



# St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

## Religious Education Policy

**September 2023**

Approved by:	Stella Oladinni	Date: 11/5/2023
Last reviewed on:	22/5/2023	
Next review due by:	22/5/2024	

**Policy addendum:**

**\*Changes made to this Policy to be listed here and signed off by the designated officer:**

- a)** AT1 and AT2 language was removed from Learning section and new vocabulary was used : Knowledge and understanding and Engagement and Response
- b)** Analysis and Evaluation part was added to the Learning section
- c)** RE co-ordinator is replaced by RE team

**Signed: Antonis Antoniou**

**Designation: RE team**

**Date: 11/5/2023**

## INTRODUCTION

*“Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for, and substantially shape the school curriculum and offer living experience of the life of faith in its practical expression.”*

(Bishops of England and Wales, 1988)

We see our Christian community sharing in the mission of the church, on our journey to closeness with Christ. We strive for our Catholic ethos to pervade our school day; we try to conduct our relationships in the way Christ wishes.

## STRATEGIC GOAL

Our main aim is to provide opportunities for children, Teachers and all who work at St Edmund’s, to be given the occasions and tools to support them in developing their spirituality, and to accompany them on this journey to:

- develop religious literacy
- contemplate the mystery of God
- foster a sense of wonder and awe
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs through responding to, and celebrating life; thereby experiencing a sense of belonging
- develop community spirit
- develop a common ethos and shared values through enriched religious experiences
- nurture and educate pupils on their journey towards full and active participation in the liturgical life of their faith
- take time ‘to wonder at,’ ‘to come to terms with,’ and ‘to give meaning and worth’ to life

## VALUES AND AIMS

We believe at this school that Religious Education [RE] both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child - *spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually* - is reflected in the RE curriculum.

Specifically, RE at our school aims to enable all pupils, irrespective of ability and level of development to:

1. actively embrace and deepen their knowledge of our Catholic faith;
2. acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of principal world faiths practised in Great Britain. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.
3. develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on

individuals, communities, societies and cultures, including the local community;

1. develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions;
2. enhance their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
  - a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life arising from human experiences, and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
  - b. responding to the fundamental questions of life in the light of their experience and with reference to religious beliefs and practices;
  - c. reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
  - d. expressing their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful, reasoned and considerate way; and
3. recognize the right of people to hold different beliefs within an ethnically and socially diverse society.

## OBJECTIVES

### Learning

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyze, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses. It encourages all participants to reflect on their own beliefs and values, and to acknowledge that others can hold beliefs different from their own. RE has these closely related aspects:

### Learning about Religion and Learning from Religion

These attainment targets with their associated statements set out the broad objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills for the RE curriculum. RE is at its most effective when these attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience.

### Knowledge and Understanding (‘learning about’):

identify, name, describe and give an account, in order to build a coherent picture of each religion;  
explain the meanings of religious language, stories and symbolism; and explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions.

Engagement and Response ('learning from'):

respond to religious and moral issues in an informed and considered manner; reflect on what might be learnt from religion in the light of personal beliefs and life experience; and identify and respond to the question of meaning within religion.

Analysis and Evaluation:

- a new discrete skills strand;
- develops the ability to analyse and evaluate as an essential skill

### Teaching

For Nursery and Reception to Year 6, we adopted the Margaret Carswell programme. Teaching these Programmes of Study should contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding, and provide opportunities for reflection on six key areas:

- **Beliefs and teachings** - e.g. stories, religious leaders, books, God/gods, self-sacrifice, truth, life after death;
- **Religious practices and lifestyles** - e.g. people, festivals, pilgrimages, places, events, artefacts, lifestyle choices, actions, effects on individuals;
- **Ways of expressing meaning** - e.g. sacred texts, art, music, literature, symbolism, poetry, dance, drama, prayer, forms of religious and spiritual expression, silence/stillness;
- **Human identity, personality and experience** - e.g. belonging, preferences, relationships within family and community, influences on own lives, inspirational people;
- **Questions of meaning and purpose** - e.g. amazement, sadness, disappointment, joy, awe, in connection with the natural world and life's journey, making sense, ultimate questions of life raised by life experiences; and
- **Values and commitments** - e.g. values, ethics, principles, rules, morality.

The teaching of RE seeks both to impart knowledge, and to develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes through a variety of teaching and learning approaches. Providing a balance between the two key attainment targets underpins the teaching of RE at this school.

RE teaching specifically draws on the following:

1. visits and visitors: enabling children to see and experience at first-hand religious people, objects, symbols, places, events, stories and explore with people who have faith;
2. role play: encouraging children to learn through familiar or unfamiliar settings and ask

questions from their own

3. artefacts: being able to explore items which are precious and/or used in religious worship, encouraging respect and questioning whilst deepening knowledge; an
4. parents: by valuing the family backgrounds of the children and making them part of the school community, e.g. the formation of a Parent Steering Group to foster closer links between the School, the Church and the Local Community.

The teaching of RE will involve direct teaching and whole class, group, paired or individual activities. A range of teaching styles will be used including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and faith visitors so that pupils are actively engaged in learning.

### **ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING**

The agreed syllabi set out a structure for recognizing pupil achievements, and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the statements of attainment as outlined following the Five Level Scale in the Diocese of Westminster Agreed Levels of Attainment for Religious Education, 2014. Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not solely limited to measurement and testing.

Through activities, discussion with pupils, marking and guiding their work, observing, displaying work, asking and answering questions, Teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is then recorded against the statements of attainment in line with other areas of the curriculum. At this school we appreciate that a vital aid to learning is for pupils to be actively involved in their own assessment.

As a staff we regularly undertake moderation exercises to ensure that we are familiar with the statements and what they mean in the context of a pupil's work. The RE Co-ordinator attends regular Moderation meetings in the Diocese and with Deanery Co-ordinators, where samples of work are shared and moderated. INSET days and termly Staff Meetings are scheduled to support Teachers and Support Staff and maintain a robust assessment practice.

School reports are sent home in the summer term of each year and the RE report is written with reference to the records made or pieces of work retained.

### **TIME ALLOCATION**

In line with the requirements of Westminster Diocese Education we plan for RE to be delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS at Foundation Stage. Religious Education is timetabled to receive ten percent of curriculum time across all Key Stages.

### **PLANNING**

In order to ensure that our aims are met and sufficient content is covered at each key stage, the school follows the Margaret Carswell Schemes of Work for RE, which build-in coverage of, and progression in, both the content and concepts outlined in the Curriculum Directory. These Schemes demonstrate how we plan that pupils learn about, and from, the six principal religions through the EYFS and Key Stages 1 and 2. We use a combination of teaching RE through a creative curriculum, music, drama and role play, visits, and as a separate subject, depending on the material which has to be covered.

## **LEGAL**

We acknowledge the legal statutory requirement that a daily Act of Worship is provided for all students on the school's register. This can take place at any time during the school day, and can be either a single Act of Worship for all pupils or separate Acts of Worship in school or class groups.

We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer; said either by the Teacher or everyone present; does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made explicit.

The Act of Worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations, and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education Curriculum.

In Catholic voluntary aided schools, responsibility for the provision of collective worship, along

with the logistics for the provision for collective worship rests with the Governing Body and is normally delegated to the Head of School and RE team.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

- Please refer to the Worship Policy.

## **PRAYER**

- Please refer to the Prayer Policy

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- Book looks – formally twice a term, informally as and when by RE Team and Co-ordinator;
- Planning scrutiny
- Lesson observations – once a term by RE Team and Co-ordinator; and
- Team-teaching to support new and also experienced Teachers.

## **RESOURCES**

A full list of electronic resources and their locations is located on the Teacher Shared Drive. Artefacts, books and images are located in the RE cupboard in the Resource Room. An interactive catalogue of online hymns has been created by the RE Co-ordinator, to facilitate joyful celebration of the Eucharist in-class or as a whole school. From this, the RE Co-ordinator has established a 'Hymn of the Week,' wherein all classes practice a particular hymn at the end of each day; to introduce children to, and increase our repertoire of traditional and modern hymns. Additionally, an online catalogue of liturgically-authentic Bible stories has been created to support teaching and learning in a dynamic way.

## **POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Head of School, along with the RE Co-ordinator will hold responsibility for the monitoring of the policy. It will be evaluated and reviewed by the school staff and governors every two years.

The Foundation Governors (in the name of the Diocesan Trustees) will have a particular role and responsibility for this review. The overall responsibility of Governors from a statutory perspective and Foundation Governors from the canonical perspective needs to be clearly stated in the context of the denomination nature of the school.



