

Saint Clare's
Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy



Member of staff responsible: Mr Parkinson
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The Intent of our Religious Education Curriculum

Mission Statement

St Clare's is a Christ-centred family where everyone is valued and respected. We learn and grow, whilst strengthening our relationship with God and one another. Together in His love, we can achieve our full potential.

Play, learn and grow together with Christ

At Saint Clare's Religious Education is the foundation of all our teaching, and our Catholic beliefs and values inspire and unify every aspect of our school life. Religious Education is linked to all our teaching and the key areas of the children's learning. This is because we see education as being God's work, and so education is religious, in that it concerns discovering the breadth and depth of God's creation and His creatures. Hence, whatever area of the curriculum children are studying they are actively learning about:

- the mysteries and wonders of God's creation
- the challenges and discoveries that are presented to them
- the uniqueness and dignity of individual people
- how they can enjoy God's world

'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)

The planning of our faith teaching, which is at the centre of our curriculum, becomes the foundation for the National Curriculum, with its aims to promote

"the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils . . . and prepare such pupils for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life."

(Education Reform Act 1988)

At Saint Clare's we understand that Jesus challenges us to be 'perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect', by the strength of our faith, hope, love and compassion. Therefore, we aspire to see ourselves and each other as 'precious in His eyes'.

Developing an enquiring mind about our purpose in the world we explore topics based on our own experience. We meet Jesus in stories from scripture and discover a friend for life by talking to him in our own prayer and collective worship. We encourage multi-cultural interests through looking at other world faiths and customs.

Every person is valued and feels part of a caring community in school, within the parish and the worldwide family of God. The teaching of religion therefore is not confined to the R.E. lesson but pervades all the work of the Curriculum which is used to stimulate Religious spiritual growth and development, as well as academic and social progress.

We value the role of parents as the first educators of their child and encourage a partnership between home, parish and school. The Parish and the Parish Priest, as well as the School, have a role to play in assisting parents to perform their duties as religious educators. The school accepts its responsibility to support the parents and parish by helping the children to understand their faith and to understand their lives in the light of their faith. Our children are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation by taking part in a Parish led programme, under the guidance of the parish priest and catechists.

We believe the purpose of St. Clare's Catholic Primary school is to:

- help pupils to live and learn in a Catholic Christian environment leading to acceptance and respect of others in a diverse school community and wider world.
- provide an environment in which high expectations will lead to a striving for excellence in all areas of school life.
- educate and develop each member of the school community by building on their strengths and supporting their weaknesses.
- foster purposeful relationships with those who learn in, work in and visit our school where diverse views and backgrounds are respected.

The Implementation of our Religious Education Curriculum

Curriculum time allocation

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Prayer and Liturgy or Worship.

Curriculum

We use a range of resources to fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the current Curriculum Directory - Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ. We are mindful that a new draft Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2022) is currently in development. As a school we await training and guidance throughout this transition phase to continue providing meaningful Religious Education curriculum for the children in our care.

Resources used to help deliver our curriculum:

- Caritas in Action
- The Way, the Truth and the Life Series
- We Believe Scheme
- Come and See Scheme
- ACN and CAFOD resources

Religious Education Lessons

At Saint Clare's, Religious Education focuses children's learning on a single end goal - to deepen the children's relationship with God. We do this by 'Learning about' and 'Learning from' religion. Therefore, during each lesson it should be clear whether the children are learning about or learning from our faith. Religious Education relies on the same key principles as any other lesson: excellent teaching and excellent subject knowledge. We are very fortunate to have a staff who have a wealth of experience and knowledge of the Catholic faith. Religious Education lessons are planned in such a manner that ensures they are fun, exciting and engaging - children learn best this way; not by simply reading and answering questions.

Presentation of Work

Work is presented in a variety of ways across the school, both written and oral. In written pieces, children have to present work as they would in English and other subjects and there is the expectation that it will be neat, clear and well organised. Throughout topics, children are encouraged to actively listen and interact with others to discuss issues and form opinions. This shared learning enables children to express their own ideas, listen to those of others and grow in their understanding. Drama is used effectively to walk in the footsteps of others, developing a greater sense of empathy and an understanding of how they and others feel. Work is also depicted through HRSE, art, writing, ICT and other areas of the curriculum. The choice of presentation is dependent upon the learning taking place. All activities are planned through deep consideration of how the learning objective can be best achieved and how mastery can be embedded.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In line with our other school policies, we recognise that all children have needs. We continuously strive to ensure that we challenge all children to reach their true potential and develop their spirituality no matter what their educational need is. Teachers know their children and strive to move their learning on. Children who are on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register will be working in line with their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using Age-Related Standards (3-19) in Religious Education. These standards have been approved for us in Catholic Schools by the department of Catholic Education and formation of The Catholic Bishop/ Conference in England and Wales.
- Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress. This record is passed on at the end of each year. It is kept by the co-ordinator and forms a portfolio of work.
- Assessment in RE is discussed at termly Pupil Progress Meetings with the Senior Leadership team and assessments are recorded on our whole school assessment tracker. This data is then shared with governors, who challenge it with the same rigour as other core subjects.
- The school portfolio of pupils' work is made up of the work of tracked children from each cohort who are of differing abilities.
- An in - house moderation meeting is held every term as part of our staff meeting cycle. Each year all staff from our school meet as a cluster (5 other primary schools) to moderate within individual year groups.
- Assessed samples of work are presented for Diocesan Moderation throughout the year.
- Children in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) complete a baseline assessment as soon as they start school and at the end of their time in EYFS.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out formally through book looks and lesson observations and through informal discussions with the staff and pupils.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each term and during parents evening.
- A segment of each weekly staff meeting is put aside for RE, giving staff a regular opportunity to raise any issues and discuss development.
- Religious Education is discussed during our Governor meetings and our RE Governor is in school at least once a week meeting with children and staff.

Prayer

An essential part of the Catholic ethos of Saint Clare's is the prayer life. (Please see Prayer and Liturgy Policy) The most important aspect of prayer for children, is that they realise it is their way of communicating with God and a time to become closer to God. Children are encouraged to pray in different ways according to their age and personal development. Children are introduced to a variety of different ways of praying:

- quiet reflection/meditation
- praying together
- writing own prayers
- prayers through music
- learning traditional Catholic prayers

Staff are encouraged to pray with children, and to be an example for them. Through prayer, we endeavour to develop our relationship with God. All classes have a prayer area which has displays of children's work. This area changes and reflects the liturgical year. Each class pray at least four times a day. We have our own school prayer book which includes all our daily prayers as well as other important prayers that we learn throughout our time at Saint Clare's. It is expected that all classes will say a prayer at:

- The beginning of the day
- Before lunch
- After lunch
- At home time

Sacramental Programmes

Sacramental preparation for Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation are undertaken by catechists from Saint Clare's Catholic Church and supported by members of staff from school. During this time parental sessions are delivered to provide parents with the opportunity to question and reflect on their own faith journey.

Mass and Services with the Parish

Growing to love and understand the Mass is an essential part of our teaching. We attend Mass as a whole school each term, which helps us to place our learning and formation into God's hands. All children attend Mass on holy days and other times of the year, in addition to visits to Church as part of the curriculum. Children from across the school are chosen for the readings and prayers, they often write parts of the latter themselves as well as contributing to the music and singing. During the school year different classes also take the lead for liturgical events.

- Year 5 and 6 - Advent
- EYFS & KS1 - Christmas
- Year 3 - Holy Week

Children have the opportunity for confession throughout Lent and Advent as well as services of reconciliation throughout the year. We also hold two processions alongside the Parish in the Summer term for the Veneration of the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady. We are also very lucky to be joined each week in school by our Parish Priest.

Communication with our school community

We value the role of parents as the first educators of their child and encourage a partnership between home, parish and school. Over the past two years we have endeavoured to find ways to further strengthen this relationship and developed new avenues of communication. Each class has their own blog page on the school website as well as a whole school twitter, Instagram and Facebook pages where we celebrate and share our Faith. With support of the Parish we also have the ability to live stream and record liturgical celebrations which enables more of our community to be involved in the Spiritual formation of our children in school.

Visits and Visitors

During their time at Saint Clare's Catholic Primary School, each child can expect to:

- Visit a range of Churches in our local area
- Visit a Cathedral
- Visit places of worship/sacred space for different faith communities
- Meet and interact with leaders of Faith communities in our local area
- Lead on prayer within their class and the Parish community
- Meet and interact with members of our Parish
- Understand their connection to our Parish community

HRSE – Human, Relationships and Sex Education

We have developed our HRSE scheme of work, with each year group having access to their own age appropriate curriculum. Evidence is recorded in each class HRSE book as well as being referenced across the curriculum in other subject areas. (Please see additional HRSE policy)

The Impact of our Religious Education Curriculum

Religious Education is an integral part of learning and formation, allowing children to be living witnesses of the Gospel. An indicator of success will be the amount of pleasure and knowledge gained by the children from the study of RE and a deepening of their personal faith, understanding and response to Christ through their service of others. This will support children to love themselves, love each other and love Jesus Christ so that they are ready when they reach the end of Year 6 to commence the next stage of their life journey.