



## **Saint Edward's Catholic Primary and Nursery School**

### **RE Policy July 2020**

At St Edward's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, we believe that Religious Education is the foundation of the entire educational process, and that the beliefs and values it communicates will inspire every aspect of school life.

We recognise that as teachers of religious education our need is to lead young people through word and action towards an ever-increasing understanding of the faith. We are seeking for our children to walk hand in hand with God, and to live out their faith every day. We want our children to learn more about and appreciate the Catholic faith regardless of gender, cultural background or ability. As a staff we are dedicated to setting good examples and expressing our own faith in our teaching and in all of our care for our pupils.

We firmly believe that the Gospel message should be reflected in the lives of everyone connected to our school. Therefore our school Mission Statement lies at the very heart of our school:

**'We carry the light of Christ as we love, live and learn with each other.'**

**Love God, ourselves and each other.**

**Live life in response to God's teachings.**

**Learn to achieve our best in everything we do in school.**

### **Aims of RE in our school**

The aim of religious education in St Edward's Catholic Primary School is to lead the children in knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and to support them in living it in their daily lives. This includes:

- To encourage children to develop a love and passion for their faith
- Becoming a setting, whereby our Catholic values are embodied in our mission statement and are central to the development of our children's spiritual, moral and vocational understanding
- To encourage study and reflection
- To encourage children to take an active role in planning and leading Collective Worship
- To encourage skills of listening and spirituality

- To develop opportunities for learning about other faiths and to respect and acknowledge that we live in a multi-faith world
- To continue to develop parish links within our local community
- To assess and monitor performance of pupils in order to plan work that encourages pupils to reach their full potential regardless of gender, class, culture or ability

### **How we meet our stated aims:**

We meet our aims by providing opportunities for pupils to question and reflect upon their own and others life experiences, sharing their thoughts and feelings with others in a spirit of mutual respect. In addition, we ensure that the celebration of mass, collective worship, daily prayers and curricular time has an established place in the life of the school.

We will provide opportunities where pupils can make an active response in life and worship through activities which evoke such a response enabling them to express their feelings freely. We will also enable children to respect and recognise the diversity of human life and beliefs of other faith traditions.

Learning and growing as the people of God is the strategy that we follow in our school. This and curriculum mapping are used to create the schools long term and medium term plans. Each class teacher is responsible for long, medium and short term planning for their class. Planning is given to the RE co-ordinator who monitors this throughout the school year.

The RE Coordinator provides support with assessing pupils progress and after each assessed unit, will discuss and collate the whole school data with staff.

### **Legal rights:**

Parent's do have a legal right to withdraw their child from RE and collective worship but at St Edward's we encourage all children to take part.

### **How we teach RE:**

Creating the right atmosphere and encouraging the children to accept prayer as a normal part of life is very important at St Edwards. Prayer occupies a central role in our Religious Education as a means of expressing and fostering faith and building up a permanent relationship with God. Prayer is an awareness of the presence of God in our lives and engages the whole person. Opportunities are given for prayer to occur across the curriculum- thanking, praising and asking God for help, guidance and for His protection. Each day is to begin and end with prayer, and lunchtime and afternoon prayers are said by each class. Every class has been given a list of prayers to learn throughout the year as well as a class prayer book, to record their own prayers within. Every Friday, a pupil is nominated to take home a prayer bag to share in collective worship with their families.

During our Monday morning prayer service, a prayer is selected from the 'prayer basket', which will have been written by one of our pupils and will be shared amongst the whole school. The staff at St Edward's act as role models in leading prayer and at the beginning of each staff meeting, a member of staff will lead a collective prayer or meditation.

Opportunities arise all throughout the day for spontaneous prayer from the children and children are encouraged to pray at their prayer areas in each class or at our religious focal point in the entrance foyer of the school.

All pupils take part in a daily act of collective worship- this may be in the form of a prayer liturgy in the classroom or a key stage or whole school assembly. Our Liturgy group help to plan collective worship and set up Masses, they support their peers in the planning and preparation of Collective Worship across the school. Our school use the Ten:Ten scheme to help plan for assemblies and collective worship across the school.

Children celebrate mass regularly, the masses are led by the children and parishioners and family members are invited to share mass with us. Each class takes part in a class mass which is related to the classes' curriculum at the time. Key stage 2 participates in reconciliation services which happen during the season of Advent and Lent. In addition once every half term, every class will celebrate Mass with our priest at Church on a Thursday morning. This is a lovely celebration and the children are expected to write a Mass reflection upon arrival back at school.

Reception and nursery children follow the Learning and growing as the people of God scheme and appropriate Saint's days, multi-cultural festivals and celebrations. It is taught as a discreet subject and not subsumed into the rest of the curriculum.

RE is taught within its own right and follows the Learning and growing as the people of God scheme. 10 per cent of curriculum time be devoted to Religious Education excluding assembly and Acts of Worship time, as advised by the Bishops of England and Wales.

RHE is a statutory subject for all schools from September 2020, we are embracing "the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life" by giving pupils knowledge "that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships" (DFE Statutory Guidance). We will deliver this teaching through the prism of Catholic RSHE, using the program: 'Life to the full', Ten:Ten. The framework of this programme is taken from the Model Catholic RSE Programme by the Catholic Education Service, which has been highlighted by the Department of Education as a work of good practice.

### **Multicultural Education**

At St. Edward's we foster acceptance and respect of the cultures and beliefs of others as preparation for meeting the challenge of living in a multicultural, multi-faith society. A week is blocked for Multi-Faith education to be taught throughout school (from nursery to year 6) during the summer term. It is also taught at other times throughout the year. Opportunities will also arise for year groups to visit other religious places of worship, to build upon their knowledge of other cultures and beliefs.

### **Planning**

#### **Long term Planning**

A long term plan is completed by the RE co-ordinator every year detailing when, and for how long each unit should be taught. Also depending on the assessment focus for the year, these units will be highlighted to make staff fully aware, and act as a reminder, when they are referring to their long term plan.

#### **Medium Term Planning**

Copies of the diocesan strategy 'Learning and Growing as the people of God' can be found on the teacher's area in individual year groups. All outcomes for each unit must be covered.

Using these unit plans, class teachers complete their medium term planning in one go before the start of a unit so that they have a full understanding of how the unit is going to be covered. Staff look at, and focus on, the outcomes to ensure that they are covered in their teaching of the unit. They then choose activities from the strategy, or use their own ideas, to ensure children are given opportunities to be stretched and challenged. When planning, learning outcomes that are going to be covered in each lesson are chunked and labelled, and any activities that teachers think they will use will be highlighted and labelled according to the corresponding learning outcome. Teachers should consider the links given for Collective Worship for each unit.

### **Short Term Planning**

New short term plans have been introduced by the diocese and are the only ones to be used at St. Edward's. The new plans include the Attainment Targets for teachers to include when planning RE lessons and they are level & cross level specific. All short term plans must be completed weekly, dated and a copy of the planning saved to teachers' year group folders within the short term planning folder. It is very important that high level questioning, appropriate to children's attainment is included in planning.

### **The school's involvement with parents and the parish community.**

Parents are invited to attend assemblies, masses, class masses and open days to see the daily pattern of the school day. Prayer workshops are also timetabled into the school year to give families a chance to collectively pray together. Termly information is sent home to parents with details of what is to be covered by each year group in RE and parents attend two parents evening nights to see recording work and to discuss pupil progress.

Parents/children are informed and encouraged to attend mass and processions at our parish church throughout the year. Parents are involved with sacramental preparations.

### **Sacramental preparation.**

#### **Reconciliation and Holy Communion.**

The sacrament of Reconciliation and first Holy Communion is undertaken by year 3 children. The 'I Belong' scheme is followed with the Headteacher, staff, parish priest and parents are involved with the preparation. Non-Catholic children and parents are invited to complete the scheme receiving a Holy blessing instead of Holy Communion. Children are guided through the scheme by the RE co-ordinator and the year 3 teacher through RE lessons and Reconciliation and Holy Communion sessions. Holy Communion occurs in June each year.

#### **Confirmation.**

The sacrament of Confirmation is received by our year 6 children when the archbishop/bishop administers the sacrament on his annual visit to the parish. The year 6 teacher and the RE co-ordinator instruct and guide them in preparation for the Sacrament. The booklet 'Gifted in the Spirit' is used as a class teaching resource.

### **Equal Opportunities.**

All children non-Catholic and non-Christian have equal access to the school's religious education programme and opportunity to join in collective worship and private prayer. All recording work and content of classroom lessons are differentiated to accommodate the least and most able pupils.

**Resources.** A list of resources and supplementary materials used at St Edwards is kept with the RE co-ordinator and included in the scheme of work. Most resources are kept within each classroom but a central RE resource area has been set up for more general artefacts.

### **Assessing, recording and reporting.**

This is in accordance with the whole school assessment policy and Diocese guidelines. A portfolio of work with unit assessments and moderated work assessed according to the national levels of attainment are kept by the RE co-ordinator. Each class teacher also completes a tracking sheet for each assessed unit and assesses one focus child on all units, as well as one HA, MA and LA pupil for the main assessed units.

### **Prayer and Collective Worship**

At St. Edward's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, we aim to help children understand what both formal and informal prayer is. We also aim to ensure that children value and respect the power of prayer and use it to help strengthen their relationships with God.

We strive to be a praying community. It is important for the children to know 'formal' prayers of the church which we all pray together and which we all hear and say with the parish/family communities outside school e.g. Our Father, Hail Mary.

We all pray collectively at school in class in the morning, before lunch and at the end of the school day. At these times the children are encouraged to face or gather around the prayer focal point, which forms an essential part of every class. These daily prayers (along with other formal prayers) are displayed around the focal area which reflects the liturgical season with the appropriate colour cloth; green, purple, gold or white. A crucifix and candle are prominently displayed along with other statues, artefacts and posters and changed on a regular basis. This responsibility, although ultimately that of the class teacher, is frequently given to pupils.

Class collective worship is celebrated on days when children are not participating in an assembly or Mass. These sessions are an essential element of the Catholic life of our school and pivotal to our spiritual development. Children often plan, prepare and lead collective worship.

A focal point, candle, crucifix, Bible and artefacts relevant to the theme/ occasion are the prayer focus during collective worship and assemblies in the school hall. Such gatherings always include the children making the sign of the cross and spending some time in prayer.

We value the opportunity to gather so that we can pray together, sing together and celebrate good news together.

Prayer does not only mean 'formal' prayers. We hope to help each other to listen to God speaking to us and to respond in our hearts and minds during moments of silence knowing that He always listens and is ready to respond.

Times of planned or spontaneous prayer and quiet reflection are integral and important features of daily collective worship.

We also plan for and encourage prayer writing by the children themselves.

Time at the start of staff meetings is dedicated to prayer and quiet reflection. Staff are also encouraged to develop their spirituality through planned inset days.

The liturgical calendar also provides particular prayer opportunities within school e.g. praying the Rosary during May and October, the Stations of the Cross during Holy Week, the Walk With Me prayer during Advent and Lent.

Liturgy - Celebrating the Mass is vitally important to the spiritual life of the whole school community. We make each celebration of the Mass a community celebration which involves children, teachers, support staff, parents, families and parishioners.

At the start of the academic year a timetable of whole school, phase, year groups and class Liturgies for the forthcoming academic year are planned in conjunction with the Head Teacher, RE Co-ordinator and the Parish Priest.

Responsibilities for planning and preparing the Liturgies are assigned on the rota i.e. class teacher, RE co-ordinator, Leadership Team.

Masses are celebrated in the school hall and when children gather together for Mass along with staff, parents, family and parishioners they are aware that they are in 'God's House' and are part of the wider family of the Church.

### **The role of the RE co-ordinator.**

To support and advise all staff in the teaching and planning of RE throughout the school. To prepare the RE policy for approval by staff and governors. To monitor the quality of teaching and learning, pupils work and religious displays. To monitor planning and lead staff meeting and INSET days. To monitor, evaluate, co-ordinate and purchase resources.

### **SMSVC.**

Our aim at St Edwards is to help and foster our pupils to become responsible and mature Christians living in the world and belonging to the church. The children at St Edwards are encouraged to have a strong sense of caring for others within the school community and in the wider community. The RE programme alongside the PSHE scheme we follow supports the SMSVC development of each child.

**Link Governor** Father Kevin is the link governor for Religious Education in the school.

**Policy to be reviewed:** July 2021