

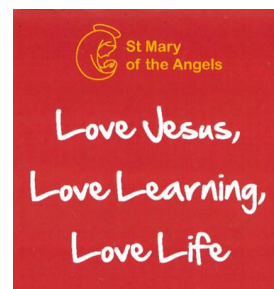
St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Person responsible: Mrs. H. Thorpe

Written: July 2022

To be reviewed: July 2023



General Aims and Philosophy

Religious education and School Aims

At St. Mary of the Angels our religion and faith permeates every aspect of the life of the school. While addressing curricular RE through timetabled sessions we also address the spiritual needs of the children in many other ways, such as through whole class discussion, through subjects such as PSHCE and Art, in assemblies and Liturgical celebrations. As teachers and practitioners we aim to impart and nurture the Catholic faith, values and traditions to the children in our care. Our aims for the education of our children are expressed more fully in our mission statement, Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life.

Evangelisation, Catechesis and Religious Studies

We recognise that the faith backgrounds of our children vary and that they are at different stages of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. We therefore approach and deliver Religious Education in a way which meets the needs of every child.

School, Home, Parish

We aim to provide a secure, caring and positive community which values all children, staff, parents and parishioners:

- We foster a school environment which enables each child to grow in love for God, themselves and each other.
- We establish good relationships with home from the beginning of a child's life at the school and aim to strengthen this throughout the child's time with us. We involve parents in many events and projects and encourage them to participate in the religious life of the school, including collective worship.
- We recognise that our school is an integral part of the parish community and appreciate that priests and catechists must be involved in our R.E. programme. We are blessed to be part of a broad and active parish and we aim to incorporate ourselves into the life of the parish.

Religious Education and the Total Curriculum

We believe that cross curricular links are integral to a holistic and creative approach to Religious Education. Examples of this include, but are not exclusive to:

Literacy	- speaking and listening: class discussions - drama: role-play and acting out events - poetry, prose: creating prayers
D&T	- making artefacts - making celebration cards
Art	- creating individual, group and whole class pieces - looking at art associated with other faiths
Music	- used for quiet reflection and celebration

	- looking at music from other faiths
History	- using timelines and collecting historic information
	- history of other faiths e.g. Judaism
Geography	- using maps to locate places in the Holy Land
Science	- studying nature and the world God made
	- developing a sense of awe and wonder
Philosophy	- developing thinking and discussion skills
Lotc / Forest School	– working together, making artefacts

As in other core subjects, we focus on developing Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in RE. This can be evidenced in our pupil books and planning.

Roles, Functions and Responsibilities

Responsibilities

The headteacher, Mrs Thorpe is ultimately responsible for the Religious Education of all our children and the Deputy, Mr Campbell and R.E. coordinator, Mrs Kane shares in this responsibility. Each teacher has the task of ensuring that the children in their class receive Religious Education appropriate to their age and ability levels. All teachers prepare their own class assemblies and contribute to other services and celebrations throughout the year including assemblies and prayer leaders.

There is continual liaison with the parish priest on sacramental preparation and other school celebrations.

Communication

Staff members are provided with copies of the R.E. team's material for each terms' topics which are taken from The Way, The Truth and The Life scheme. Staff meeting time is allocated to discussing planning and assessment, as and when necessary. We use The Way, The Truth and The Life as our core scheme with other resources to support, including CAFOD Universal Church Units, P4C resources, Lat Blaylock publications etc.

Requisition

Within a set budget the R.E. Coordinator has the responsibility of requisitioning and maintaining resources for Religious Education and for the religious life of the school.

Monitoring

As with other curriculum subjects, there is an assessment and monitoring process in place to include monitoring of planning, scrutiny of work in books and speaking with children. In addition to the Subject Leader, the governors take a proactive role in the monitoring of the subject delivery through the whole school monitoring and evaluation schedule.

Other Links

Parish Links

Sacramental preparation is now a shared programme between school and the parish. Both school staff and parish catechists deliver the programmes together. Celebrations of the Sacrament of First Forgiveness take place at one of our parish Churches and celebrations of First Holy Communion take place on a Saturday during May.

Clergy, children, parents and other parishioners unite to celebrate the Mass together on numerous occasions throughout the year. Parents and parishioners are also invited to join us for Liturgical and Prayer events, such as our Advent Service, our Ash Wednesday service etc. They also meet together for various social functions throughout the year.

High School Liaison

Liaison with Ellesmere Port Catholic High School is important throughout the primary years. To assist their transition to secondary education, Year 6 children visit Ellesmere Port High School for two full days in their final year at St. Mary of the Angels. We also work with EPCHS throughout the year on joint projects including Retreat Days, curriculum visits and more.

Religious Education in the classroom

Religious Education Lessons

Religious Education is at the core of our Curriculum. Elements of RE permeate into every other curriculum area too. The specific times for more structured religious teaching vary in accordance with the ages of our children. This is one tenth of the weekly taught time for each class, from EYFS to Year 6. RE lessons are taught over both morning and afternoon sessions and are delivered throughout the week. RE lessons are taught by qualified classteachers with support from HLTAS and Teaching Assistants.

Children are encouraged to value themselves as a unique beings, created and loved by God and showered with many different gifts. We aim to develop in each child a knowledge and love of God and of His creation. Through this the children learn to care for and respect other people, animals and the environment.

Methodology

Religious Education is based on *The Way, The Truth and The Life* as our core scheme. The teaching styles employed in the classroom are varied and engaging, gaining depth and focus as the children grow in age and ability.

With their teachers and peer groups, children explore various themes and relate them, through their own experience, to the Christian way of life. They may be engaged as a whole class, small group, or individually in discussion, drama, writings or artistic pursuits working at their own level of knowledge and understanding.

Extra-classroom activity

Community Links

The school is involved in the larger parish community in a number of ways – Masses and other liturgical celebrations, fairs, foodbank etc. During Lent and Advent and on family fast days the children are encouraged to make a small sacrifice in order to contribute to charities such as *CAFOD and Mission Together*. Local charities such as *Claire House Hospice* also received financial support on occasions.