



St. Michael's Catholic School

Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement

As a Catholic School we understand the importance of being a learning community that lives its life according to the teachings of Christ. Put in to practice it means that we take Jesus' injunction to love our neighbour seriously, we are called to 'serve and not to be served' and we strive for excellence so that we may be better able to contribute to the welfare of others and ourselves in the wider community.

Recognising each individual in our community as made in the image of God as we aim to:

- Enable pupils to develop spiritually, personally, morally, socially, physically and intellectually
- Help our pupils grow in the Catholic faith and prepare them for life in the wider community
- Challenge our pupils to make best use of their God-given talents and to celebrate their achievements
- Develop a love of learning and the ability to work independently
- Provide equal opportunities for all pupils whilst responding to their varied needs
- Work in partnership with the families of our pupils
- Value and develop the skills and talents of our staff and celebrate their successes
- Enrich our pupils' education by active involvement with the life of local parishes, the Diocese and local community

'Living in the Light of the Gospel' is the basis of the life and work of St Michael's.

- Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church.
*'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'*¹
- Religious Education is 'the core of the core curriculum.'
'Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school..... All pupils

*have the 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 which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.*¹

- Religious Education is the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ and is a rigorous academic subject in its own right.
*Religious Education is regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines.*² As such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

*“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. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material.”*³

- The outcome of classroom 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”.*⁴
- Whilst evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils, the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

Religious Education - Curriculum Time Allocation

10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship.

Programme of Study

To fulfil the above aims and to address the areas of study outlined in Diocesan guidance and the examination syllabi for those year groups who study Religious Education at GCSE and Philosophy and Ethics at A' level.

Methodology

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

Inclusion

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

² Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3

³ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7

⁴ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE agreed by Bishops' Conference or in accordance to the guidelines outlined in the PoS for examination courses.
- Assessed work is seen in pupils' books or in separate assessment folders.
- In-house moderation meetings are held at regular intervals during the year.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is undertaken using the same routines of full (appraisal-linked) lesson observations and drop-ins and learning walks. Review of marking and feedback is also undertaken during lesson observations. There are also opportunities for work scrutiny and planning scrutiny.
- Pupils are assessed at the end of each term and this information is record and track achievement and progress.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in students' written reports.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors through the Teaching, Learning and Ethos committee. This is reported by the Chair of this sub-committee at a full Governing Body meeting.

Management of the Subject

The Subject Leader has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. In the secondary phase, this work is supported by the Head of Faculty (AVP6).

Our Ambition

By adopting the practices outlined above, founded on the principles of effective religious education, we seek to ensure that the pupils of St. Michael's Catholic School:

- work in an environment in which students can engage in the search for truth and meaning and progress along their personal journey of faith.
- develop a knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- develop an understanding of Christians of all denominations.
- develop a knowledge and understanding of and respect for other World Faiths
- explore the response of faith to ultimate questions about human life
- develop the skills required to engage in religious thinking.

In co-operation with the Chaplaincy Team, we wish to provide opportunities for personal reflection in the classroom and through prayer, liturgical celebrations and retreats. We intend that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Roman Catholic Christians through the study of scripture and tradition and that they develop knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christians of other denominations; to this end we encourage contributions from and dialogue between Christians of all denominations within the school. Pupils will also study aspects of the beliefs and practices of several World Faiths and will access a range of resources which reflect a rich diversity of lifestyles, cultures and belief. In all these ways, students

have the opportunity to develop skills in literacy, investigation and research, critical thinking and theological thinking.

Finally, we offer the opportunity to explore a range of personal, social and moral issues and a range of possible responses to them, particularly those based on Roman Catholic teaching. The caring atmosphere and positive relationships that are nurtured in the school should help to develop appropriate moral values and a sense of individual and collective responsibility.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Teaching, Learning and Ethos committee (which includes the Governor responsible for Chaplaincy and RE).

Equality Monitoring

DATE: 5.7.14

1. Does this policy have any implications for people of relevant protected characteristics (RPC)*? Yes, because not all members of the school community are practising Catholics.

2. If 'yes', will it advantage or disadvantage any particular group? No because this policy outlines we will ensure that our acts of Collective Worship are fully inclusive.

3. How will this policy, if relevant, promote good relations between people of RPC and those without? It should prevent anyone of any faith (or none) being treated less favourably than any others

* Age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Monitored by the Governors Personnel and Resources Committee