



ST AIDAN'S

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Religious Education Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

**“Learning and growing together; inspired by the love of
Jesus.”**

Introduction

The policies and planned curriculum, ethos and climate of St. Aidan's are reflected in the mission statement that expresses the philosophy of education and community living in our Catholic school. We believe that,

'Pupils have a right to receive an overall religious education that 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 (1 Peter 3:15)...Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.' (Expectations of Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, January 2000.)

St. Aidan's promotes religious education for all its pupils taking into account their needs and backgrounds. These include:

- Those who come from supportive Catholic homes.
- Those for whom the school will be their first point of contact and experience of the Church.
- Those who belong to other Christian traditions.
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

The governors and staff believe R.E. to be a collaborative activity that respects and promotes the child's innate capacity for wonder, awe, reverence and imagination for the spiritual.

Aims of Religious Education in St. Aidan's

The aim of religious education in St. Aidan's 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:

- Enabling pupils to recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimension of life appropriate to their age and ability.
- Enabling pupils to acquire a set of moral values and the confidence to make and hold moral judgements, thus enabling children to develop a sense of awareness of self and sensitivity to others.
- Helping pupils to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition 'in a manner that encourages investigation and reflection.
- Deepening and enriching the understanding and living faith of children from committed Catholic homes.

- Recognising and respecting other faith traditions.

Objectives

- To provide 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.
- To provide opportunities for children to begin to establish their own set of moral values and begin to make moral decisions.
- To enable children to explore and begin to understand the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition, thus deepening and enriching the faith of those from committed Catholic homes.
- To 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.
- To enable children to respect and recognise the diversity of human life and beliefs of other faith traditions.

Promoting Community Cohesion

'Educators develop in themselves and cultivate in their students, a keen social awareness and a profound sense of civic and political responsibility.' (SACRE)

A cohesive community is one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds

At St. Aidan's we develop community cohesion through:

- Links with other schools e.g. through creative partnerships
- Developing and understanding of rights and responsibilities in the children
- Extended schools e.g. 'wrap around care'
- Working and learning together e.g. making links with other schools via e-mail etc.
- Caring and learning in the community e.g. local charity work e.g. Nugent
- Global community e.g. our work with CAFOD.
- Caring for the environment – e.g. eco school status

At St. Aidan's we endeavour to:

- Contribute positively to local parish, deanery and wider diocesan life and worship
- Ensure that pupils have the opportunity to be involved in all appropriate school activities
- Teach about the challenges to society where community cohesion is lacking
- Collaborate with other Catholic schools and schools of other denominations, faith traditions and schools of no religious character
- Contribute to the life of the local community and to national and international events/ initiatives and opportunities
- Work in partnership with parents and carers
- Make the provision of prayer, collective worship and the liturgical life of the school inclusive
- Include all staff and pupils in its corporate life of worship
- Ensure that the curriculum promotes community cohesion
- Demonstrate in planning and practice that the RE curriculum teaches Christian concern for all, irrespective of e.g. gender, ethnicity and faith
- Ensure that the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum enhances teaching about the benefits of community cohesion.

Spiritual Development

<p><i>Pupils who are developing spiritually are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics</i></p>	<p><i>At St. Aidan's we encourage children's Spiritual Development through:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour • An awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs • A respect for themselves and for others • A sense of empathy with others, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving pupils the opportunity to explore Catholic values and beliefs, and include other religious beliefs and the way in which they affect peoples' lives • Supporting and develop children's beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them. • Encouraging pupils to explore and

<p>concern and compassion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ An increasing ability to reflect and learn from this reflection □ An ability to show courage and persistence in defence of their aims, values, principles and beliefs □ A readiness to challenge all that would constrain human spirit; e.g. poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination □ An appreciation of the intangible – e.g. beauty, truth, love, goodness, order – as well as for mystery, paradox and ambiguity □ A respect for insight as well as for knowledge and reason □ An expressive and/or creative impulse □ An ability to think in terms of the ‘whole’ –e.g. concepts such as harmony, interdependence, scale, perspective □ An understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely impact 	<p>develop what animates themselves and others</p> <p>Encouraging pupils to reflect and learn from reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Giving pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions and the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful <p>Develop a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals □ Promoting teaching styles which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -value pupils’ questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns -enable pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning -encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference e.g. asking Why? How? Where? What? <p>Monitoring in simple and pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided</p>
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Religious Education in the Catholic School

Religious Education plays a central role in the curriculum, ethos and community of the school. Expectations for excellence in religious education are achieved by:

- Clarity of succinct religious learning objectives,
- Key content,
- By appropriate methodologies,
- Rigour,
- Richness of resources,
- Achievement of identified outcomes
- Accurate methods of assessment

The objective of religious education requires:

- Analysis and reflection and critical appreciation of sources.
- Marked progression through the different stages of education,
- The unequivocal support of the management of every Catholic school,
- 10% of the taught week for each Key stage of education,
- The encouragement of investigation and reflection,
- Development of appropriate skills and attitudes which allows for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life.
- The use of skills in other areas of the curriculum.

At St. Aidan's we provide a Catholic curriculum, which is broad and balanced, recognising that every pupil is *"unique and is created in the image of God"* (Gen 1:27). Our curriculum is designed to enable every pupil to discern their vocation and to follow it as active citizens in service to the world.

Relationship of R.E. to the Whole Curriculum

Whilst making links with other areas of learning it is important that teachers remain focused on the learning outcomes of the religious education topic. For example, delivering Scripture and using the skills developed in Literacy to present a passage several times in order to enhance, deepen and extend children's awareness of the message.

English: In R.E. written work reflects a wide range of writing styles and genres as recommended in the National Curriculum Programme of Study. Work however is not assessed based upon the same standards in English.

PSHE: Here at St. Aidan's we have adapted the PSHE Association Programme of Study and incorporated aspects of Young Citizens Go- Givers resources. We are supported through the Catholic ethos of the school and in the Come and See programme.

Science- Several topics throughout the school encourage respect for God's creation.

Supporting those with Additional Educational Needs

We support all those children with additional or special educational needs. All class teachers differentiate their teaching so that all children can achieve their potential in Religious Education. (See school inclusion policy.) Teachers make full use of the SEND support provided on the Come and See website. We strive to ensure all children have access to learning in religious education curriculum.

The Religious Education Programme

To fulfil our aims and objectives, we use the 'Come and See' programme of religious education as recommended by the Liverpool Archdiocese.

Overview of Content

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

Where do I come from?	Life-Creation
Who am I?	Dignity-Incarnation
Why am I here?	Purpose- Redemption

Come and See is developed through three themes based on documents from the Second Vatican Council. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian living.

The basic question/belief for each season time is explored through three kinds of themes.

The Community of Faith ↔ Church

The **Church** themes occur in each season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme.

The Celebration of Ritual ↔ Sacramental

The **Sacramental** themes occur once in every season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme.

The Way of Life ↔ Christian Living

The **Christian living** themes occur in each season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme.

Delivering the programme.

Each year group has its own set of topics within the programme. The process of each topic is opened up through **Explore, Reveal** and **Respond**.

Explore helps children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives-concerning themselves, their relationships and their world.

Explore will take **one week** of Religious Education time to complete.

Reveal is the heart of the process. The children 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 Christians. It will involve learning about Scripture, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians. **Reveal** will take two weeks of Religious Education time to complete.

Respond has three parts; **Remember, Rejoice** and **Renew**.

There is no new learning during this week. This week consolidates what the children have been taught. Children are also given the chance to plan a Collective Worship to celebrate their learning during this week.

Respond will take **one week** of Religious Education time to complete.

Planning

Long Term planning.

The themes and topics framework sets out the programme for the year.

The topics are set out on a yearlong plan to ensure all will be taught and learning intentions can be met.

Medium Term Planning

Medium term planning is the responsibility of the R.E. co-ordinator. Who will:

- Use the overview to note the basic question of Christian doctrine for the term. This can also be found on the **Come and See** website so teachers may adapt it to the needs of their class.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher.

Each class teacher will complete planning on an individual basis for their class. They will use a planner suitable for their use or annotate the Come and See planning. They will use the driver/skill words to set out clear expectations for assessment.

RE books will be monitored on a regular basis by the R.E. Lead.

Assessment

In Come and See assessment is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of the themes and the learning outcomes for each topic. Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do. It does not assess spirituality or faith practice.

Formal Assessments

Formal assessments will take place once a term. The school follows the assessment process as recommended by the Archdiocesan team. This work will also be moderated with other staff members.

A tracker has been developed for staff to use and grade children against the new RE Standards. This will be completed termly.

Informal Assessments

Assessment takes place on an informal basis continually as this ensures that planning and teaching is reflective, thus allowing children to achieve their full potential.

This may take place through displays, discussions, marking and observation.

RE assessment for Foundation stage takes place within the Learning areas of Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World using the Foundation Stage profile. Evidence of this is kept in the children's learning journey and floor books. EYFS staff will use the tracker in the summer term to formally assess their children against the appropriate standards ready for their transition into year 1.

Expectations

There are three attainments targets for religious education. The levels shown equate to the same levels used by the other national curriculum subjects.

RECORDING

Informal

Recording provides evidence of achievement. It involves pupils in self-assessment progress in dialogue with their teacher. It takes many forms:

- Notes from observations
- Written comments on children's work
- Visual evidence (photographs, displays, etc)
- Dance, drama and celebrations
- Class/ school portfolios
- Pupils self-assessment

Formal

The Archdiocese of Liverpool has introduced three formal assessments which take place once a term. These are formally recorded on pro-formas provided by the Archdiocesan education

team. After each formal assessment there is a staff meeting for moderation purposes. Each class teacher provides 2 samples each of Greater Depth, Age related and Working towards with completed context sheets. These are then discussed and when agreed they are countersigned. These are kept in files by RE co-ordinator but are available to all staff.

Each class teacher keeps individual records for each child's attainment in religious education. These are based on the attainment targets and are completed at end of each term throughout the year to track the continual progression of each child. These individual records are then passed to the next teacher at the end of the academic year.

These records can then be monitored and achievement analysed to establish that pupils are progressing and reaching the standard in religious education that they are reaching in other core subjects.

Evaluation of teaching

In St. Aidan's teachers are encouraged to reflect and evaluate their teaching consistently to ensure good practice. These evaluations feed into future planning and teaching. This is done through annotating plans and constant ongoing assessment.

Evaluation of learning

In our school children evaluate their own learning through the 'Rejoice, Remember and Renew' section of the programme. Children will celebrate their learning of each topic and have evidence in floor books to show for this. Once a term parents are invited in to share in this celebration of learning and take part in Collective Worship.

Staff Development

All relevant courses are advertised and made available to staff members. R.E. co-ordinator attends all subject leader meetings and courses.

Teaching staff attend other relevant courses provided by the Archdiocese and disseminate information accordingly.

Staff Induction

New members of staff are offered support by the R.E. Leader in planning, teaching, assessing and evaluating.

They will be sent on the courses available for new teachers in Catholic Schools. 'New to Come and See' and 'New to Collective Worship.'

The whole staff is involved in upholding the Catholic Ethos of the school.

The R.E. policy is shared with all members of staff and reviewed every two years by the RE Lead, Senior Management and Governors.

Staff Communication

Information from R.E. co-ordinators' meetings is disseminated at regular staff meeting and through emails.

Planning and assessment pro-formas are distributed before each topic.

The R.E. Leader is always available for advice and discussion.

Termly newsletters are created to communicate with parents the curriculum content for the coming term (personalised to each year group as well as the Come and see newsletter)

RESOURCES

Each teacher has their own resources for a prayer focus and a display wall in class. These are updated to reflect the church calendar. Other resources are to be found in the Religious Education Kallax (situated within the link corridor to Year 2). Staff have their own password for Come and See website. Staff have copies of the relevant God's Story and Church's Story books.