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## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**We see Jesus in everything we do**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

“Education cannot be neutral. It is either positive or negative; either it enriches or it impoverishes; either it enables a person to grow or it lessens, even corrupts him. The mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth, of what is good and beautiful. And this occurs through a rich path made up of many ingredients ...If something is true, it is good and beautiful; if it is beautiful; it is good and true; if it is good, it is true and it is beautiful. And together, these elements enable us to grow and help us to love life, even when we are not well, even in the midst of many problems. True education enables us to love life and opens us to the fullness of life.”

**Pope Francis**; from an address with Italian school teachers, parents, educators, pupils May 10, 2014

### **POLICY AIM**

Religious Education at St Edward's will be treated as a subject in its own right; taught, resourced and developed as any other subject in the school.

The ethos of Catholic Education promotes the ideal that children should be enabled to achieve their full potential as unique individuals by fostering a sense of belonging and support. For those children from a strong faith background, it will be a chance for their faith to grow and deepen, for some it will be a chance to develop some knowledge of their faith and for some it will be the first opportunity they will have had to hear the Gospel message.

**Contents** Page No

1. OBJECTIVES	1
2. THE CURRICULUM	
3. THE ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR	
4. RESOURCES	
5. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING	
6. THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM RE	
7. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	
8. EUCHARIST	
9. PRAYER	
10. HOME/SCHOOL/PARISH AGREEMENT	

## 1. OBJECTIVES

In Religious Education, we will aim to develop:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and its impact on our school, our local community and on our society today.
- Knowledge and understanding of some of the other principal religious traditions.
- A sense of respect for religious traditions, beliefs and practice.
- Growth in spiritual development and understanding of their role in the broader church.
- A sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- Skills and attitudes to support their personal, moral, social and cultural development.
- Understanding of beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious, and the values of the school community.

To achieve this outcome, it will also be necessary to develop the skills necessary to engage the children in:

- Examining and reflecting on religious belief and practice
- Study, investigation and reflection
- Listening
- Thinking critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically
- Making informed judgements

And to foster appropriate attitudes enabling:

- Respect for truth and the views of others
- Awareness of their own moral responsibility
- Understanding of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life
- Understanding of the challenge of living in a multicultural society

All these values, skills and attitudes will be taught with due regard to the age and ability of the child.

## 2. THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum at St Edward's is underpinned by our School Mission Statement which is founded on Gospel values and, as we see all education as playing a part in revealing God in our lives, we recognise two aspects of Religious Education in the school:

**Implicit** – those opportunities which arise in the course of a school day to lead pupils, through differing aspects of the curriculum not directly associated with R.E. or through relationships, to a religious understanding of their implications. It is the policy of the school to use any such opportunities as they arise.

**Explicit or Curriculum Education** – timetabled or planned periods of time given over to explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom. It is the policy of the school to allocate 10% of curricular time to Religious Education, in line with the wishes of the Bishop's Conference.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visits from members of local faith communities.

The Diocesan God Matters Programme, which schools are encouraged to review and adapt, continues to provide the basis of our school R.E. Curriculum. During the course of the year, each pupil will study all 10 Units of the scheme, at an appropriate level, ensuring continuity and progression. The Units are;

Unit 1 – Creation

Unit 2 – Prayers, Saints and Feasts

Unit 3 – Advent

Unit 4 – Christmas

Unit 5 – Revelation

Unit 6 – Sacraments

Unit 7 – Lent

Unit 8 – Holy Week

Unit 9 – Easter

Unit 10 – Pentecost and Mission

Each Unit includes an aspect of study of another faith.

### **3. THE ROLE OF THE R.E. MANAGER**

- To organise Masses and Liturgical Celebrations within school.
- To organise the Multi-faith weeks in consultation with the Headteacher and Staff.
- To liaise with the Parish Priest in arranging the liturgical diary for the school term.
- To liaise with cluster groups within the Diocese of Portsmouth.
- To support other members of staff, including non-Catholic staff.
- To update teaching and policies.
- To raise and maintain standards.

The R.E. Manager will monitor the delivery of the God Matters R.E. curriculum throughout the school and the quality and quantity of work by book moderation and classroom observation. He/She will also use pupil conferencing to gain an insight into the children's view of the subject and use their responses, where appropriate, to design an enjoyable and challenging curriculum.

#### **4. RESOURCES**

The R.E. Resources are located in classrooms and in the Resources Room.

#### **5. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING**

It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through marking work set and following the assessment guidelines set down by the diocese. The class teacher must ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging.

#### **6. THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM R.E.**

At St. Edward's Catholic Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the headteacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at St. Edward's Catholic First School.

#### **7. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The current requirement for a daily act of worship is observed, either during whole school, Key Stage or individual class gatherings. The pupils at St Edward's see this as a normal part of our Catholic school life. When planning any Act of Worship the leader will follow the pattern;

- Gather
- Proclaim – suitable Bible reading
- Respond
- Go forth

#### **8. EUCHARIST**

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage.

Opportunities for all children to participate will be maximized. This will include;

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety

- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion rite.

## **9. PRAYER**

Prayer and worship are at the heart of all we do at St Edward's.

Prayers are said with all children each morning and afternoon and also before and after lunch.

Children are actively encouraged to make spontaneous responses to situations through prayer.

Each classroom has a prayer table that reflects the period of the Church's Liturgical Year and the Unit of work being studied in God Matters.

All school meetings for staff, parents/carers or governors will begin with a prayer.

The school strives to encourage parents/carers to foster the prayer life of their families through;

- The school prayer sheet given to all pupils
- Reference to the church's liturgical year and the R.E. Unit of study on the school website
- Publication of parish and/or school services for important feasts in the school newsletter and on the school website
- Inviting parents/carers to share in liturgical celebrations and class led assemblies
- Encouraging parents/carers to recognise themselves as an integral part of our school worshipping community.

## **10. HOME/SCHOOL/PARISH**

As a Catholic school community, we believe that the education of the children to and in the faith ideally takes place in the home backed up and supported by the local Christian community. We seek to provide all children with a secure knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and the opportunity to experience liturgy in a nurturing and caring community. To this end, we encourage the full participation of parents and carers in school religious life.

The importance of the Parish is also vital in accompanying families on their journey of faith and is accomplished through:

- Knowing, visiting and encouraging families to attend our parish churches
- Providing welcome and acceptance
- Sharing faith with them and providing suitable catechetical resources and courses
- Celebrating with them through liturgy, sacraments and prayer

The school is an integral part of this provision and works closely with the Parish to provide as many of these opportunities as possible.

The value of strong links between home, school and parish is the real evidence of Christian community and the vitality of the local church.

Policy to be the responsibility of Curriculum Committee

<b>Reviewed:</b>	Sarah Matthews & Helen O'Horo	March 2017
<b>Approved:</b>	Curriculum Committee	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2017
<b>Ratified:</b>	FGB	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017
<b>Review frequency</b>		
<b>Signed by Chair of Governors</b>		
<b>Signed by Head Teacher</b>		