

# **The Federation of St Mary's Catholic Schools**



## **Religious Education Handbook**

**Agreed on: September 2020**

**To be reviewed on: September 2021**

## **Contents**

1. The Mission Statement
2. The Aims and Objectives of Religious Education
3. The Religious Education Programme
  - ~ Overview of content: Themes/Topics
  - ~ How to deliver the programme: the process
4. Planning
5. Assessment
6. Recording
7. Reporting
8. Evaluation of teaching
9. Evaluation of learning
10. Staff development/communication
11. Staff induction
12. Resources
13. Relationship of Religious Education to the whole curriculum
14. Evaluation of Religious Handbook

## **1. St Mary's Mission Statement**

### **Mission Statement**

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

### **Our Values**

These values are important to all the family of St Mary's. Our children have spoken about the importance of having values and consistency across all classes regardless of age. Our core values are: Respect, Compassion, and Resilience.

- To show respect for oneself, for others and for the school environment.
- To show compassion and be a Good Samaritan.
- To develop a positive, resilient 'can do' attitude in all areas of school life.

## **2. The Aims and Objectives of Religious Education**

The outcome of Religious Education

*The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.*  
*Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools, 2012*

The aims and objectives of Religious Education at St Mary's are:

- To teach Religious Education discretely and developmentally to ensure the deepening of knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life.
- To ensure 10% of the week for each Key Stage is devoted to curriculum Religious Education
- To provide marked progression through the different stages of education as tracked on an assessment system
- To offer ample opportunities for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross-curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively.
- To develop appropriate skills and attitudes which allow for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life, which inspire awe and wonder daily
- To encourage the use of these skills in other areas of the curriculum
- To engage with their own and others' beliefs and values, develop good attitudes and dispositions so that our children are instilled with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning.
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection by the pupils using the skills and strategies of Cooperative Learning and the vocabulary taught in their 'Relationship and Sex Education' (RSE) lessons.
- To engage with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face from time to time and so enable them to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose.
- To encourage analysis, reflection on and critical appreciation of difficult questions particularly through the EXPLORE phase of 'Come & See' and their RSE lessons.

- To offer our children a sense of self-worth through their experience of belonging to a caring Christian community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life
- To give unequivocal support to our pupils through the management of St Mary's

### 3. The Religious Education Programme

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education recommended by the Archdiocese of Liverpool, introduced in September 2012 and revised in 2017. This forms the basis of Religious Education within our school.

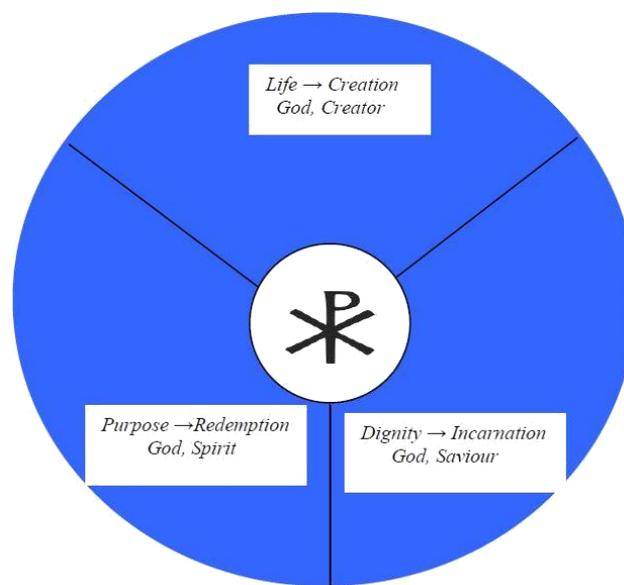
The aim of this programme is to explore the religious dimensions of questions about life within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupils' own experiences and with universal experiences. Other world faith traditions are also explored and reflected upon. For all children the programme will raise questions and provide material for reflecting on their own experiences. It will help them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition, and where appropriate, of other faith traditions.

*Religious Education in schools is to be regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. However, it should not simply be regarded as one subject among many, but should be the key element in an inter-disciplinary dialogue.*  
*Religious Education Curriculum Directory*

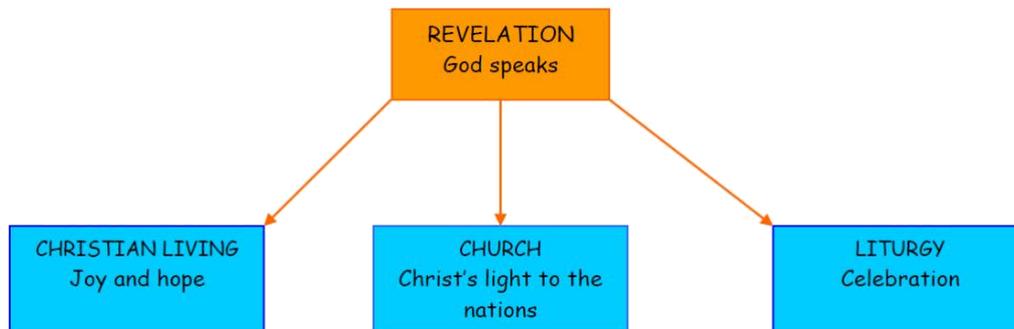
Central to the Come and See programme are three basic human questions and three Christian beliefs that are the Church's response in faith:

- |                                 |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Autumn: Where do I come from? | LIFE - CREATION       |
| • Spring: Who am I?             | DIGNITY - INCARNATION |
| • Summer: Why am I here?        | PURPOSE - REDEMPTION  |

The three doctrines of Creation, Incarnation and Redemption express faith in God as Trinity: Creator, Saviour, Spirit; and personal: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: the Holy One whose love gives life to all (Creation); who makes all holy (Incarnation) and whose purpose is to draw all men and women into one, universal family of God (Redemption).



In 'Come and See' these big questions are considered in the light of the scripture and tradition of the Church, as expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the catechism of the Catholic Church which drew its strength and inspiration from that council.



### **Themes:**

Come and See is developed through three themes based on the documents of the Second Vatican Council, which are gradually explored each term in greater depth.

### **Community of Faith – Church Themes:**

Autumn: Family – Domestic Church

Spring: Community – Local Church

Summer: World – Universal Church

### **Celebration in Ritual – Sacrament:**

Autumn: Belonging – Baptism / Confirmation

Spring: Relating – Eucharist

Summer: Inter-Relating – Reconciliation.

### **Ways of Life – Christian Living Themes:**

Autumn: Loving – Advent / Christmas

Spring: Giving – Lent / Easter

Summer: Service – Pentecost.

## **THE PROCESS**

The process for delivering the Come and See has three distinct stages:

- Explore
- Reveal
- Respond

## **EXPLORE**

The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives – concerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of significance and value of the experimental events of everyday life.

This will involve:

- Exploring experiences through, story, music, drama, dance, art
- Investigation
- Story telling
- Consideration for the big questions
- Discussion
- Becoming aware of the questions raised
- Reflecting on significance of these experiences

## REVEAL

Reveal is at the heart of the process. The teacher and the children together discover the Christian understanding of the mystery of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explore the mystery of human life as revealed in the person, life and gospel of Jesus Christ. It involves learning about scripture, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians.

The process of delivery will involve:

- Meeting new knowledge of religious education
- Developing an understanding of this new knowledge
- Reflecting on the wonder of the mystery
- Gathering information and collecting facts connected with this knowledge
- Researching, collating and classifying
- Becoming aware of the questions raised
- Working with problems and grappling with puzzling experiences
- Exploring what leads to understanding and meaning
- Asking questions and discussing
- Exploring in practical and creative ways through story, drama, writing, poetry, song, dance, music, art, ICT and service of others
- Making links between Christian understanding and the shared life experience
- Valuing life experiences
- Acknowledging and respecting differences
- Being open to new perspectives

## RESPOND

This is split into three sections.

**(1) Remember.** The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. This new understanding will enable them to make a personal response in their daily lives. This part begins by reflecting on what the children wonder about. This is followed by providing the opportunity for the children to remember what they have understood and learnt.

**(2) Rejoice.** The children will be involved in the planning of and taking part in a celebration of their new learning. The celebration will have the four main elements:

**GATHER:** How the children will begin

**WORD-LISTEN:** To some scripture read or enacted

**RESPONSE:** The children respond to their learning

**GO FORTH:** The children will take away a message

**(3) Renew.** The teacher will help each child to make an individual response, to hold on to and make their own, what they have understood of the topic. The children will think about how they can apply their learning to their lives.

Children will respond by **remembering and celebrating** what they have learnt in order to hold on to a way of expressing their new understanding.

## 4. Planning

At St Mary's we implement the Bishop's requirement of 10% of curriculum teaching time: i.e. 2 hours and 15 minutes at Foundation & Key Stage 1 and 2 hours and 30 minutes at Key Stage 2. This time allocation is distributed across the weekly timetable, ensuring quality time

is given for effective teaching and learning. This does not include additional time allocation for collective worship, assembly and hymn practice.

The whole school follows the themes addressed in Come and See, through individual year group topics, on a yearly cycle. Each theme of Church, Sacraments and Christian Living occurs each term. This approach ensures continuity and progression through each of the themes and builds upon prior learning.

### **OTHER FAITHS**

In the autumn term and summer term, one week is given to the exploration of another faith. Children are taught to respect people of other faiths and to recognise that God is at work in them. They are introduced to the background and beliefs of people of other faiths so that prejudice and misunderstanding can be overcome at an early age. Come and See provides materials for each year group from Reception to Year 6. Each year children learn about Judaism and Islam/Hinduism/Sikhism

At each stage of the 'Come and See' programme there are:

- Clearly stated learning objectives
- Key words
- Driver words – which allow for pupils to work according to their different abilities.
- A selection of experiences and differentiated activities for each of the learning intentions
- Achievable learning outcomes

### **THE SACRAMENTS AND THEIR PREPARATION**

The sacraments are taught and revisited through the 'Come and See' programme each year of a child's school life.

The Archdiocese of Liverpool guidance is that Sacramental Preparation takes place in Year 4. To help enable this, guidance materials are shared with Year 3 parents in the summer term, informing every one of the 'With You Always' programme of Sacramental Preparation that takes place in the various parishes, beginning in the Autumn Term of the children's Year 4.

All St Mary's children who have received their sacraments that academic year come together for a school celebration in the Summer Term.

*I hope that the Lord will give Christian families the faith, the freedom and the courage necessary for their mission. If family education rediscovers the pride of its leadership, many things will change for the better, for hesitant parents and for disappointed children. It is time that fathers and mothers return from their exile and reassume fully their educational role. We hope that the Lord will give parents this grace: not to exile themselves from the education of their children.*

And only love, tenderness and patience can do this.

*Pope Francis offered these words of encouragement for parents and their educational mission in the family, 20th May 2015*

## **PLANNING**

### **Long-term planning**

Each topic takes approximately four weeks to deliver and teachers will allocate approximately 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education. This is indicated on class timetables.

### **Medium-term planning**

The R.E Coordinator will provide each class teacher with a termly planner. This indicates the topics to be covered, the start and finish dates as agreed in collaboration with all staff at weekly meetings and any special events or feast days which occur during the weeks of the topic. This will also indicate any assessed topics.

### **Short-term planning**

All class teachers will be provided with a medium term planner, which they will then use:

- To allocate time for each learning outcome to be achieved.
- To plan the topic to ensure achievement of the three learning outcomes.
- To select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children.
- To indicate the children to be assessed: the whole class, groups or individuals and the activities chosen for the assessment.

### **Foundation Stage Approach**

Religious Education makes an active contribution to the areas of learning outlined in the curriculum for the Foundation stage:

\* Religious Education

But also

\* Personal development and Mutual understanding

\* Language and Literacy

\* Mathematics and Numeracy

\* The World Around Us

\* The Arts

\* Physical Development and Movement

The Foundation stage classes have RE Floor Books, complemented by their Learning Journeys, where the children's progress is recorded and celebrated. Teaching takes the form of whole class activities, adult directed group work and continuous provision.

Each year group plans topics together, across the two forms, using their year group 'Come and See' teacher handbook and resources from the Come and See website. Planning is recorded on an agreed template: see Religious Education on the shared drive.

Attention is paid to the use of the Driver Words to move children's learning and understanding forward.

Reference is made to the 'Come and See and Relationships & Sex Education' document so that possible links are planned for.

For music enrichment teachers refer to the 'John Burland Come and See correlation' overview.

### **Differentiation**

As with all areas of the curriculum, we follow the school's policy on equal opportunities for all our members of the school community in terms of gender, race, culture and academic ability. The purpose of differentiation in Religious Education is:

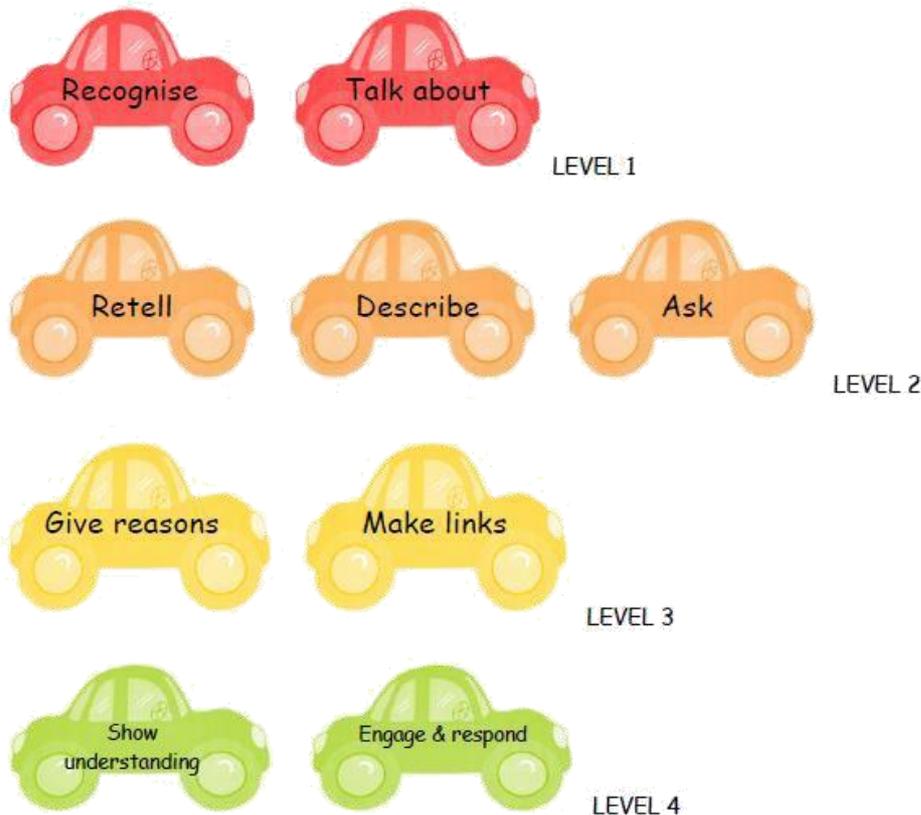
- To enable children to succeed in the set task or activity
- To challenge children appropriately
- To enable children to recognise and celebrate their achievement in Come and See, a variety of activities are provided to meet the differing needs and abilities of children.

## Display

A topic display, or Learning Journey (working wall), offers evidence of pupil achievement and also celebrates this.

## DRIVER WORDS

Words to drive your learning forward...



## 5. Assessment of Achievement

As professionals, we want to ensure that we provide the best Religious Education for all children.

*"Excellence in religious education then will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment".*

*Religious Education in Catholic Schools May 2000 - a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales*

Teachers are continually making informal professional assessments of individual pupils, becoming aware of a pupil's level of understanding and growth in skills by observing their ability to:

- listen
- ask relevant questions
- respond to questions
- interact with others
- To be still
- To understand
- To remember

This assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith.

### **Informal assessment**

This can take the form of observations of children engaged in tasks, observations of their contribution to classroom displays, end of topic reviews and marking of their written work, as indicated in the school marking policy. A note will be kept on planning of those children achieving above or below expectations. (These notes are then used to inform future planning.)

### **Formal assessment**

One topic per term will be formally assessed. Reception to Year 6's formal assessments will be based on end of topic expectations and attainment levels, each theme is assessed formally twice throughout EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2.

In each Topic, teachers are offered brief summaries of what children can be expected to know, understand and be able to do. They provide support for the tasks of differentiation, assessment, recording and reporting. Teachers will record their observations on the assessment system.

Foundation stage children can assess using class/group concept mapping but will also keep a portfolio of annotated work from each assessed topic, including photographic evidence. After each formal assessment staff will assess them using the new Standards in Religious Education. These are then recorded in the excel document.

Staff will give Miss McCormack and Mrs Grange 10 pieces to moderate. These 10 pieces all need context sheets and will be put together in a whole school portfolio.

### **As we are in a time of change from levels to end of year expectations, we are following the guidelines from Liverpool Archdiocese. These are as follows:**

- The standards show the END OF PHASE and the END OF YEAR expected standards. From EYFS TO 'A' Level.
- The standards framework focuses on key Religious Education skills.
- The framework does not cover all the content of Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Pupils meeting the different standards within the framework will have a broader range of knowledge and skills than those being assessed against in the framework.
- We should continue to report to parents on the broader range of Knowledge and Skills from the Come and See Programme.
- The Standards are not a formative assessment tool: they are not intended to guide individual programmes of study, classroom practice or methodology.
- Teachers should assess individual pieces of pupils' work in line with their Archdiocesan and school's own assessment policy and not against the frameworks.
- At the end of the year and phase teachers should make a judgement against the Standards based on their own assessments of pupils' work.
- Teachers need to base their judgement on a broad range of evidence, which will come from day-to-day work in the classroom. This could include Religious Education work evidenced in other areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers may also consider a single example of a pupil's work to provide evidence for multiple statements.
- Teachers should be confident that pupils have met the standards preceding the one at which they judge them to be working. However, they are not required to have specific evidence for that judgement. Pupil's work which demonstrates that they are consistently meeting a standard, shows that they are working above preceding standards.

## **6. Recording**

Recording in Religious Education recognises the distinct nature of the subject, provides evidence of achievement and may involve the pupils in self-assessment and dialogue with the teacher. It can take many forms:

- Notes from observations
- Comments written on pupils' work
- Visual evidence e.g. PIC Collages of children's activities, photographs of displays, portfolios.
- Children's self-assessments.

Recording provides evidence of and celebrates the individual's achievement. Links to 'Relationship & Sex Education' through their 'Come & See' learning are evidence in children's individual RSE lessons are recorded at the back of their books.

## **7. Reporting**

Reporting in Religious Education is a natural part of teaching and is integral to the learning process. There are four dimensions to reporting in R.E.

- It provides feedback to pupils on their achievements and progress.
- It informs colleagues of the achievement of pupils and areas studied by the class.
- It informs parents of children's progress and achievement.
- It informs governors, parish and external agencies about the Religious Education provided.

The process of reporting includes: end of year reports, parent's evenings, lists of topics covered, Catholic Life of School section on the website and items in the school newsletter. As well as this, parents are encouraged and welcome to enquire about the progress and achievements of their children.

## **8. Evaluation of teaching**

The Religious Subject Leader:

- Monitors a sample of planning and pupil's work, across all the stages, each term as part of the formal assessment process
- Religious Education forms part of the school's Observation of Teaching Monitoring plan
- Children's work is scrutinised as part of the school's scrutiny of work programme
- Resources are evaluated yearly by teachers who then inform the Religious Education Coordinator of any requirements.

## **9. Evaluation of learning**

Through the Come and See programme children are encouraged to evaluate their own learning, particularly through the Respond stages of each topic. The following questions enable the children to critically assess their own understanding at the end of each topic:

- What do I now understand?
- What have I thought about?
- What have I enjoyed in this topic?
- Was there anything I didn't enjoy?
- Is there something new I might now try?
- Is there something that puzzled me?

Each term the Religious Education Subject Leader reviews the work and planning from a variety of year groups. This will focus on;

- Marking
- Standards in comparison to other core subjects
- Coverage matching time allocated
- Continuity and progression across the year groups
- Differentiation
- Range of teaching styles

Displays/working walls are regularly observed and the appropriate use of resources checked. The biggest contribution to evaluation of teaching is made by self-evaluation, year group partner's evaluation and staffroom discussion and sharing of good practise.

## **10. Staff Development**

### **Staff Development/Communication**

The Religious Education coordinator has attended Archdiocese-led Inset courses and Coordinator Meetings. Time has then been allocated during staff meetings for the dissemination of information from these meetings.

Members of staff attend RE Inset and CCRS courses offered by the Archdiocese.

At the beginning of each topic, year group teachers meet to discuss, plan and share ideas and resources. During these meetings, full use is made of the 'Come and See for Yourself', teacher's resources found on the website. In this way, teachers focus on the Christian theology contained within each topic. Having focused their own minds teachers can more fully participate in the topic, thus enabling children to reach a greater understanding. At this stage, the celebratory aspect of the topic can be decided upon.

## **11. Staff Induction**

### **Staff Induction**

All new colleagues are guided through this handbook and the Come and See materials appropriate to their year group. They are made aware of resources available and encouraged to ask for help and support whenever needed. Whenever possible, new colleagues attend 'New to Come and See' inset offered by the Archdiocese.

## **12. Resources**

The most vital resource within our school is our committed Christian staff.

All class teachers are responsible for the direct teaching of Religious Education and all members of staff are committed to fostering a warm, caring ethos within the school.

Each teacher has their own login to the Come and See internet resource materials.

All staff have access to a range of resources to enable them to deliver the Come and See scheme effectively.

## **13. Relationship of Religious Education to the whole curriculum**

Religious Education is the core subject at St Mary's and underpins all other teaching.

Collective Worship

Refer to our policy for Collective Worship

At St Mary's we follow the Archdiocesan 'Collective Worship – Guidance for schools', which states:

'At the heart of the Christian faith is the belief in a God who communicates with people. God calls every human person into a loving relationship and as with every relationship; our relationship with God can only grow through communication.'

There are therefore Acts of Collective Worship, planned in accordance with Archdiocesan guidance, daily. Years 1 to 6 also deliver a Collective Worship to their Key phase on a termly basis.

Opportunities for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Refer to our policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

This is evidenced through:

- children's 'Relationship & Sex Education' work books
- planning, photographs and 'go forth' gifts from acts of Collective Worship
- children's prayer life
- Celebrations of Mass, such as, Y4 Sacramental Celebrations and end of year moving on Mass. Children help lead these Masses to which parents and parishioners who are invited.
- Children visiting Church as part of their 'Come and See' curriculum e.g. Reception/Y1 visiting for the topic relating to Baptism
- Regular newsletters for school life, Religious Education, RSE and Online Safety
- School support for the 'With You Always' family catechesis programme by passing on information from the Archdiocese and parishes to families through school newsletters.
- Children's contributions to charities such as, Macmillan coffee morning, CAFOD, Children in Need etc.

#### **14. Evaluation of Religious Education Handbook**

The Religious Education Subject Leader will review the handbook as necessary but no later than a two year interval.