



St. Aidan's Catholic Primary School
Religious Education (R.E.) Policy

Change Summary

Version	Issue Date	Section	Description of change
1	Sept 2013		TH role as RE coordinator. Updated policy
2	Sept 2014		TH role as RE coordinator. Updated policy
3	Sept 2015		TH role as RE coordinator. Reviewed policy
4			
5			
6			
7			

Next Review

Aut 2020

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St. Aidan's Catholic Primary School – R.E. Policy

School Mission Statement

Mission Statement

'Living and growing in Christ'

Christ's ministry, as recounted in the Gospels, and the values he promoted through his teachings are fundamental to the life of our school in fulfilling its purpose as a Catholic institution.

This is reflected in our Collective Worship, our teaching and learning and the way in which we treat one another.

Living and growing in Christ, the children are at the centre of all that we do and their potential to achieve is recognised. Their time in our school is characterised by a sense of belonging, security, challenge and appreciation.

At St. Aidan's we seek to work together with parents, parishes and the local community to create an environment where we can all grow together, feel valued and develop self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.

We aim to be a worshipping, celebrating, reconciling school, living and growing with Christ.

Policy aims and objectives

- RE and worship in the school is in line with The School Mission Statement which drives all the work we do
- To establish a loving relationship with Father, Son and Spirit
- To help pupils recognise and appreciate the spiritual, religious and moral dimensions of life
- To allow space for searching and questioning
- To challenge pupils to examine their own life stance, to deepen their personal faith commitment and to respect that of others
- To lead pupils to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Christian tradition and the ways in which it seeks to express the significance of human life
- To lead pupils to a deeper knowledge of other religious traditions
- The school aims to play a full part in fostering home/parish/school links

Curriculum for Religious Education

The programme for R.E. is based on the expectations stated in the Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools. Religious Education is a subject in its own right and is afforded the same importance as the core subjects English, Maths.

The R.E. Programme

At St Aidan's we follow the programme: *Come and See*.

All year groups follow the same topics which cover a four-week cycle.

Two weeks are devoted to the study of other faiths. We cover Judaism in the Autumn and another faith in the summer.

R.E. lessons and tasks are differentiated and varied to engage the children and to promote learning. As with other subjects, expectations of pupils are high. Teachers are expected to include a period of reflection and prayer at each lesson. Prayer corners are a focal point of reflection in the classroom and include contributions from the children in response to their learning.

Time Allocation

10% of the taught week is dedicated to the teaching of R.E. This amounts to 2 hours in FS and KS1 and 2 hours and 30 mins in KS2.

Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Monitoring is carried out in line with the whole school policy on monitoring.

The R.E. Coordinator monitors planning, teaching and learning, and observes lessons and conducts book scans, reporting to the Head Teacher and governor with responsibility for R.E.

Planning

Each topic is usually taught on a 4-week cycle using *Come and See*. The Learning Objectives for R.E. are recorded on the weekly overview. These sheets are annotated at the end of the week to inform future planning.

Assessment

The *Come and See* programme is directed towards spiritual growth and development. This is, in itself, immeasurable. It is particularly important to recognise that personal faith, feelings, beliefs and values cannot be assessed, but that we can assess and evaluate the attainment of learning objectives in relation to knowledge, skills and understanding.

Assessment in R.E. is against learning objectives in the *Come and See* scheme and The Levels of Attainment in Religious Education. We assess fully once a term using the topics recommended by the Diocese. Teachers may adapt the assessment sheets or suggested activities provided by the Diocese on the Southwark website or other suitable tasks. Some teachers may use concept maps as another method of establishing how the children's learning has moved forward throughout the topic.

Assessment is in line with the school policies on assessment and feedback.

Procedures in Assessment –

“Assessment is at the heart of good teaching and does not require highly complex procedures. The unnecessary recording of assessments can tire and stifle the creativity of the teacher, and hamper the learning process and is to be avoided.”

(Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Religious Education. P13).

Recording

Assessment is recorded on the Half-termly assessment sheets, in line with the other curriculum subjects. (see appendix).

Marking

Marking is against the learning objective for the lesson and is in accordance with the policy for assessment and marking.

Lesson Procedures

- Reflections must take place at the beginning and end of every R.E. lesson. (2-3 minutes)

Beginning

- Children must be offered a way into their R.E. lesson and given an opportunity to distance themselves from their previous activity. It does not have to relate to the lesson they are about to do. *Examples: Close your eyes and think about one thing that happened in the playground that made you happy. Talk to God and thank him for your friends/Think about one thing you were proud of in your last activity. How can you make yourself and your teacher proud during your next lesson?*

End

- The reflection at the end of the lesson must be linked to the lesson
- Have a focal point for the children to look at: Picture, candle, flower, etc
- Read out a prayer, poem or short scripture
- Play a piece of music and children to close their eyes
- After a few minutes give the children something in particular to think about
- Invite children to write their reflection on a post-it and place on prayer corner if they wish

Links with other policies

At St Aidan's we ensure that provision for teaching and learning in R.E. meets with the requirements set out in our policies for Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities, and Special Educational Needs. In our marking of the children's work, we correct the spelling of key vocabulary that links to the children's learning in R.E.

Collective Worship and Prayer

We aim to be a worshipping, celebrating, reconciling school, living and growing with Christ.
(Mission Statement)

At St Aidan's we believe that collective worship plays a key role in the life of our school. Coming together with our children in a quiet period of prayer and reflection each day strengthens and deepens our Catholic roots as we celebrate all aspects of school life. We encourage a variety of prayer forms: spontaneous, contemplative and formal.

Aims

- Provide opportunities for the children to develop a personal relationship with God through prayer
- Children should be involved actively in ways suited to their age and stage of personal, social and religious development. It is therefore appropriate that most worship takes place with the school community
- All children should have a special part to play in the celebration
- Celebrations should address the emotions and feelings children experience. Usually this is through the use of story
- Music, mime, drama and art, together with visual aids, should be used to enhance the atmosphere. Examples of visual aids include candles, lighting and symbolic materials
- Celebrations should incorporate and make use of the many and varied cultural backgrounds of our children wherever this is possible and appropriate
- Celebrations should be linked to the Liturgical year. They should also reflect thanksgiving, special days and feast days, e.g. First Holy Communion celebrations, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, beginning of school year, staff mass, Leavers' mass
- It is important to provide opportunities for private prayer and reflection
- Scripture should be used as a source after exploring the children's own experience
- Time and thought should be given to the creation of the right atmosphere and setting for prayer and worship
- It is important that teachers take the children from where they are whether from committed Catholic homes or not (not a very clear sentence)
- Teachers should respect and take time to discuss the children's experiences with them, enabling them to develop a deeper personal relationship with God
- The example of adults is of paramount importance. It is vital that adults are seen to treat each other with respect
- gain both respect and appreciation of other faiths

In addition to weekly acts of worship (see *Framework of School Worship* attached) daily prayers take place in every class. A number of special celebrations take place throughout the year and the classes responsible for the preparation of these are indicated on *Programme of Celebrations and Worship* (see appendix).

Organisation

Monday

Whole school Assembly led by Head Teacher/Deputy. This links with Sunday's Gospel and topical events.

Tuesday

Hymn Practice

Wednesday

KS1 Assembly Birthdays and Come and See topics.

Thursday

KS2 Assembly Linked to *Come and See*, Birthdays (monthly) and celebration of good work.

Friday

Whole School Assembly. Awards, end of topic assembly, Class Masses

Collective worship takes place within the classroom on the remaining days using the prayer corner as a focal point. NB One of the above was to be removed

Aids to Collective Worship

There is a range of resources available to aid prayer and reflection: a selection of material, crosses, candles, posters, Bibles and story books and music.

R.E. Display

Each class has a dedicated area in the classroom for prayer and reflection. There is a prayer focus and display both in the lobby and the school hall. Prayer corners are interactive and they reflect the current Come and See topic. The colours should reflect the liturgical year: purple during Advent and Lent and green at other times – splashes of colour should be used to denote other important events i.e. white for Pentecost.

Prayer Corners

All prayer corners must have the following:

- Crucifix, an appropriate bible for your year group, a candle, key words for the current R.E. topic and a class prayer book

- You must also display an interactive focal area to enable the children to use the prayer corner in lessons for spontaneous prayer
- Please ensure that the prayer corner is draped with the correct liturgical colour. Prayer corners must be ready by the end of the first week of each term

Yearly Spiritual Development Plan for All Year Groups

We encourage the children's spiritual development through our ethos, by promoting a sense of awe and wonder, in our collective worship and through other subjects in the curriculum.

Whole School:

- Mass to begin the School Year at St Aidan's Church
- Harvest Mass at St Aidan's Church
- Mass to end the School Year at St Aidan's Church
- Advent Service at St Aidan's Church
- Stations of the Cross at school during Lent.
- Lenten Service – The Passion led by Yr 5
- Mass at St Aidan's on Holy days of Obligation
- End of Topic Assemblies at school
- Remembrance at School throughout November
- Focus on the Rosary in October and May
- Nativity Play at school led by Reception and Yr 1

Individual Year Groups:

- Reconciliation in Lent for Yrs 4, 5 and 6
- Class Masses: Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Liturgies and whole school assembly: Reception
- Good Shepherd Mass, Aylesford Yr 2
- First Communion Masses Yr 3
- Leavers' Mass Yr 6

Spiritual & Moral Development

Spiritual development is a sensitive and personal area for individuals and it is crucial that the shared values of home, school and parish create an environment of trust and openness. Opportunities for fostering Spiritual and Moral development are in line with the Mission Statement.

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development across the curriculum contributes to the wider spiritual development of the pupils in the school, and is not necessarily about Mass, the Rosary etc., but rather it promotes a sense of self, the essence of the individual and the centre of being. This is to say that spiritual development is not limited to the religious life of the school.

Spiritual development across the curriculum is, thus concerned with the individual's growth in the faith through his or her deepening knowledge of creation and revelation.

(Spiritual And Moral Development Across The Curriculum CES1995)

Achieved through:

Ethos – Display, values

Curriculum – Awe & wonder, open questioning, opportunities to reflect on God's creation

Worship/Prayer – Creating an atmosphere (use of music and candles)

Moral Development

Moral development across the curriculum is about how individuals – pupils and teachers – increasingly live that faith within the community, in school, home, parish and the wider world.

(Spiritual And Moral Development Across The Curriculum CES 1995)

Achieved through:

Role modelling:

Fair and Just Behaviour Policy

Awareness of the needs of others – in the world

Class rules

Every effort should be made to create in the classroom a community where the children know they are loved, where they feel confident and secure. Love and security experienced by very young children is a basic religious need. The children's concepts of love, kindness, trust, security and forgiveness come first from their parents and teachers. This is their first experience of God as a loving Father.

Spiritual Development and the Curriculum

Religious Education (R.E.) has a rightful place in the curriculum. At St. Aidan's, R.E. plays a central role. Within our school the children, staff, parents and governors come together to give it its life and meaning. We strive to provide all children with love and security. The ethos of the school enhances this, and we try to help our pupils develop their spiritual awareness through thinking, appreciating, questioning, wondering, loving, reflecting and working. *"In the Catholic tradition, spiritual development is inseparable from growth in faith, from life in "the spirit of truth" (John 15:26), as we each help to bring creation to perfection and to find our own true and lasting fulfilment."* (Spiritual And Moral Development across the Curriculum)

R.E. is brought into every area of our curriculum and also into the 'hidden' curriculum reflecting the ethos of the school. Thus we aim to bring the Gospel values into every aspect of the school's life. Discussion is promoted to stimulate the exchange of ideas and encourage children to listen to each other.

Children's developing Spirituality

Children develop best spiritually when:

- all adults work co-operatively to create an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity;
- there is a warm and friendly environment;
- there is a supportive and positive attitude that understands their needs and builds on their successes; and
- there is mutual respect and consideration for others.

Family Involvement

A termly newsletter is sent to parents. This suggests activities which support the topics being taught that term. A book of 'Class Prayers', written by the children and their families during Advent or other occasions strengthens the involvement of families in the children's religious and spiritual education. In addition, we have introduced the 'Wednesday Word' for families with children in KS2 to help support the faith development of their children.

Conditions for Prayer

Every classroom has a focus area for prayer:

- Give time for reflection possibly on a phrase from scripture
- Enable the children to relax
- Make the best possible use of silence
- Make the best possible use of music
- Lead the children to pray with openness and spontaneity
- Share with the children
- Ensure that our prayer reflects the essence of our lives: happiness, sadness, celebration, upset etc.
- Have a focal point - e.g. statue, flowers, candle, art, Bible.
- Guided meditation

Formal Prayer

Formal prayers are taught.

There is a place for formal prayer relevant to the age group.

Infant children can hear the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, said by the teacher, and by listening will eventually learn to recite them from memory

Junior children can have formal prayers broken down into phrases - and each phrase explained.

Grace before and after meals, morning and evening prayers are used throughout the school.

Informal Prayer

Children should be encouraged to talk to God in their own words, whenever they wish. Other opportunities for prayer and spiritual development outside the classroom are offered on a voluntary basis e.g. Children of Faith (prayer group) and Rosary Club (October).

Links with Home, School and Parish

At St Aidan's we seek to work together with parents, parishes and the local community to create an environment where we can all grow together, feel valued and develop self-esteem and a sense of responsibility. (Mission Statement)

Our pupils are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion in the parishes of St Aidan's and St Mary's Old Coulsdon. We support that in lessons, by attending the first Communion Masses and inviting catechists to a celebration Mass of thanksgiving in school. Year 6 children act as prayer partners to those preparing for the sacraments.

Parents have regular updates on religious matters in the Head Teacher's newsletter. Parents receive the termly newsletter on the Come and See programme from the school. They receive an annual report on their child's learning in R.E. Teachers work very closely with parents especially where a child needs additional support with learning or behaviour.

Parents are invited to a liturgy, assembly or class Mass each term. They come into the playground after school which allows for regular and immediate contact.

On Holy Days of Obligation, we take the children to St Aidan's for Mass. We write the bidding prayers and bring up the gifts at the offertory. Year 6 children sing at the Parish Christmas Lunch.

We serve two parishes: St Aidan's and St Mary's Old Coulsdon. Both Parish priests are regular visitors to school. They attend liturgies, assemblies and celebrate Mass for us. One of our chaplains is the Chair of the Governing Body.

List of appendices

The following appendices are attached:

- Half-termly assessment sheet
- Framework of School Worship
- Programme of Celebrations and Worship
- Sample Planning

