

# Our Lady's RC Primary School



## Primary Religious Education Policy

Last reviewed by Staff	Spring 2020
Last reviewed by Governors	Spring 2020
Person Responsible	RE Co-ordinator and Headteacher
Date of Next Review	Spring 2021

**Signed:** ..... (Person Responsible) **Date:**

**Signed:**  (Headteacher) **Date:**

**Signed:** ..... (Chair/Governor) **Date:**

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT

Our Lady's School is a Voluntary Aided Catholic School established to support Catholic parents in their responsibility for the spiritual, academic, physical, moral, cultural and religious development of their children in accordance with the teachings of the Church.

Religious Education in Our Lady's School is based on a number of ministries of the early Christians. Summarised in a fivefold model of a Christian community, they include: a *Welcoming Community*; a *Word of God Community*; a *Worshipping Community*; a *Welfare Community* and; a *Witnessing Community*.

Religious Education will be made available to every pupil by every teacher. It will be presented to pupils in a variety of forms with regard to pupil's needs and abilities. Class teachers will teach Religious Education through appropriate learning activities, experiences of life, and opportunities for prayer and worship.

Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own actions and relationships and to care for themselves, each other and the environment. The school will support the work of groups or individuals in the local parish and the dioceses and opportunities will be offered for pupils to learn about respond to some of the needs of the worldwide human family through charitable organisations.

By enabling pupils to learn and appreciate how beliefs affect people in their lives, Religious Education will make a vital contribution to the understanding, mutual respect and cooperation between Christianity and other faiths.

The policy reflects the school's Mission Statement and the main aims of the school which are:

- To make prayer, worship and liturgy real educational experiences and to contribute successfully to the development of each individual in the school community.
- To create a strong link between home, parish and school which prepares the child for life in the wider community.
- To ensure that the child's experience of relationships within the school has a significant influence on their understanding of relationships'
- To ensure that the curriculum provides a Catholic Christian setting in which children can grow in understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values.

- To show concern for all pupils, parents, and staff.
- To develop the whole child as an individual.

Our Lady's School offers pupils the experience to grow and develop in a loving community into mature Christians who live for the Father, in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit within the Sacraments of the Church. Both through Religious Education and in the general life of the school, pupils are prepared to witness to moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

## THE AIMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Using the model of the 5Ws, Our Lady's School seeks to promote the growth towards wholeness of all those who share its life; a wholeness that comes from free response to God, who has called each person into being, and by whom all are loved and sustained. In this setting the School's Religious Education curriculum will:

- Make a significant contribution to the child's understanding of *Spirituality* and thus being capable of responding to the invitation of *God* and the challenges of life.
- Seek to help each person to live and grow in a *Word of God Community* based on Gospel values and to foster positive interaction between home, parish and school, which provides preparation for pupil's entry into the wider community.
- Promote the religious and spiritual growth of pupils in order to provide a *Welcoming Community* within which they can examine the relationship between all Christians and foster positive attitudes towards people of other faiths.
- Seek to encourage a *Welfare Community* where there is concern and respect for each other, for teaching and non teaching staff, for parents, for the environment and for the needs of *God's* worldwide family.
- Promote a prayer and *Worshipping Community* to experiences such as beauty, joy and suffering, and to express their own thoughts and feelings.
- Seek to help pupils to explore a *Witnessing Community* where they can share their own experiences in their search for the truth about *God*.

The Religious Education programme in Our Lady's School will provide a comprehensive and systematic study of Christianity so that children will be enabled to:

- Grow in knowledge and openness to the mystery of *God*, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Become familiar with the person, life and teachings of *Jesus*, who is Saviour and Lord, reveals both the face of *God* and the fullness of what it means to be human.
- Grow in experience, knowledge and understanding of the Church, her life and teachings, her significance in the world today, and her concern for peace and justice.
- Develop a moral awareness as they reflect upon human conditions, in their own and other's lives in the light of the Christian message.
- Prepare for, participate in and appreciate liturgical prayer and worship.
- Grow in understanding and appreciation of Scripture and its place in Christianity, the Sacraments and the Church.
- Grow in knowledge and understanding of Catholic traditions and way of life.

Through sound teaching which reflects the pupil's needs and abilities, the School's Religious Education programme will:

- Be informed by a range of teaching styles and the whole variety of ways in which children learn, and will enable teachers to select from and devise appropriate learning activities.
- Affirm all pupils' value and worth, build on their own experiences of living relationships, and contribute to the development of self-esteem.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to recognise, appreciate and develop their talents and skills.
- Promote the development of independence and autonomy in children so that they are encouraged to accept increasing responsibility for their own learning and are enabled to make ever more fully informed, mature and free responses and choices in relation to *God*, faith, stewardship, and the service of others.

## THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In order to fulfil our aims, Religious Education in Our Lady's School takes account of the School Mission Statement, whole school policies, the 5Ws model of a Catholic school, Caritas in Action, the Salford Diocesan Sacramental Programme, and the Church's liturgical year.

The school follows a curriculum based on the guidelines outlined in the Bishops Conference of England and Wales and is supported by the schemes: *Come and See* and *Caritas in Action*.

The children at Our Lady's, broadly following the Religious Education as set out in *Come and See* will learn about the Church's liturgy and about a variety of styles and settings for personal prayer. They will also learn about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, become more familiar with Scripture and explore and relate Christian beliefs to living a human life.

*Caritas in Action* assists in the delivery of the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church. There are seven themes: Dignity of the Human Person, Family and Community, Solidarity and the Common Good, Dignity of Work, Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the Poor and Vulnerable and Stewardship.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning in Religious Education is in accordance with the whole school policy on teaching and learning. A variety of teaching styles are adopted throughout the school to match the age, ability and needs of the children. These include:

- Whole class teaching, using stories, discussion, scripture, drama etc.
- Children working in groups-brainstorming, discussing, recording etc.
- Children working individually.
- Interactive Collective Worship and celebrations.
- Every aspect of school life.

### **Differentiation**

Differentiation is about matching teaching approaches to those of the learners. Within any group there is a range of ability, interest, background and needs, and the teacher will seek to ensure that each pupil can improve his or her starting point in each lesson and feel the gain of success. The curriculum is planned taking into account the needs of all pupils; the more able being extended as much as the less able supported. Differentiation will take many forms depending on the teaching style of the teacher and content of the lesson.

### **Assessment**

Assessment in Religious Education

- Is a judgement about the achievement of a pupil or group of pupils, not about grading children.
- Focuses on the unique contribution of the subject to pupil development.
- Is integral to the whole educational process.
- Is incorporated into teaching strategies and practices.
- Is directly related to ways of teaching as well as to what is taught.

**Such assessment will:**

- Enable the pupil to reflect on and acknowledge personal or group achievement.
- Help pupils to take the next step in learning.
- Enable teacher to monitor pupil progress.
- Enable teachers to communicate effectively with parents and interested parties about the achievements of pupils.
- Enable teachers to monitor the effectiveness of their own work.

The outcomes of assessment will be recorded in accordance with the whole school policy on Assessment, Recording and Reporting. Pupil progress and achievement in Religious Education will be communicated to parents at two Parents Evenings in the autumn and spring terms, and in a written report in the summer term.

Assessment judgement is based on evidence from one or more sources such as observations, discussions and questioning, written and other forms of work.

### **Evaluation of Learning**

Pupil learning at Our Lady's is evaluated during pupil/teacher discussion, children's work and through teacher assessment. Progress and achievement is assessed in terms of knowledge, understanding and appreciation, in relation to their age and capabilities of:

- Sacred Scripture
- The person, life and ministry of Jesus
- The Mystery of God
- The teaching and liturgy of the Church
- Prayer and worship
- Human dignity and moral responsibility

We will be aware that responses will be different and we will be mindful of our role as 'catechist' and 'evangelist'.

### **Evaluation of Teaching**

The quality of teaching at Our Lady's is evaluated in terms of teacher's ability to relate effectively to the pupils and to engage and motivate them in their learning.

Teachers will provide opportunities for pupils to relate religious beliefs to their own experiences of life and to discuss religious issues in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Evaluations will be made by:

- Discussion which will inform members of staff and the RE coordinator of our planning and provision.
- Observation of displays and the classroom environment.
- Observation and monitoring of lessons and Collective Worship by the RE coordinator.
- Monitoring of schemes of work, half termly planning, lesson plans etc.
- Looking at samples of children's work
- Talking to children
- Marking and assessment of children's work.

## THE ROLE OF RE COORDINATOR

The role of the coordinator is to ensure the implementation and ongoing development of the Religious Education Programme and to make a significant contribution to the School Improvement Plan.

### **Personal development**

- Reading and study
- In-service courses
- Contact with other RE coordinators
- Contact with diocesan and other support services
- Model of good RE classroom practice

### **Staff development**

- Generate enthusiasm for RE
- Lead staff in the development of the RE policy
- Make information available for all
- Plan and set up school displays
- Informal and formal discussion with staff about needs and support
- Monitor progress in RE and advise the head teacher on action plan
- Organise in-service training

### **Curriculum development**

- Leading staff in addressing aspects of current practice such as planning, classroom organisation, teaching and learning strategies, Prayer and Worship etc.

- Responding to any needs, difficulties, changes or initiatives.
- Arranging special events and activities
- Monitoring current resources for the teaching of RE
- Taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources.

## PRAYER AND WORSHIP

At Our Lady's we aim to provide opportunities for prayer and worship, which challenge and enrich the religious experience of both pupils and staff. Such opportunities include Masses in school, parish celebrations and collective worship, as well as individual prayer and reflection.

Through prayer, scripture, reflection and celebration we provide opportunities for our school community to:

- Give honour and glory to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Worship God
- Consider spiritual and moral issues
- Explore our own beliefs
- Develop community cohesion

Through a range of opportunities for prayer and worship we will

- Encourage participation and response
- Promote common ethos and shared values
- Reinforce positive attitudes
- Challenge and enrich the religious experiences of staff and pupils
- Encourage pupils' leadership and participation in class and whole school experiences of prayer and worship
- Promote and celebrate the partnership with home and parish e.g. through sacramental celebrations, parish celebrations, inviting parents to special assemblies etc.
- Provide opportunities for quiet reflection during collective worship or class prayer.

To enable children to develop an appreciation of the importance of prayer we make time and space throughout the school day for both formal and informal worship. Each classroom has a prayer table or corner to encourage individual prayer and reflection.

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- Show respect for places and objects associated with prayer and worship
- Appreciate the importance of prayer for many people
- Relate prayer and worship to experiences such as beauty, joy and suffering, and to question about the meaning and purpose of life
- Express their own thoughts and feelings about prayer and worship through art, music, dance, drama etc.
- Recognise the value of silence and reflection

The daily act of *Collective Worship* is a legal requirement for all schools. At Our Lady's this takes the form of whole school, key stage and class *Collective Worship* on different days of the week. The content, form and organisation of *Collective Worship* at Our Lady's is based on a resource entitled *Nurturing Human Wholeness through our Distinctive Catholic Tradition* (NHW). The resource aims to:

- Make the Catholic values of the school explicit
- Promote a positive and caring Christian ethos that is understood and communicated to everyone
- Promote emotional literacy and contribute towards community cohesion and the common good

NHW incorporates, SEAL and PSHCE. The resource is based on 36 'Statements to Live By', each supported by a circle time and Act of Worship. The statements are based on nine guiding principles rooted in the Christian Faith. They ensure that the children are given opportunities to:

- Hear the Christian story and encounter the person of Jesus.
- Understand their uniqueness as made in the image and likeness of God.
- Experience a sense of belonging within a range of communities, including the local Eucharistic community.
- Know, appreciate and understand the importance of social justice.
- Know that our limitations are also opportunities for growth.
- Understand the connection (wisdom) between knowledge and living.
- Know that everything has the opportunity to reveal God's presence to us ie to see the divine in the ordinary.
- Forgive and be forgiven, to reconcile and be reconciled.
- Experience fun, humour, imagination, creativity, play and excitement in life.

*Collective Worship* is organised in the classroom, in the hall, outdoors, or in a quiet area. It may include a variety of activities such as prayer, song, story, speech, silence and stillness, reading from varied sources, free expression, music, drama etc. World faiths are included when appropriate. All children must attend collective worship unless they are withdrawn by their parents.

The RE curriculum contributes to the school's life of prayer and worship, though it does not substitute for it. Topics covered in curriculum religious education are echoed in *Collective Worship*, thus enabling the RE curriculum to deepen the children's understanding and appreciation of prayer and worship. On occasion the children will bring their work in curriculum religious education to a conclusion in a celebration. Sometimes pupils will be

encouraged to share some of their religious education class work with others in prayer and worship, perhaps incorporating song, artwork, poetry, story or drama making such a celebration a real experience of prayer and worship, as well as legitimate curriculum religious education.

## SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

*"Love each other as much as I have loved you.  
If you do, people will notice and they will say:  
'You are like Jesus'."*

(Listen p.53)

At Our Lady's School we aim to create a happy, loving family atmosphere so that our children feel valued and secure. We aim to enable our children to experience a sense of awe and wonder and to be touched by the mysteries of life. Through the *Caritas in Action* programme our Children are:

- Taught about the dignity, destiny and worth of each individual.
- Taught about the beauty, harmony and purpose of the whole creation.
- Encouraged to accept responsibility for their own actions and relationships and to care for the school environment.
- Encouraged to respect themselves, others, their own and others' property and the environment.
- Encouraged to explore their feelings, thoughts and attitudes in a quiet and prayerful atmosphere.
- Given opportunities to respond to their new insights in creative and practical ways, and in the service of others.
- Helped to make informed choices by offering information, advice and support with regard to health and safety and personal relationships.
- Encouraged to behave in an appropriate manner at all times based on the school's agreed expectations and Catholic moral teachings.

The approach to spiritual and moral development is ongoing and cross curriculum with the Religious Education Programme at its core.

- **Literacy:** Poetry, creative writing, listening to and respecting the view of others.
- **Numeracy:** Shape, pattern and symmetry in the natural world.
- **Music:** Listening to and appreciating a wide variety of music and responding to it emotionally. Music to reflect moods and evoke memories.
- **Science:** The miracle of life, growth, death and renewal (reflecting the liturgical year), forces, energy, power and light.
- **Art/Design Technology:** Explore and alleviate feelings. Putting child in touch with the environment (textures, tones etc.)

- **Physical Education:** Looking at self in time and space through dance, gymnastics, sport cooperation in games etc.
- **Geography:** Highest mountain, longest river etc.
- **History:** Famous people as role models and witnesses. Inspirational stories about bravery, kindness, unselfishness etc.

Children are encouraged to respect each other's views and efforts and to work cooperatively. They are encouraged to approach things with an open mind.

Teachers and other adults in school 'teach by example' as they go about their daily tasks.

At Our Lady's we aim to link with the wider community at all opportunities. Particularly important are the links with parents, which are vital if we are to achieve the best for every child. The school works in partnership with parents, encouraging their involvement in a variety of school activities and celebrations.

The school supports the work of groups and individuals in the parish and the diocese. Opportunities are offered to pupils to learn about and respond to charitable organisations such as *CARITAS, CAFOD, Christian Aid*.

Opportunities are offered to pupils to develop an appreciation of different cultural groups through participation in a range of appropriate cultural experiences and activities. Pupils are also encouraged to respect other faith, customs and practices.

## THE SCHOOL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME

In Year 3 children in Our Lady's parish are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. The school supports the work of the Sacramental team.

Preparation for these Sacraments seeks to bring together in a real partnership the three main contexts of the child's growing and learning.

- **The home**, where family teaching and support lay the foundations for everything else.

- **The school**, where the children are helped to live and to understand what is being experienced.
- **The parish**, which is the local expression of God's welcoming celebrating family.

Christian Initiation, begun in Baptism, has elements addressed to children and to parents, as well as a number of celebrations:

- Presentation of the children
- Celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation
- Celebration of First Holy Communion

The school, as an extension of the home and an expression of the parish, will continue and build upon that family style teaching that goes on in the home. In its daily prayer, its assemblies and other celebrations, the school will build upon what is happening in the home and in the parish.

The school also provides a range of experiences and opportunities to learn and understand. The School's Religious Education Programme assists the children to grow in knowledge of the sacraments and God's family.

Sacramental preparation is on-going and developmental throughout the school. The children continue to follow the Sacramental themes within the scheme thereby growing in understanding and thanksgiving for these sacraments.

## LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Religious Education permeates the whole of school life at Our Lady's, encompassing all curriculum areas and takes into account equal opportunities and any special educational needs. Religious Education has links with all whole school policies.