



The Catholic Schools of the Waveney Valley

Religious Education Policy

Reviewed by:	Mr Patrick Kennedy Executive Head teacher
Approved by:	Governing Body
Status & Review Cycle	Statutory Annual
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MISSION STATEMENT AND AIMS

The family of St Benet's and St Edmund's are school communities following in the footsteps of Christ and built on the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.

We seek to:

- Be a happy, welcoming and caring school where we recognise, affirm and develop the unique gifts and talents of each individual
- Provide a safe, purposeful and stimulating learning environment where all children can flourish
- To value childhood as an intrinsic right of all children
- Enable every child to learn, grow and reach their full potential
- Help children develop high self-esteem, confidence and a strong sense of identity
- Inspire the children through a child-centred, thematic and creative curriculum
- Capture the children's natural curiosity and foster a desire for learning and high achievement in a changing and challenging world
- Teach Christian values to children, inviting them to build their own lives upon them
- Provide a place where all are offered an opportunity to come to know Jesus better through their learning, through worship and through the daily life of the school
- Work together as a hardworking, dedicated and enthusiastic community, where all contributions are valued
- Recognise and value parents as the first educators of their children, fostering positive relationships and strong working partnerships between the school, parents, and all those responsible for the children's welfare and education
- Be an inclusive family, inspired by gospel values through service to others
- Teach the children to value and celebrate diversity within the school and beyond
- Help the children develop respect and responsibility for themselves, for others, and the world in which they live

In our Catholic school, we aim to:

- Be a school community reflecting the love of God in its relationships, standards, teaching and way of life in promoting the development of the whole child.
- Build on and extend the foundations of religious education begun in the home. In partnership with home and parish, we strive to deepen the children's knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and to contribute to their understanding and living of their own faith.
- Provide opportunities that will allow the children to develop skills needed to reflect upon and explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition and of other faith traditions, to enable children to love and respect one another and to respect the religious convictions of others.
- Extend the children's understanding of God's family across the world by building a global dimension into both prayer and liturgy and the curriculum whenever appropriate.
- Help children to recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life, and to deepen and enrich each child's understanding and living of their own personal faith.
- Stimulate children to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose i.e. Where did I come from? Why am I here? Who am I?
- Develop in the children an understanding of the importance of celebration within the Catholic tradition – the festivals, worship and liturgical practices.
- Encourage children to develop an understanding of sacraments as a celebration of Christ permeating every moment of their lives.
- Encourage children to develop an understanding of sacred writings, events, key religious figures and their significance for believers today.

- Create and maintain an environment where prayer is valued, fostered and developed.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

"To Know You More Clearly."

"Education is not about knowing things or taking lessons but about being able to use three lingos: those of the head, the heart, and the hands... learning so that you can think about what you feel and do, can feel what you think and do, and can do what you feel and think. Unity within a person."
– Pope Francis

Curriculum Intent

Why do we teach this? Why do we teach it the way we do?

At CPSWV Religious Education (RE) is the heart of all we do as a Catholic school and permeates through every aspect of the curriculum and school life. We aim to provide the very best Catholic education for our pupils. CPSWV is a learning community underpinned by a Catholic ethos based upon Gospel values and Catholic Social Teaching. We aim to celebrate the uniqueness of every child, enabling each to reach his or her potential spiritually, morally, academically and socially. Religious Education is the core of the core curriculum.

We aspire to achieve this aim through the everyday routine and prayer life of the school, as well as Religious Education and to achieve high standards and encourage pupils to make the most of the opportunities we offer them.

In the daily living out of our Catholic faith, we aim to ensure that RE and spiritual development is threaded through every aspect of the curriculum, so that it is explicit and implicit within the taught curriculum. Rooted in prayer and lived out in the daily life of the school, the children are supported, through the curriculum, to grow in faith and deepen their relationships with God and each other.

THE AIMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

Implementation: Planning, Teaching and Learning

What do we teach? What does this look like?

Our curriculum is shaped by our school mission and values. We ensure that a minimum of 10% of curriculum time is allocated for RE teaching across all key stages. We plan from the new RE Directory for all children and utilise the Catholic Plus scheme of work to support our teachers in their work. As a small school, our curriculum operates on a two year cycle.

Planning is detailed and there is a sharp focus on knowing and understanding religious vocabulary. Teaching ensures that there are regular planned opportunities to re-visit, review and consolidate prior learning. In classrooms you will see RE working walls displaying key vocabulary and current learning. There is a consistent approach to re-visiting learning from previous units throughout the school.

We focus on activities which evoke an active response in the children's lives and worship, and through which the children can express themselves. We provide activities that allow and encourage children to actively explore and reflect upon their own experiences and feelings freely and deeply, as well as upon those of others. We provide a balance between practical, investigative tasks and teacher-led activities, and between paired, small group and class sessions.

The ways of knowing describe the skills that pupils develop as they progress through the religious education curriculum. We refer now to ways of knowing rather than standards or levels, since progress in religious education is not only something that concerns performance and summative assessment. Each unit of work has key Ways of Knowing questions for the children to respond to at the end of each lesson. They are called ways of knowing since they describe the holistic ways human beings experience education: as a growth in understanding, as a creative and critical assimilation, and as a recognition of the application of learning to one's own life. The three ways of knowing are 'understand', 'discern', and 'respond'.

Scripture is the foundation of each Branch and feature in each lesson. This develops knowledge, understanding, skills, compassion and awe and wonder across the curriculum.

We ensure that this programme of study is enriched with a variety of activities that include drama, music, history, geography and art

Pupils explore the religious dimensions of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupils' own experiences and with the other faith traditions. We proudly proclaim our faith and invite all to join us on our journey, but we welcome children and families of other faiths to our community, and we learn about other faiths and cultures. Throughout the year, we ensure that children learn about other faiths, religious celebrations and events. We enjoy inviting visitors into school so that children can learn to respect and understand other faiths and cultures.

By offering these kinds of teaching and learning opportunities we encourage children to develop an understanding of the relevance of the following Gospel values in their lives:

- Love of God
- Love of themselves and others
- Care for themselves and others
- Forgiveness of themselves and others
- Respect for themselves and others
- Giving of themselves to and for others

Through children's learning, we encourage them to

- Develop a spiritual understanding – a sense of awe, wonder and mystery, and a sense of God in the world
- Develop a sense of uniqueness and worth
- Have respect and tolerance for others who hold different religious views
- Develop an understanding of the obligations, responsibilities and joys of belonging to the Catholic community.

We foster in children the ability to:

- Listen, think critically, ethically and spiritually
- Make informed judgements
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Recognise the consequences of their own actions
- Examine, and evaluate their own feelings and motivations
- Choose, change and forgive,
- Reflect on their actions and experiences
- Develop skills of interpersonal relationships
- Respond in faith, gratitude and love of God

Impact

Through their RE learning, the children are able to make links between their own lives and those of others in their community and in the wider world. The children are developing an understanding of other people's cultures and ways of life, which they are then able to communicate to others.

Through regular moderation and monitoring of lessons and books, we can be sure that progress is made across all year groups. Evidence in RE is not just collated through books. Children's knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through art, drama and thoughts and actions.

RE offers our children the means by which to understand how people choose to live and to understand why they choose to live in that way.

Recording of RE may take many forms and can include:

- Written work in books – accounts, poems, prayers etc.
- Work completed for display
- Art work and taped music recordings
- Photographs and recordings of drama work in progress

Formal reporting to parents takes place at the end of each school year.

Assessment information is passed on to the next teacher at the end of each academic year and to Notre Dame High School and other secondary schools on transfer.

Children's progress is tracked by the RE leader/Executive Head teacher and reported to the School Governors.

The RE leader is responsible for the monitoring, evaluating and development of all areas of RE and Collective Worship. The RE leader/Executive Head teacher monitor the different areas of RE on a rolling programme. These areas include:

- teaching and learning
- quality of worship
- display and prayer corners

- percentage of curriculum time dedicated to RE

Most monitoring is done through direct observation, but also includes a scrutiny of planning and assessment, pupil voice activities and recorded RE work.

Resources are audited and spending needs identified on an annual basis.

This policy will be reviewed annually.