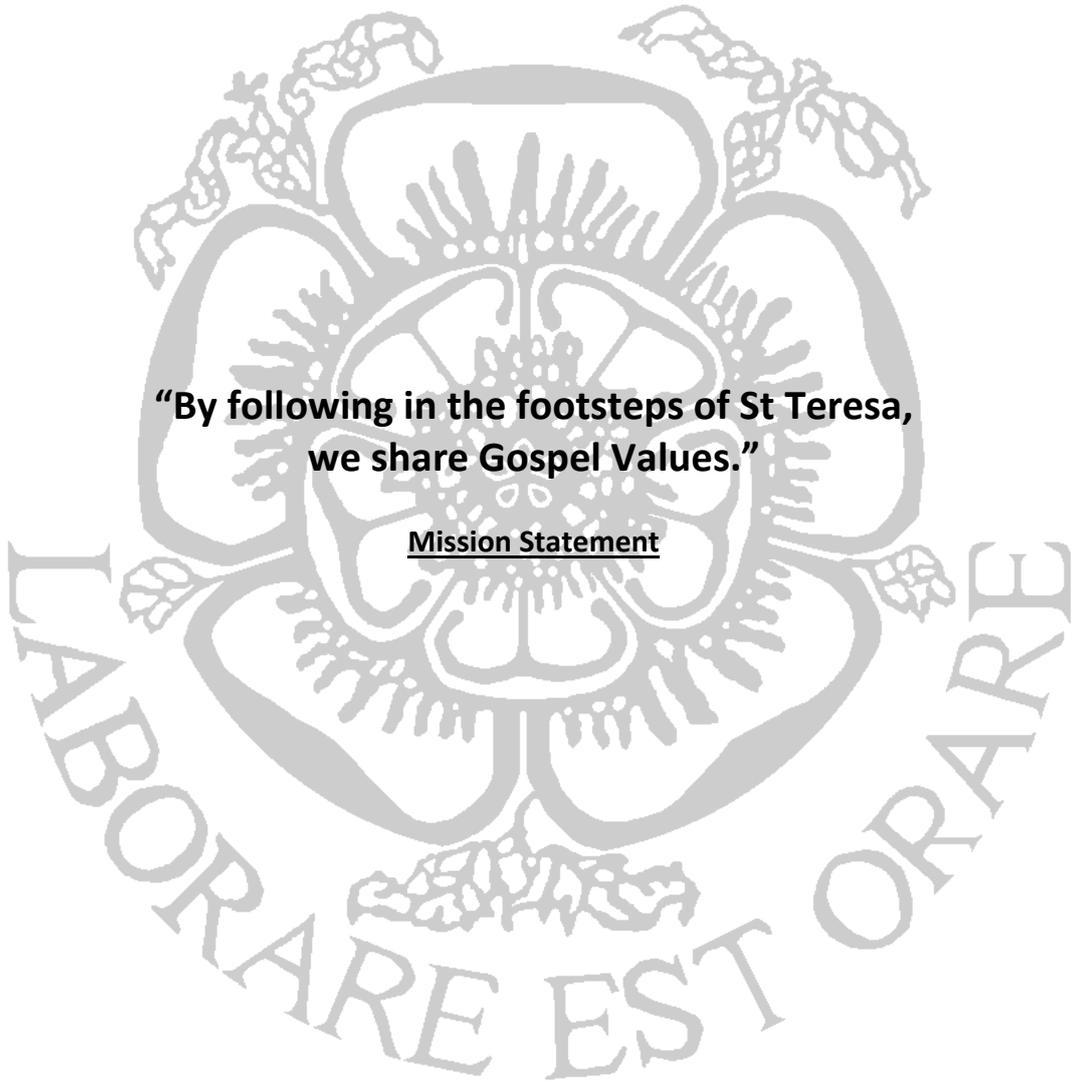


**St Teresa's Catholic Primary School**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

**“By following in the footsteps of St Teresa,  
we share Gospel Values.”**

**Mission Statement**



## **INTRODUCTION**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of Religious Education at St Teresa's Catholic Primary School.

It was reviewed by the Governing Body on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

## **WHAT IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?**

Religious Education permeates everything in St Teresa's School. It seeks to provide pupils with an intellectual foundation so that they may understand and stand on a solid basis of faith (Col. 1 : 23) It also seeks to help pupils to integrate all life's experience and all learning into an ever-deepening appreciation of faith in Jesus Christ.

## **AIMS**

Our Mission Statement underpins our Core Values which are set out below:

Wisdom  
Justice  
Courage  
Compassion  
Hope  
Respect  
Responsibility  
Integrity  
Love

At St Teresa's we aim:

- To provide a secure caring environment inspired by Gospel values, in which all members are treated equally
- To foster good relationships between home, parish and school
- To provide a rich and balanced curriculum
- To provide opportunities to participate in all forms of Catholic worship
- To respect the unique qualities of every individual
- To guide the children towards an understanding of the Christian virtues and moral code, together with the basic doctrines of the Catholic faith.

Our aims in teaching Religious Education are as outlined in our Mission Statement.

## **PRINCIPLES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religious Education is important because it attends to the needs of every pupil who has been admitted to St Teresa's. Christian attitudes run through the whole life of the school – the Good News of Jesus is shown to all the children in actions and words.

All children have regular religious lessons. These are based on the *Come and See* programme as recommended by the Brentwood Religious Education Service.

Religious Education presents pupils with the same academic demands and challenges as any other curriculum area.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE LAW OF THE CHURCH**

The Bishop is the first teacher of the diocese. 'The Catechism of the Catholic Church' is a major point of reference for the content of Religious Education. The Bishops of England and Wales have produced 'Guidelines' for the introduction and use of the 'Catechism.' They have also issued the document 'What are we to teach?' which clarifies the foundations of our Catholic religious teaching in the light of the 'Catechism.'

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The statutory requirements governing Religious Education in all Catholic Schools are to be found in the most recent Education Acts. Statutory requirements are as follows:

- Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils;
- The subject content of Religious Education must be in accord with the Trust Deed relating to the school and is under the control of the Governors;
- Religious Education must form part of the school's basic curriculum but is not part of the National Curriculum;
- There must be a daily act of Collective Worship;
- Religious Education and Collective Worship must be inspected according to the provisions of Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act.

In Canon Law, Religious Education must meet with the approval of the local Ordinary. In particular, Foundation Governors are charged on appointment with ensuring that this is so.

### **STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The Religious Education curriculum is organised by the recommended *Come and See* programme for all pupils. Religious themes are explored through topics allocated to year groups. This ensures that appropriate content is taught at each level, thus continuity and progression follow naturally.

Religious Education is taught for approximately 2.5 hours per week.

The predominant mode for working in Religious Education is class teaching, although group work and individual work are used where appropriate.

Each week there will be opportunities for:

- the children's faith to be deepened and strengthened through contact with the faith and prayer of the whole school community;
- the children to see God in each other, in nature, in human experience, in the Bible and in the liturgy and teachings of the Church;
- the children to love and respect each other and to live and work happily and in harmony;
- the children to develop the moral qualities of self-discipline, perseverance, fair play and consideration;
- the children to be encouraged to 'Serve the Lord with joy' and be happy and confident in the caring Christian environment the school provides.

Pupils with special needs in Religious Education are provided for by each topic being developed through levels which take account of the ages and stages of development of pupils in the primary years. For each level there are:

- clearly stated aims;
- achievable learning intentions;
- a selection of experiences and activities for each of the learning intentions.

These allow for pupils to work according to their different abilities.

Additionally, pupils are presented with a six week Bible Study course with Year 5 and Year 6 during the Spring Term each year. The Old Testament and the New Testament are covered in alternate years.

### **THE EMPHASIS IN OUR TEACHING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

At St Teresa's we attach great importance to Religious Education. Religious Education takes place in the context of a community which seeks to live by and foster Gospel values and which provides other opportunities for faith sharing and develop those who are open to it.

Religious Education is taught through the process of Explore, Reveal, Respond.

We encourage an active participation by our children in all worship, prayer, music, reflection and liturgical celebrations. The respond element of each topic provides opportunities for children to participate in community worship.

**THE MASS** is central to our worship at St Teresa's. Father Gerry celebrates Mass at the end of each term. We join the Parish on Feast Days and Holy Days. Various classes attend Mass on Thursday morning in the Parish Church. Staff and Governors

join others from the Deanery schools at the start of each Academic Year. Year 6 pupils join pupils from the other Deanery Schools for Mass during the Summer Term and have their own Leavers' Mass in July.

**PRAYER** Children are very open to God – they have a natural aptitude for prayer. We endeavour to build upon this by informal prayers (the children are encouraged to make up their own prayers) and formal words of prayers. The Angelus is prayed daily at noon.

**ASSEMBLIES** are a very important part of our day. We meet together in the school hall. A weekly assembly is led by the Headteacher. The Deputy Headteacher leads a weekly Achievement assembly. Father Gerry leads an assembly once a week.

In addition, classes may prepare and lead Morning Prayer to which parents are invited.

OTHER FAITHS are taught from Reception to Year 6 following the programme of study in *Come and See*.

### **STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY**

Planning in Religious Education is a process in which all teachers are involved, wherein:

- the teachers plan their Religious Education curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and of standards.
- termly staff meetings are used to discuss the Religious Education curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and of standards.

The role of the RE Co-ordinator is:

- take the lead in policy development
- support colleagues in their work and implementation of *Come and See*
- monitor progress in Religious Education and advise the Head Teacher on action needed
- take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for Religious Education
- keep up to date with developments in Religious Education and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate
- liaise with the Parish to arrange Masses and Prayer Services
- Liaise with the RE Governor

The AfL leader takes the lead in assessment (Attainment Levels in RE) and record keeping.

Feedback to pupils about their progress in Religious Education is achieved through the marking of work.

Effective marking:

- Aims to be encouraging and supportive
- Includes ticks and written comments
- Is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion with child and teacher.

## **ASSESSMENT**

At St. Teresa's we believe that the development of a child's faith is unique and cannot be assessed. However, we can assess the religious knowledge they are receiving. We hope to meet pupils' needs where they are on their faith journey.

We can do this by:

- helping them to see and meet the challenges of the Gospels;
- by nurturing and developing an already existing faith;
- by acquiring knowledge and understanding of beliefs, practices and religious traditions.

Assessment of standards is in accordance with Diocesan guidelines. It involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, using the "Attainment Levels in R.E." materials, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage of his / her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Monitoring of RE takes place throughout the year through planned book scrutinies.

## **STRATEGIES FOR RECORDING AND REPORTING**

Reporting to parents is done on a termly basis through Termly Learning Conferences and annually through a written report. Reporting in Religious Education will focus on each child's:

- attitudes to Religious Education;
- attitudes to self, all those around and to the wider world;
- topics covered.

## **Strategies for the use of resources**

Classroom resources in Religious Education vary and they include:

- various Bibles;
- Come and See booklet
- Come and See website (all staff have their own login and password)
- Catechism;
- God's story
- Artefacts
- CAFOD supports schools to embed the global dimension

Central resources in Religious Education are the responsibility of the R.E. Co-ordinator who has a budget available within the school curriculum budget.

The library has a section on Religious Education (Dewey 200 – 299) including books of general interest such as Bible Stories, books about Saints, books about other faiths etc.

## **Home – School - Parish**

The vital partnership of home, school and parish provide the context for the life long process of religious formation.

At St. Teresa's we co-operate by bringing our own distinctive contribution to this parental privilege and responsibility of developing the faith and religious commitment of the child.

In our school we aim to provide a balanced, coherent education in the light of the Roman Catholic principles which will enable all children to develop to their full potential and equip them to contribute to life in a changing society. We aim to lead our children to develop a loving and trusting relationship with God our Father and His Son Jesus Christ, through the grace of the Holy Spirit – we hope this will influence their attitude to life and their relationships with other people.

The Parish is responsible for the religious formation of its members and provides the setting for family catechesis. Our Parish Priest, Fr. Gerry Drummond is a very frequent and welcomed visitor to our school. He keeps in regular contact with us and makes himself available to offer advice and support wherever needed.

Religious Education in the classroom compliments, but is distinct from the work of parish catechesis.

As outlined in Diocesan policy, children are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion by their parents with the help and assistance of Parish Catechists.