



*'Together we will do our best for Jesus'*

*"My commandment is this: Love one another as I love you." John 15:12*

St Joseph's is a Catholic learning community, which promotes the values of a family life and supports parents/carers as the first teachers of their children.

At our school and in all aspects of the curriculum we promote Gospel Values. Our shared Gospel Values are:

- **Faith:** A call to prayer and to follow the teaching of Jesus in the way we come together as a community.
- **Love:** (agapé) A genuine concern for each other's welfare.
- **Kindness:** Giving space and respect to the things that are unique and different about us.
- **Forgiveness:** to recognise error, take responsibility for it, and admit we can be wrong (to resist blaming).
- **Humility:** Working together so that what we achieve is a *sum of the parts* and not anxious self-justification.
- **Courage:** Daring to be ourselves with all our limitations recognising we are most authentic that way.
- **Generosity:** Being grateful for the contribution of others and finding the time to thank them for it.

Everyone within our learning community is encouraged to strive for the highest standards of personal, social and intellectual development. Our community recognises that each person is unique and we support each other along our personal journeys of faith.

Our school and parishes provide opportunities for all our community to experience prayer, worship and reflection. Jesus says, "Where people come together in my name, I am with them." *Matthew 18:20*

### **Introduction**

We believe that faith development is a gradual, life long, and community process. It is primarily a partnership of home, school and parish. St Joseph's Primary School links with the parishes of St. Joseph & St Walburga and Our Lady of Fatima and has very close links with the Parish Priests.

Religious education provides pupils with opportunities to reflect upon human experiences that give rise to fundamental questions of life and an exploration of values and commitments. It provides opportunities to study Christianity and the principal religions of Britain. The subject contributes to the development of the pupils' own beliefs, values and sense of dignity.

Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject amongst many, but the foundations of the entire education process. As a result RE is a core subject and takes up a minimum of 10% curriculum time. 'The beliefs and values that it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life' (Bishop's Conference Of England and Wales 1988). We also recognise that our children come from a range of backgrounds and abilities and that our teachings of Religious Education will reflect this.

**Aims of Religious Education:**

- To develop the skills required to engage, examine and reflection upon religious beliefs and practices.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and the central beliefs which Catholics hold;
- To develop awareness and appreciation of Catholic beliefs, understanding of its impact on personal and social behaviour and of the vital relationship between faith and life, life and death;
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection by pupils;
- To develop appropriate skills: for example, an ability to listen; to think critically; spiritually, ethically and theologically; to acquire knowledge and organise it effectively and to make informed judgements;
- To foster appropriate attitudes: for example, respect for truth, respect for the views of others, awareness of the spiritual, of moral responsibility, of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and especially the challenge of living in a multicultural, multifaith society.

*(These aims are taken from the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools published for the Bishops' Conference by the Catholic Education Service – curriculum directory p10)*

**Entitlement and Curriculum Provision**

Our school values underpin all the teaching and learning in the school. We see all education as revealing the mystery of God. We all aim to learn and “be a light to our brothers and sisters” in all that we say, think and do. We recognise two aspects of Religious Education in school:

- 1 Implicit or unstructured Religious Education – those opportunities that arise in the course of the school day to lead pupils through curriculum content or through relationships to a religious understanding of their implications. It is our school policy to address these opportunities as they arise.
- 2 Explicit or Curriculum Education – those timetabled or planned periods of time to an explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom.

**Programme of Study**

The curriculum at St Joseph's is underpinned by our School Mission Statement which is founded on Gospel values. To fulfil our aims and objectives and to adhere to the Curriculum Directory, as prescribed by the Diocese, we use the 'God Matters' programme. Each year group explores ten units, which are linked to the liturgical year of the Church and include teaching of other faiths. The programme offers a clear approach to teaching and learning. This is characterised by engaging, exploring and expressing and it is structured in a way which allows for deep learning and real engagement with the RE content.

Explicit R.E. takes place during timetabled lessons (10% of curriculum time) supported by assemblies, liturgies and community worship. The God Matters Curriculum includes the following units:

Unit 1 – Creation  
Unit 2 – Prayers, Saints and Feasts  
Unit 3 – Advent  
Unit 4 – Christmas  
Unit 5 – Revelation

Unit 6 – Sacraments  
Unit 7 – Lent  
Unit 8 – Holy Week  
Unit 9 – Easter  
Unit 10 – Pentecost and Mission

**Assessment**

Teachers are not expected to make judgements concerning a child's personal faith and commitment. Assessment and profiling procedures are concerned with learning objectives which teachers devise in relation to knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. Assessment for learning techniques used in other curriculum areas are used in similar way.

Summative assessments are made at the end of specified units and data is collated and analysed by the RE leader annually.

#### **Attitudes to be fostered in Religious Education**

Attitudes to be fostered in Religious Education re associated with the gifts of the Holy Spirit identified in Scripture and the Catholic tradition as signs of growth and maturity. Through the programme of study, links to other subjects and the skills developed during teaching our RE help pupils to develop attitudes, which can be grouped as:

**Wisdom:** The ability to see God in everyone and everything everywhere and an ability to look at beliefs, values and morality of society; a thirst for meaning and willingness to learn.

**Understanding:** The ability to comprehend that we are followers of Christ and receptivity to the gift of being able to look beyond the immediate and seek for a meaning in one's personal life and experience of others.

**Counsel (Right Judgment):** The ability to know right from wrong and to choose to do what is right. An awareness of the complexity of making choices and a willingness to discuss the appropriateness of moral decisions in reference to personal experiences and the experiences of others. It requires a sense of self-esteem and self-knowledge a sense of community and correct respect for authority.

**Piety (Reverence):** The ability to have deep respect for God and the church and a respect for one self, a respect of others and an awareness of obligations in justice and charity towards them. It requires empathy, openness and a sensitivity in relating to others, their views, opinions and beliefs

**Knowledge:** The ability to understand the meaning of God and an openness which engenders the confidence necessary to integrate religious knowledge into a way of life. It reviews a respect for truth and an openness to search for meaning.

**Fortitude (Courage):** The ability to overcome our fear and to stand up for what is right in the eyes of God and a willingness to struggle with the challenge of religious thinking and living a Christian life. It requires a sense of personal dignity, as sense of personal responsibility and a clear sense of right and wrong.

**Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe):** The ability to be aware the God is all-powerful, all-loving, all-perfect A sense of transcendent and the Holy Spirt from an awareness of the presence of God in self, others and in the world. It requires respect for the mystery and the gift of imagination

#### **Equality**

At St Joseph's we recognise that each child is uniquely created by God and must be valued, respected and treated as special. There is a particular duty to be inclusive and to provide for the needs of the less able and those who are socially, academically, physically and emotionally disadvantaged. In all classes there are children with different abilities and we recognise we need to meet the particular needs of the child and the teacher plans will include different levels to meet the child's needs.

#### **Recording**

Each child has an RE book. In addition each year group has an RE reflections book which records events or ideas generated through group or whole class learning.

#### **Withdrawal from RE**

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent considering this to contact the RE Leader or Assistant Head or Head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

**Strategy for improvement**

The RE coordinator and Head teacher follows the framework below when monitoring Focal Points, RE displays and RE books.

Focal points	Is it visible?	Is it accessible?	Does it make good use of religious art?	Does it reflect the liturgical season?	Does it encourage reflection and prayer?
RE Displays	Is it given prime wall space?	Is it a celebration of pupils' work?	Is it well displayed?	Does it use appropriate vocabulary?	Is it interactive?
Monitoring of books	Is it marked?	Is work completed?	Is the work well presented?	Is there a range of recording?	Is appropriate RE vocabulary used?

**The Role of the RE Coordinator**

RE is at the heart of our curriculum and it is the role of the RE co-ordinator to:

- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching in RE and provide suitable feedback for improvement
- Monitor the quality of pupils work, class focal points and RE displays
- Co-ordinate the development of the school's RE using the 'God Matters' scheme
- Attend in-service courses led by the Diocese and LA advisors and be able to present information to colleagues.
- Manage the RE budget and purchase RE resources
- Link with Parish Priests in relation to the school's RE.