St Joseph's RE Curriculum Rationale

New RED model curriculum taught by EYFS-Year 6

As a Catholic school, our aim is that every child achieves their full potential as an individual made in the image and likeness of God. This encompasses every dimension of the child: spiritual, moral, social, academic, physical and artistic. Our vision is that children will learn to be good citizens of the world, enriching society through a positive contribution to their community and beyond. Our curriculum is the vehicle through which we support and nurture children to achieve this potential. We believe that knowledge empowers and enables children to feel and be successful, and that this is the entitlement of every child.

INTENT

Alignment to National Curriculum

As a faith school, we follow the Model Curriculum provided in To know You more clearly: The Religious Education Directory 2023 (RED), as required by Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. We intend a religious education that covers all aspects of Catholic education and introduces children to other faiths.

Our curriculum follows the six-branch model of the RED Model Curriculum, structured to align with the Liturgical Year, and explores beliefs and sources through 'knowledge lenses':
HEAR – The Word – The Bible and teaching documents of the church
BELIEVE – What do Catholics believe?
CELEBRATE – How do our beliefs shape our prayer, liturgy and sacraments?
LIVE – The impact of faith on life: ethics, philosophy, art and culture.

In addition, we recognise the responsibility of living in a multi-faith and multicultural society and aim to introduce children to other world faiths and practices with an attitude of mutual respect and tolerance through the 'knowledge lenses' of **DIALOGUE** and **ENCOUNTER.**

End Points

We use the Expected end of age-phase outcomes contained within the RED alongside the Model Curriculum's 'Ways of Knowing' Expected Outcomes for each unit. These aim to develop a range of skills over the course of primary school in the areas of Understanding ('learning about'), Discerning ('judging wisely in response to different interpretations'), and Responding ('reflecting personally and with integrity on what they have learned and considering the implications for action these may have for their own lives and the world in which they live. These link directly to the Expected Outcomes used at Secondary level.

IMPLEMENTATION

Pedagogical Approaches

The pedagogical approaches to the teaching of RE in the school are closely aligned to the approaches and principles of teaching in other subject areas, with the key elements being:

- Teachers ensuring that pupils see the 'purpose' of each lesson and the content in relation to their lives
- Deliberate and intentional retrieval of previous knowledge to build on previous learning
- Regular checkpoints and formative assessments within lessons to tailor lessons to the needs of pupils
- Exceptionally positive relationships in school that create the conditions conducive to effective learning
- High levels of subject knowledge
- Making reference to the school rules, values, and the class purpose and culture when teaching; this supports pupils to contribute and engage in lessons and be part of a class community striving to unlock each member's potential

Teachers' Expert Knowledge

Teachers are given regular opportunities to access CPD at school and through the local Diocesan training centre. In addition, the RE leadership team provides regular updates to staff about upcoming events and developments within Catholic religious teaching through regular staff meetings and key stage meetings.

Many of the elements of the wider curriculum, and indeed the school's approach to behaviour and relationships, is underpinned by the very latest best practice and research in relation to developing a positive climate for learning, and the very latest developments and research in child psychology. The culture of the school is one which promotes openness and honesty in relation to proactively seeking support for any gaps in subject knowledge; this may be reflected in professional development meeting content, and discussions between colleagues.

IMPACT

Approach to Assessment

All assessment is linked to the skills referenced in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing. This is done formatively during lessons, and at the end of each lesson teachers will complete summative assessment of the children's current level of skills. Degree of mastery of these skills will be recorded and used to inform teacher judgment on a termly basis.

Task design is intentionally open in order for children to demonstrate their level of depth.

Performance Data

At the end of each year, data is shared with the senior leadership team and stakeholders, including the Trust and local governing body. Teachers will report termly outcomes based on the learning they see in class and the evidence in
children's books. This will be as a final judgment, rather than individual learning indicators. Teachers have reference to the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing when making decisions about children's depth of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Sequencing

The Expected end of age-phase outcomes further break down the skills which we will develop in each area. For Understanding, this begins with being able to name, remember, recall and retell, before being able to describe and use specialist vocabulary, with the aim of being able to describe and explain meaning, making links between sources, beliefs, worship and life.

Discerning seeks to build children's ability to ask and respond to questions, and make comparisons, aiming to develop their ability to find meaning and purpose in religious texts and understanding of their and others' beliefs and values. The aim is for children to be able to arrive at justified conclusions, recognising complexity with reference to different interpretations and historical context.

Responding means being able to talk about feelings and experiences, critically reflecting and responding with integrity to personal conclusions about questions of value and meaning.

Religious education will be taught discretely and developmentally. It will include the deepening of knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life. These key ideas are revisited in greater depth each year.

Sacramental knowledge progresses from Baptism in Early Years and Key Stage 1, to Confirmation, Marriage and Ordination in Key Stage 2.

Addressing Social Disadvantage

We have a firm belief that every child can achieve and that they are entitled to the same knowledge and cultural capital, whatever their background or starting point. As such, we adopt a mastery approach to all of the teacher, having high expectations of all children and scaffolding those with lower starting points to be able to access and achieve these.

Local Context

The school is a faith school and serves the local Catholic community. We are aware that we have children in our school from different faiths and backgrounds, and that we have a duty to ensure all children are brought up with knowledge and understanding of other cultures and faiths. As such, children are introduced to other world faiths and other Christian denominations, including trips to local places of worship.

Promoting Discussion and Understanding

As a school, we use the themes of the RED to ensure the children have the skills needed to achieve as they progress through school. The themes remain the same for each year, with skills being built from year to year.

We explore the themes of Church, Sacrament and Christian Living, looking in greater depth each year. Each term's topics seek to make links between the church's teaching, community of faith and Church, celebration in ritual and Sacraments and way of life and Christian Living.

This is achieved through pupils being given regular opportunities to explore and discuss theological and philosophical questions at an age-appropriate level, and to promote knowledge, awareness and tolerance of other faiths.

Teachers use their strong knowledge of the progression in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing in order to ask questions which lead children to develop the skills we intend to promote.

Knowing More and Remembering More

Knowledge and skills build from year to year and it is important that pupils can remember and use knowledge and skills from previous learning. Effective questioning by the teacher is key to allow pupils to practise new knowledge and to help them make links between new material and prior learning (Rosenshine). Opportunities for retrieval practice are included to ensure knowledge is transferred into long-term memory.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers assess formatively and summatively in each lesson according to the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing. Task design allows children to demonstrate their progress towards each Standard.

In school, we keep track of children's progress against these standards, having three data points, one at the end of each school term.

Pupils' Work

It is expected that tasks are designed with reference to the skills referenced in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing, to give children opportunities to display and build these skills. Throughout a unit, there should be opportunities to develop skills in all areas and reflect on an open enquiry question, producing an extended piece of writing in response.

Teachers are encouraged to be creative in task design, and work can take the form of artwork, discussion, drama, song, extended writing or a mixture of these. There is an expectation that the learning in RE is evidenced in books at an age-appropriate level.

Talking to Pupils

The RE leadership team will dedicate time termly to the scrutiny of books, discussion with teachers, enhancing subject knowledge, and discussion with pupils. Pupils will have the opportunity to talk about their work, their enjoyment and understanding of the lessons, and how much they can recall, and their responses will be used to inform teaching.

Links / References

To know You more clearly The Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools, Academies and Colleges in England and Wales – Bishops' Conference of England and Wales
Rosenshine's Principles in Action – Tom Sherrington
When the Adults Change, Everything Changes – Paul Dix
St Joseph's RE Policy
St Joseph's Prayer & Liturgy Policy

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