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# St Joseph's Catholic

## Primary School

### RE Handbook



# Our Mission Statement

**The family of St. Joseph's will live,**

**love and learn by the example of Jesus**

At St. Joseph's we will strive to fulfil our mission statement by:

- The whole school being encouraged to be fully involved in the Christian life of the community, by participation in liturgies, assemblies and in caring for our environment.
- The Catholic Ethos of the school being kept under constant review.
- R E Continuing to have a high status within the curriculum.
- Providing a stimulating and challenging curriculum in an effort to attain the highest possible standards.
- Encouraging our children to question and answer without the feeling of failure, to give them a sense of achievement.
- To foster self-confidence and to motivate our children to take pride and pleasure in their work and to build on their success.
- To encourage our children to work independently and co-operatively.
- To assist our children to develop problem solving and investigation techniques and to be able to assess their own learning.
- To encourage in our children a sense of responsibility for their own learning, their personal growth, their community and for the world in which they live.
- Providing support, enrichment and realistic expectations for our children.

- Providing opportunities for parental involvement in their children's education.
- Sharing tolerance and understanding of the other faiths and cultures.
- A commitment of all parties involved in the life of the school to the children and the rest of the school family.



## **Aims and Objectives of Religious Education**

For all children religious education is a subject in its own right in the schools curriculum. It is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

**As written in the Curriculum Directory, religious education aims to promote:**

- Knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- Knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose
- The skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice

### **Aims**

- To develop the spiritual awareness of the children e.g. a sense of wonder at creation.
- To assist the children in developing a loving and fulfilling relationship with God.

- To provide the children with an example of Christian care and love for each other.
- To enable the children to celebrate and rejoice in their religious development through worship e.g.: class celebration / Masses termly.
- To develop respect and understanding of other faiths.
- To ensure the development of children's religious experience and understanding through progression and continuity in our R E Curriculum.
- To continue to support the development of links with the surrounding parishes.
- To encourage the children to recognise God's presence in their lives and his unfailing love.



### Objectives:

We strive to achieve these aims by:

#### Allocating time

- The teaching of R.E. will take 10% of the curriculum time each week.

#### Schemes followed

- The Religious Education Curriculum Directory guides and informs the teaching of Religious Education.
- The R.E. scheme is *Here I Am*. At the end of each topic, each class should have a prayerful gathering.
- The school scheme of work includes topics to be covered, liturgical focus, prayers to be learnt, global dimension, other faiths and visits each class has to go on.



## **Classroom Religious Education**

At Holy Rood we are committed to classroom RE because all pupils have a right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope that is within them.

Class lessons will be characterised by succinct learning objectives and key content. Appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment.

As written in the Bishops Statement (2000)

'A Catholic school which promotes the best possible teaching of religious education is fulfilling its true purpose'

To ensure this is happening the objective of religious education is to include analysis and reflection, critical appreciation of sources and samples and a real sense of progression.

The Bishops state that 10% of the length of the taught week for each key stage should be devoted to RE. This does not include time for assemblies or hymn practice. At Holy Rood we are committed to this expectation.

**Times for RE are as follows:**

**KS2**

**2h 30min**

## Preparing the Children for Mass

- Spend time talking to the children about the reason behind the celebration. Go through the responses the children will say.
- Explain/discuss with the children the importance of sitting quietly and listening carefully.
- Encourage the children to say the responses.
- Children should only make the sign of peace with the person on their left and right.
- Children stand in their allocated space to receive Communion, ashes etc.
- Children should enter and leave the hall in an orderly and respectful manner.
- Please try and keep children who need support near you.

Thank you for your support in making our whole school Masses and Celebrations special.



## Home, School, Parish Partnership

"As it is the parents who have given life to their children on them lies the gravest obligation to educate their family. They must be recognised as being primarily and principally responsible for their education."  
*Gravissimum Educationis* (para 3)

Links between Home, School, Parish are developed with parish news distributed through the schools newsletter and school news publicised through parish newsletters when appropriate. Parents and parishioners are invited to Masses within the school. Fr. Philip from Holy Rood visits the school on a weekly basis. Father Pat from St. Helen's visits each class in the Spring term. Fr. Paul celebrates class Masses and Masses on Holy Days.

Parents are welcome at all school Masses, class Masses and class celebrations.

We frequently support fundraising activities for CAFOD, NSPCA, and the Catholic children's society during lent. Various other charities are supported by request from either the school's council or the staff. The children sing in the community every Christmas.



## **Recording Children's Work**

A wide range of teaching techniques and learning opportunities are involved in the delivery of the RE scheme of work. These include story telling, writing, poetry, prayer, class and small group discussion, role play, drama, music and ICT.

Children record their work in an exercise book. This book should have the school mission statement either on the front page or front cover.

Children at KS2 should have at least two pieces of written work in their books each week.

### **Homework**

All children at KS2 will complete at least two homework pieces in RE each term.

Children can be asked to learn prayers or hymns at home, practise readings for Masses or celebrations. Prayers, hymns and mission statement may also be used as handwriting practice.

## Assessment and Monitoring

- Assessment of children's knowledge and understanding will be carried out at the end of each unit
- Self evaluation sheets will be completed termly by the children.
- Marking of children's work will be ongoing.
- Book scrutinies will be carried out by the subject leader termly.
- Monitoring of planning and assessment will also be undertaken by the RE subject leader once every term. Lesson observations will also be carried out by the RE subject leader.

Assessment sheets will be available for each unit with brief summaries of what children are expected to know and understand.



## **Attainment Targets and Strands**

As a subject of the school curriculum Religious Education is concerned with the development of knowledge, understanding and the ability to evaluate. These aspects of development are expressed as Attainment Target 1 and Attainment Target 2.

**In Attainment Target 1, these are:**

- AT 1a** knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs
- AT 1b** knowledge and understanding of how religious beliefs shape life
- AT 1c** knowledge and understanding of religious language, action and concepts
- At 1d** knowledge and understanding of the coherence of a religion

**In attainment Target 2, the specific skills and abilities are:**

- AT 2a** Engagement with own beliefs and values
- AT 2b** Engagement with the beliefs and values of others
- AT 2c** Engagement with questions of ultimate meaning
- AT 2d** Reflection and contemplation

At the end of each unit teachers are given an assessment sheet recording the specific attainment targets taught. The class teacher then records the groups of children who have achieved the levels corresponding to these targets. These are kept in the class teacher's assessment file where they are used to inform planning and make accurate judgements for report writing.

## Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist is parish based.

A child's first celebration of the Sacraments of the Eucharistic and Reconciliation are very special moments. Preparation for these involves the partnership between home, school and parish in which each partner has a distinctive contribution to make.

At Holy Rood we make our contribution to this partnership by our work in Y3.

Throughout their years at school a child's exploration of the Sacraments is ongoing. Every year their knowledge and understanding is deepened. Some of the staff also join the children and their parents at their Holy communion in May and June thus supporting the strong partnership of home, school and parish.



## Prayer, Worship and Liturgy



Children participate in class based prayer at key times throughout the day. They have the opportunity to recite traditional prayers and those of their own composition. Each child has their own prayer book which begins in year 3 and follows through until year 6. There is also a list of prayers that each Key Stage should be teaching. Each class has a prayer focus reflecting either the current unit studied or the liturgical year. There are whole school Masses at the beginning and end of the school year. Feast days are also marked by a Mass.



The whole school attends a twice weekly assembly involving collective worship and a celebration of pupil achievement. Each class prepares and leads an assembly and a class Mass during the year.

## Prayer Focus

- Each class will have an RE display board and shelf or table as an altar.
- Display materials should reflect the liturgical seasons.
- It is important to create the right atmosphere.
- Candles should be lit or quiet music played.
- Make sure everyone has the space to sit comfortably.
- We should create an environment that encourages prayer and reminds children of the presence of God in all that they undertake.



## Other Faiths

The Church teaches that, while living out our Christian faith we are called to listen in dialogue and be ready to learn from those of other faiths, many of whom may, in our multicultural society, be our neighbours.

At Holy Rood we believe that other faiths should be taught so that children can:

- Grow to understand and respect others in their school and community
- Appreciate the ray of truth and holiness in other faiths, which give us all hope.
- Create a desire to search together for meaning
- Share a common humanity
- Learn to live with our neighbours

We believe that each faith should be treated with respect and integrity and not by comparisons or by isolated festivals. In RE the teaching will be of the key concepts of that religion.

The teachings of other faiths focuses on the key teachings of one faith at a time. It will start from the children's own understanding of what it is to be a member of a particular faith community.

**In each lesson of other faiths children should:**

**Look** - at their own experience

**Learn** - about another faith community

**Respect** - and appreciate what they have learned

**We do this by:**

- Learning from a member of the faith community
- Making a visit to a place of worship
- Watching videos
- Using information books
- Using ICT e.g. CD ROMs and the Internet
- Appreciating and learning from multi cultural families in the school



## Special Educational Needs in RE

At Holy Rood we believe that each child, whatever their need or disability, is a unique creation of God. Our Mission statement underpins our determination to create an inclusive environment where:

- each member of the school community is equally valued and has the same opportunities for participation.
- will have their abilities and strengths developed and valued
- will be encouraged to develop tolerance, understanding and respect for each other and the wider community

We strive to ensure that barriers to learning are removed so that each child has the opportunity to achieve their personal potential.

Through Here I Am there are opportunities to differentiate for children with special educational needs.

The purpose of this is to:

- help children to relate to God's love and teachings to their own personal experiences and culture.
- Enable children to succeed in the set task or activity
- Challenge children to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills

It is essential that the specific needs or disability of a child is taken into account when planning RE, to ensure that they have equal opportunities to develop in their faith journey.

## **PSHE/Citizenship in RE**

As a school, we are working towards the Catholic vision of the human person fully alive. Citizenship is both important and distinctive in this Catholic school and incorporated in our PSHE policy are aspects specifically covered in the RE curriculum.

At Holy Rood we aim to address issues such as behaviour, relationships, the environment and our multicultural society in an effort to equip our pupils with the knowledge, attitude and skills of good citizens. RE enables the children to develop their roles as citizens through their preparation for Holy Communion and their role in class or whole school celebrations or Masses.

## **Sex Education in RE**

The sex education of young people is undertaken by the school, in the light of the Church's teaching that parents are the first educators.

At Holy Rood we aim to provide an education which is about the development, growth and journey of the whole person towards becoming fully human fully alive as a unique creation made in God's image.

We aim to provide the children in our care with help and guidance in their struggle to live out their lives as members of the Christian family.

We are using a scheme in Year 6 but are in the process of evaluating the Birmingham and BBC schemes.

## **Equal Opportunities in RE**

At Holy Rood we promote a climate where all members of the school community are treated fairly in all circumstances. This is carried out through living our mission statement. We promote respect and understanding for all other cultures and faiths particularly in the teaching of other faiths.