



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy [Sept 2015]

But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" *Luke 18:15*

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Mission Statement and our Learning and Teaching Policy.

Aims of RE at St Mary's

To develop relationships with God, provide knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Christian faith, its relevance to the ultimate questions of life and the skills required to engage in religious thinking.

Therefore it will:

- Stimulate growth in understanding of their own values which are underpinned by their personal faith and ethos at St Mary's. They will use prayer to help them grow in their faith journey
- Stimulate deep understanding so that the best choices can be made with regard to God, self, other people and the world we live in
- For RE to be evident throughout the life of the school and in all subject areas through creative, cross-curricular planning
- To continue to promote RE as a core subject and as such have a 10% allocation of total teaching time thus developing a spiritual, moral and cultural awareness

At St Mary's the School Family will be helped to:

- Understand the use of scripture to help us to become closer to God by the way we live our lives
- To know everyone belongs God and that it is people who make up the Church
- To develop a knowledge and understanding of people and roles in the church and explore the relationships between the Catholic Church and other denominations and faiths
- Explore the values that underpin beliefs and actions in the human family, reflect on the values which Christ expressed in his life and teaching and explore the values and way of life of other world faiths
- Explore the meanings of celebrations, which mark the growth and development of every human being
- Understand that spiritual growth and development is rooted in the Church's sacramental life
- Reflect on the place of prayer within the life of the Catholic community and of individual Christians and develop a knowledge and understanding of prayers in other faiths and world religions

The organisation of RE at St Mary's

RE is evident throughout the life of the school.

How this is achieved:

- Every child is taught the same theme at the same time at a level suited to the age and understanding of the child
- In every class there is evidence of work (work recorded in designated RE books or classroom display) undertaken with regard to the *Come and See* RE curriculum as approved by the Bishops' Council of England and Wales
- A prayer table which is the main focus in every classroom. This will reflect the liturgical year and be interactive. Children have directed prayer times and opportunities to pray spontaneously
- The whole school will reflect St Mary's distinctive nature

- Assemblies in both whole school and key stages are linked to the Liturgical year, the Gospel teachings from the Sunday lectionary and the Come and See and SEAL topics
- Masses and Liturgies also reflect topic elements and the needs of the wider community (eg: Harvest, Remembrance)
- Whenever possible children are encouraged to develop an awareness of others. Collections are made during the year for charities such as CAFOD. Children also support local charities and international disaster fund appeals as they occur

The children are encouraged to have respect for themselves and one another, this is implemented through our EPR policy (Education for Personal Relationships) and programme linked to revised Diocesan documentation and SEAL resources.

Planning:

Planning takes place in each year group beginning with the 'I can . . . ' statements and the level descriptors. These statements are used to inform learning objectives for each lesson. Success criteria are used to ensure children understand how to make progress through achievement. Tasks should be clearly differentiated and a range of activities presented to ensure the wide variety of learning styles are satisfied. (Activities may involve drama, art, written work, use of ICT for example).

Planning is saved on the staff area of the school server and monitored by the RE subject leaders to ensure suitable coverage, progression, continuity and equal access.

Opportunities are provided in staff meeting, local Catholic School meetings and by outside agencies to discuss topics and the theology underpinning each theme.

At St Mary's we devote at least 10% of curriculum time to the teaching and learning of RE. The nature of the RE lesson is such that it always includes a time set aside for prayer and reflection. Assemblies, Liturgies and Masses are not counted as part of the designated 10% time.

Assessment:

Ongoing assessment opportunities are highlighted at the planning stage of each topic, these are then used to inform future planning. Assessments are made against the Levels of attainment (NBRIA) and may take the form of:

- Key questions
- Display
- Discussion (circle time)
- Use of media/ICT
- Written work
- Peer assessment
- Liturgy preparation

Topics are formally assessed each term and moderated between staff members. Whole school moderation takes place in staff meeting time. St Mary's also takes part in Deanery and Diocesan moderation meetings to ensure consistency of judgement. Levels of attainment are recorded on the school's chosen method of reporting and recording (SIMs).

Monitoring:

Over the year the Headteacher and the RE subject leaders monitor the impact of teaching and learning and assessment of RE in a variety of ways to ensure continuity of access to RE across the school and time allocation.

- Observation of RE lessons
- Review of planning
- Scrutiny of work
- Display
- Talking to the children
- Observing and monitoring pray tables
- Monitoring 'Big Question' books
- Spiritual journals

Differentiation:

RE is taught in each class with careful consideration of the needs and abilities of each individual child. St Mary's takes account of age and stage of development in the faith journey of each child.

Resources:

Each class has a range of class-based resources and books to support daily worship and teaching and learning. There are a wide range of centrally held resources to compliment class resources and support the teaching and learning of RE throughout the school and to support staff in their on subject knowledge and understanding.

Celebration of RE:

At St Mary's the celebration of RE is an integral part of school life it takes the form of:

- Display
- Sharing Liturgies, Masses and assemblies with our parents and parish community
- Whole school, key stage and class assemblies and liturgies
- Church and parish visits
- Nativity plays and the dramatisation of the Easter story

Chaplaincy:

The priest of the parish of S Mary's, Crowborough is welcomed to the school for Liturgies, Assemblies, Mass, prayer and as part of the day to day activities of the school. He can be regularly seen in school on a weekly basis and is a familiar figure to both staff and children alike.

Other world faiths:

Other world faiths are taught in line with the Come and See programme. Pupils are taught to respect the views, opinions and belief of others with sensitivity and understanding. Children of other faiths who are part of St Mary's school community have opportunity to share their own personal experiences.

The role of Governors:

All Governors are responsible for RE and the Catholic ethos throughout the school. There is one nominated RE governor who makes at least two visits to the school throughout the year and reports back to the full governing body.

Staff development:

In Service Training is regularly provided in the weekly Staff Meeting and on local Catholic schools Diocesan Training Days as well as at the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton Christian Education Centre, Crawley.

The Headteacher, RE team members and all newly qualified teachers attend courses provided by the diocese. Other teachers can attend identified courses too.

Liaison with parents:

Parents are informed of the topics to be taught in RE via St Mary's School website. Information on Masses and Liturgies are included in the weekly Newsletter, which can also be found online. All parents are invited to school Masses, Liturgies and other celebrations throughout the school year.

Sacramental preparation:

Preparation for the Sacrament of the Eucharist and Reconciliation usually takes place for children in Year 3, though other children in key stage 2 may participate. The programme is taught in school at present but is supported closely by the parish. A celebration following the Mass of First Holy Communion takes place in school.

Worship:

At St Mary's Worship is an integral part of school life. This takes a variety of forms including Masses, services of Reconciliation, Liturgies, assemblies and daily prayers. (See Prayer Life Policy)

Masses and Liturgies:

- Masses and Liturgies take place in the school Hall or the Church. Mass is celebrated on or around Holy Days and at important times of the school or liturgical year.
- A Liturgy to Our Lady is held during the month of May
- Parents, carers, friends and parishioners are warmly welcomed to come along to all Masses and Liturgies held at school

- Children are involved in all parts of the Mass, serving, reading, writing and leading the prayers and choosing the music
- Whole school Services of Reconciliation take place during Advent and Lent. Children in key stage 2 are given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation individually following the liturgy.

Assemblies:

Children and staff join together as a whole school, as a key stage or as a class to pray and worship together. An Assembly rota is set out at the beginning of each term. A reflective atmosphere is created by the use of candles and music in preparation for worship. Assemblies are lead as follows:

- Monday Whole school Gospel Assembly led by the Headteacher
- Tuesday Key stage Assembly led by teachers on rota
- Wednesday Hymn/Singing Assembly led by Music/RE leaders
- Thursday Class Assembly/ Parish Mass
- Friday Celebration Assembly led by the Headteacher

Prayer:

Prayer is an integral part of the life of St Mary's School family. In class children pray at the end of each day and before lunch time. All RE lessons begin and/or conclude with prayer and reflection. The prayer table is a central part of each class. It may reflect the current RE topic or the season of the Liturgical year. It is interactive and thought provoking, may use coloured cloths (to reflect the liturgical season), religious artefacts, beautiful and thought provoking objects. Prayer tables will always contain a Bible prominently displayed. Tables are fresh and constantly changing.