjects. Where needed, an adult will scribe for children who cannot record well. Forms of assessment which may be used include written work, art work, drama, discussion etc.. A yearly overview of the child's attainment against each attainment target is kept in the class assessment file which is passed onto the next class teacher at the end of the year.

Assessments for AT2 are ongoing throughout the year. Assessments are recorded on a class record sheet and kept in the teacher's assessment file.

All children keep a Religious exercise book throughout the year. In the Foundation stage, observations of children's comments are also collected as not all work is recorded in books. Pupil's work is recorded in a number of ways: pictorial, written, displays, assemblies and ICT on the school server. Planning is monitored and R.E books are scrutinised termly by the co-ordinator. Every member of staff is observed teaching a Religion lesson at least once every year.

Children's Individual Records to be completed half termly (Pupils to be assessed against the Level Descriptors) Senior Management Team to scrutinise and discuss Teacher Assessment termly.

RE is reported formally to parents in the annual reports.

Inclusion

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

We will provide an inclusive curriculum which will meet the needs of all pupils, where the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of every learner matters. We recognise the fact that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Using a variety of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty (we do not expect all children to complete all tasks)
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child
- Using classroom assistants to support the work of the individuals or groups of children.

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the R.E. curriculum. They plan so that the activities meet the various needs of the class and ensure participation from all the children. Religious Education is an area where all children can be involved at their own level and so work is often differentiated by outcome or level of support. Liaison takes place between home, school and parish to ensure that children with special needs are treated in an appropriate way when involved in the Sacraments.

Equal opportunities

All children are encouraged to learn with their class for RE lessons and to attend liturgical celebrations. We also positively seek knowledge of and respect for other faiths by encouraging children of differing religions to talk about their faith openly.

Prayer and Worship

St. Clare's School provides a Roman Catholic Education which is an integral part of the life of the school. Children are not only taught about their faith in lessons, prayers, liturgy and assemblies but are encouraged to live and share their faith within the school community which, in turn, permeates all areas of school life.

In order to live the faith, prayer, worship and liturgical celebrations are central to the Catholic tradition and the life of the school. It is a vital part of our role as educators in the faith to promote an appreciation of and active participation in prayer, worship and celebration through activities which include

- Whole school Acts of Worship throughout the week.
- Assemblies – Class led or teacher led.
- Children’s Masses to celebrate Feast Days and special occasions in the life of the school, e.g. the beginning of a New Year, Leavers Mass etc.
- Morning Masses.
- Harvest Celebrations in the Autumn Term.
- Advent Celebration in December.
- Christmas Celebration.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Communion in the Spring/Summer Term.
- Holy Week Celebration.
- Easter Celebrations.
- Celebration assemblies take place weekly and the children are invited to celebrate their successes with the school community. In this special assembly, certificates relating to the 5W’s are awarded for showing faith in action.
- The Monday morning assembly is either based on a liturgical theme or a PSHE / Citizenship topic.

At the beginning of the day, before and after lunch and at the end of each day the children will say prayers as a class. The children are given the opportunity to experience formal, informal, spontaneous and meditative prayer. They will also have the opportunity to reflect on the Word of God.

Every year, each class will also hold a ‘class assembly’ as an opportunity to showcase an aspect of the Religion curriculum.

Collective worship is important at St Clare’s and is of a high quality. The Headteacher prepares a timetable for liturgies, class assemblies and whole school masses for the year. These timetables are also circulated to Governors so that they may have the opportunity to also attend. Parents and family are invited to attend School Masses and liturgies to worship with the children as a community. Children are actively involved in the preparation of masses, assemblies and liturgies and are encouraged to participate as fully as possible.

Resources

Each class teacher has a copy of the ‘Come and See’ relevant to their year group. In addition to the booklets, we have access to the ‘Come and See’ resources on the website. At St. Clare’s we are blessed with a recently built school chapel and holy garden as additional areas for use in lessons and for prayer and worship. There are also other resources including other faith artefact boxes, assembly ideas, Bibles, liturgical posters, guided meditations for children, copies of ‘Church’s Story’, Religious Art and other relevant resources, which are located in the RE resource room or the school chapel. Resources are centralised and available for all staff to access. The Chapel also has a selection of religious books such as children’s Bible stories, prayer books and books about other faiths. Each class has a religious focus area, which is changed regularly and the children are encouraged to contribute to its creation and use. This area contains religious symbols and icons as a focus for prayer and has a coloured prayer cloth which corresponds to the liturgical year. E.g. a purple cloth for Advent etc.

The Sacramental Programme

The children in Year Three are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation in school by teachers and Father Jeremiah from the Parish of St Clare’s. The children are enrolled onto the programme at a welcome Mass at the beginning of the school year. The service celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation usually takes place during Spring term and Holy Communion takes place during the Summer term.

The work in R.E. undertaken by the staff and children prior to Year Three ensures that the children have a foundation of faith on to which their Sacramental preparation can be built. They continue to work on the Sacraments in school as part of the ‘Come and See’ syllabus while they complete the Sacramental programme. Teaching of the Sacraments is continually re-visited throughout the rest of the children’s primary school career. The staff attend and take part in the Sacramental celebrations.

Mass Attendance

All children attend whole school Masses throughout the years such as Induction, Advent, Easter and the Leavers’ Mass. All of the

Church. As part of their R.E. curriculum, the younger children also visit church in a more informal way so that they become familiar with the church building, its meaning and significance and how to conduct themselves in 'God's House.'

The children in Year three attend Mass with the Parish every Tuesday morning and are accompanied on a rota basis by Years 4, 5 and 6.

Family Masses are held with the Parish on the last Sunday of every month. All children enrolled on the Sacramental programme attend these masses where they are supported by staff from school alongside Catechists from the Parish.

Home, School, Parish

"The partnership between home, parish and school is the best setting for the formation of maturing Catholic young people."

- Statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (May 2000)

Parental Role

Parents understand on entry of their child, that they must support the Catholic ethos of the school. All children attend assemblies and take part in RE lessons, and they are all assessed equally. We recognise that parents are the first educators of their children.

"By their example in the home and in their participation in the Mass and other sacraments, the foundations of life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down."

- Statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (May 2000)

We support parents in developing children's faith. We work alongside them, assisting them on their faith journey and supporting them as they work with their children. Due to their key role we regularly invite parents to join us for collective worship – sharing assemblies and Masses.

We recognise the importance of parents as the child's first teacher and their role in faith development. Parents and staff do everything possible to work in close partnership. There are many opportunities for parents to engage in school life.

Our Parent Forum benefits from parents who give generously of their time and raise sums of money for the good of our children.

Parish Links

The journey in faith experienced by the children involves the clergy, parents and parishioners who commit themselves to the spiritual development of our children. Amongst some of the opportunities which are provided are

- The Sacraments of Confirmation, Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist.
- Children's participation as readers, choristers etc. at Holy Day, Parish Masses.
- Visits to nursing homes and old people's homes within the parish by the children during the Christmas season.
- Clergy and parishioners working in the school.

The Headteacher's from all the Catholic Schools meet on a regular basis. The RE co-ordinator meets with other co-ordinators from the Catholic cluster schools on a regular basis.

Community

We encourage the children to participate in charitable events for organisations such as Cafod, Cornerstones, St Joseph's Penny, Children in Need etc.

Children learn about the wider community through the study of other world faiths. We study Judaism through the 'Come and See' programme and another faith in the summer term during 'Multi Faith Week'.

Pupil Chaplains

St Clare's School has a dedicated team of 9 Pupil Chaplains from Year 6 and 5. Pupil Chaplains have to apply in writing for their job outlining why they feel they will make a good Pupil Chaplain and they are then interviewed by the Headteacher, RE Lead and Father Jeremiah. This role has a high profile in school and pupil chaplains are given a special jumper to wear so that they are easily distinguishable from other pupils. When Pupil Chaplains are commissioned, this is carried out in a Whole School Mass.

Some of the tasks the Pupil Chaplains undertake include: assisting Father Jeremiah during school Mass, Fundraising and weekly break time meditation.

Multi-faith Week

In line with St Clare's Creative Curriculum all children have access to a broad and enriched thematic curriculum, which explores other faiths and cultures.

Every year the school holds a multi-faith week where the children from EYFS to Year 6 study a world faith in detail including Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism. Using the 'Come and See' materials, teachers plan and deliver lessons which encourage our children to understand and appreciate other religions. Children are taught about the beliefs, signs and symbols used in these world religions. St Clare's School firmly believes in the value of Multi-faith week as a way to strengthen our own faith whilst learning about others.

Religious Retreat Days

Days of religious retreat are regularly planned for classes and various groups throughout the school. These are days of special reflection where the children can focus on their own spirituality and grow in their religious knowledge. We ensure that the sacramental year of Y3 in particular, is well catered for with 4 visits routinely planned in without any cost to parents so that spirituality can be well developed. Recent trips include visits to the Marist Centre, Chorlton, Salford Cathedral, Wardley Hall and Gorton Monastery.

Role of the Co-ordinator:

Should aim to:

- Support staff in their delivery of the Diocese syllabus by:
 - Modelling good practice
 - Monitor the quality of teaching and learning (including Planning, Assessment and progression) through Lesson Observations and Work Scrutiny
 - Provide information and making information available to all
 - Monitoring resources
 - Organising and supporting inset
 - Collate evidence of engagement in the Faith Community
- lead staff in developing the teaching of R.E. through support, advice, organising INSET and purchasing resources
- develop and extend the Catholic ethos of the school in relation to worship, prayer, Scripture, assembly and the school's mission statement
- oversee the collection of assessment evidence, and create a portfolio of good practice
- organise displays which celebrate the children's achievements in R.E. alongside other members of staff
- monitor R.E. provision
- oversee an annual Multi-faith week in school where the children study another world faith in detail
- liaise with and report to the Religious Education governor alongside the Headteacher

Signed by:

W. Ryan

W. Ryan, Chair of Governors

Date:

16th March 2016

Date for Review:

March 2017