

ST. WINEFRIDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

Mission Statement

Welcome to St Winefride's where we come together to learn, laugh, listen, live and love in the presence of Jesus.

At our school, we believe that everyone is valued as a unique gift from God.

We work together to create an engaging learning environment, where all children are challenged to achieve their full potential.

General Aims and Philosophy

Through our Mission Statement we aim:

- ❖ To educate the whole child through a broad curriculum the school will:
 - provide a broad, child-centred curriculum extending beyond the National Curriculum,
 - provide a stimulating and inspiring environment,
 - nurture and foster individual talents and abilities,
 - motivate all to achieve their full potential and contribute to the common good,
 - enable pupils to become independent learners producing quality work,
 - provide an efficiently managed school with planned development,
 - work towards achieving excellence in all areas.

- ❖ To develop each child's religious experience by fostering growth in the Catholic Faith the school will:
 - provide a variety of religious experience through Liturgy, Liturgical Prayer and prayer; and through 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' RE Scheme.

- ❖ To enable children, staff and parents to grow in their spiritual relationship with God the school will:
 - share with the parents and parishes in Sacramental Preparation,
 - provide the opportunity for individual and group reflection, prayer and worship.

- ❖ To value the individuality of each member of the school community and help him/her grow in self-confidence the school will:
 - respect and value the contribution made by all members of the school,
 - encourage awareness and respect for other faiths and cultures,
 - enable times for encounter with God, individually and collectively, to develop and nurture each person's awareness of their dignity as a child of God.

- ❖ To ensure that the children's experiences in school have a positive, formative and significant influence on their understanding of relationships the school will:
 - provide the children with examples of Christian behaviour,
 - model and develop understanding of core Christian values,
 - ensure that there is a welcoming atmosphere for all.

- ❖ To show active concern for the well being of children, staff and parents the school will:
 - show sensitivity to the needs of individuals,
 - provide a safe environment,
 - encourage the children to grow in responsibility for their own safety.

- ❖ To foster positive links between home, school, parish and the wider community the school will:
 - provide opportunities for liaison between home, school, parish and the wider community.
 - enable opportunities for community celebrations and experiences between home, school, parish and the wider community.

Religious Education

Religious Education addresses all pupils in our school regardless of diversity of religious background and commitment. They aim to -

- help pupils recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life,
- lead to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic and other religious traditions,
- challenge pupils to examine their own commitment and to respect that of others,
- encourage the school community to work towards building a fairer world based on justice and peace.

Evangelisation

Evangelisation will inevitably take place implicitly through the ethos, pastoral care and the general curriculum developed in our school.

Catechesis

We recognise that there will be variances in the stages and levels of faith experienced by individual members of our school community. Catechesis, in the form of celebration, liturgy, prayer and social inter-action, will help to nurture and develop an already existing Christian faith and lead pupils to participate more fully in the life of the Church.

Structure & Management of Religious Education

The Role of the RE Subject Leader

- To lead development of the school's religious education
- To attend to personal development through in-service courses, contact with other RE subject leaders and diocesan primary support
- To attend to staff development by working with colleagues, making information available and having discussions with staff about needs/support required
- To organise and manage acts of collective worship, including Masses
- To develop an annual RE Action Plan
- To carry out regular audits of resources and organise their storage

Communication

- Regular staff meetings are held to discuss the implementation of RE programme
- Staff are encouraged to report back from appropriate courses
- Staff attend regular INSET days

Planning

Staff will use the 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' planning, presently provided by the Diocese of Shrewsbury. They will utilise the bank of resources on the Education section of the Diocesan website.

Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing. Comments in children's books and marking against the Can I statements contribute to this process. Children from KS2 use Knowledge Organisers to show their learning. Formal assessment will be carried out each term to help teacher reach a level of attainment for each child. Six children from each year group are tracked throughout the year and this is reported to the RE Subject Leader. The RE Subject Leader, together with the SLT, will carry out regular scrutiny of children's work to help this levelling process.

Reporting

- A written report is given to parents at the end of the academic year, as part of a child's annual report.
- The Religious Education subject leader contributes to the Headteacher's termly report for governors.

Monitoring

- The Religious Education Subject Leader and/or the Senior Leadership Team formally monitors medium term planning, which includes Religious Education, and short-term planning.
- Children's RE books are scrutinised regularly.
- The Religious Education Subject Leader monitors teaching every year. She gives feedback to staff and copies of the observation are given to the head teacher.
- Informal monitoring takes place through shared liturgical prayer, displays and assemblies as well as talking to children.

Parish Links

- The school extends a warm welcome to our parish priest and Governors for formal and informal visits.
- Parents, family, friends and parishioners are invited to attend masses in school and at church and other religious services and assemblies such as Class RE Assemblies.
- All staff and pupils are encouraged to be involved in the various activities in the life of the Parishes. e.g., Celebrations of Sacraments of Forgiveness and Eucharist; Altar servers, Choir.
- Informal visits to church organised by class teachers, to support learning linked to The Way, The Truth and The Life scheme, as appropriate, and children visit the church, formally, to celebrate Mass, such as St. Winefride's Day, Feast Days or KS2 Carol Service.
- Parishioners are invited to be prayer sponsors for children preparing to receive Holy Eucharist for the first time.
- The school hall is used for parish events, social evenings and annual Summer Fair.

Liaison

- We are involved in initiatives to further improve liaison with the Chester Catholic High School and the other cluster schools.
- We work closely with nurseries and secondary schools to ensure ease of transfer of pupils from one stage of education to another.
- The RE Subject Leader works closely with the Diocese to ensure opportunities for CPD are accessed by staff.
- The RE Subject Leader and SLT engage in regular meetings with the Diocese and other Diocesan colleagues.
- The RE Subject leader takes an active part in the Primary Curriculum Working Party and Cheshire West and Chester Hub group.

Religious Education in the Classroom

Since the total curriculum in our school is based on the values of the Gospel and because we see all education as revealing the mystery of God, we recognise two aspects of religious education in the school.

Implicit or unstructured religious education - those opportunities which arise over the day to lead pupils through curriculum content or through relationships to a religious understanding of their implications. It is the policy of this school to use such opportunities as they arise.

Explicit or structural religious education - those timetabled periods of time given to an explicit consideration of religious education in the classroom. It is the policy of this school to provide:

- KS1 Approx. 2 hours a week
- KS2 Approx. 2 hours 30 mins a week

This is based on Revelation; Church; Sacraments; Christian Living.

Methodology

- a) We aim to employ a variety of teaching and learning styles which are appropriate to the age and stage of development of the pupils in each class.
- b) We aim to provide a variety of activities, through which we deliver the RE curriculum, such as -
 - i) Discussion and debate
 - ii) Reading and development of reference skills
 - iii) Writing in many forms e.g., stories, prayers, personal accounts
 - iv) Music
 - v) Artwork and display
 - vi) Drama
 - vii) Prayer and meditation
 - viii) Multi-faith (annually)

As with all other areas of the curriculum, teachers provide this process for pupils in a variety of groupings:

- a) Whole class (year groups)
- b) Pairs
- c) Small groups of similar ability levels
- d) Small groups of mixed ability levels
- e) Key stages

Worship

I Assemblies: - Refer to Prayer and Liturgy policy.

II Prayer in the classroom

- (i) It is the policy of this school for classes to pray together at the start of each day, at lunch-time and at the end of each day.
- (ii) Teachers are encouraged to employ a variety of styles of prayer in their classrooms. These will include:

- *formal or set prayers

- *quiet private prayer

- *written prayers or 'letters' to God

- *informal or even impromptu prayer arising from discussion, events etc

Progressively, pupils will be helped towards experiencing short periods of meditation/ reflection.

- (iii) We feel it is important to provide focal points for prayer both in the classroom and around the school. These may be permanent or temporary arrangements:

- e.g.
 - a) Crucifix in each room and Main Hall
 - b) Displays mounted for specific lessons or assemblies
 - c) Quiet corners in classrooms - carpeted areas where possible
 - d) Crib at Christmas/Way of the Cross - Lent
 - e) Statues, pictures, candles

III Liturgy in School Classroom and at Church

- (a) We celebrate Mass in the school hall regularly mornings during term time, parents, friends and parishioners are welcome to attend. We celebrate special occasions such as the Beginning of Year and Leavers' Masses; Mother's Day; First Communion; Harvest, Easter and Advent Masses.
- (b) We provide opportunities for non-Sacramental liturgies led by teachers and occasionally by pupils such as Remembrance Day.
- (c) We join together in whole school and departmental Celebrations of Christmas and remembrance of the events of Holy week in song, readings and prayer.
- (d) During the course of a school year, each class will provide an assembly based upon the topics being studied in 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'. Parents and friends will be invited to share in this assembly.
- (e) There is an annual Mass for staff of the feeder schools of the Catholic high schools and also regular Diocesan Mass for staff in the Diocese.

Sacramental Preparation

The celebration of First Holy Communion and Reconciliation takes place in Year 3. Parents are involved in meetings held in church, led by the parish priest and parish catechists.

There is an induction mass in the parish to initiate children into sacramental programme and they are given medals to celebrate this occasion. This medal is worn at masses in school and church to mark the children as belonging to the sacramental preparation group and provides a link between school and church.

The sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in or around Holy Week. Small groups of children along with their parents go to church to make their First Forgiveness. The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated on a Saturday in June. This service is viewed as a family celebration, but teachers, catechists and non-catholic class friends are invited as guests. During the week following this Mass, a school celebration is held so that the children can celebrate with the school community.