

Guide to Religious Education
at St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School
‘We are loving Christian family, striving to achieve excellence’

The Aim of Religious Education

Religious Education is a collaborative activity which respects and promotes our children’s capacity for wonder, awe, reverence and imagination in an effort to help them grow spiritually.

The aim of Religious Education in St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School is to promote:

- Knowledge and understanding of Christian faith and life
- Knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origins and purpose
- The skills required to engage in examination of and reflection on religious belief and practice.

Objectives

The following objectives flow from these and enable us to achieve our aims:

- To develop knowledge and understanding of the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ, of the Church and of the central beliefs which Catholics hold.
- To develop awareness and appreciation of Catholic belief, understanding of its impact on personal and social behaviour and of the vital relationship between faith and life.
- To develop appropriate skills, for example the ability to listen, to think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically, to acquire knowledge and organize it effectively, to make informed judgements.
- To foster appropriate attitudes e.g. respect for truth, 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 society.

The Religious Education Programme

To fulfill our aims and objectives, we are currently continuing our transition from using 'Come and See' as a scheme of work, to following the Religious Education Directory, 'To Know you more clearly,' as a model curriculum. In line with guidance from Liverpool Archdiocese, we are gradually implementing 'To know you more clearly'. We started in Early Years (Nursery and Reception), gradually implementing this to Y1 and 2 with Y3 and Y4 beginning now too. We will continue to implement this into Y5 and 6 in 2025 – 2026.

The ‘Come and See’ Programme

The aim of this programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupils’ own experiences and with the universal experience of other faith traditions.

The 'To Know You More Clearly' Model Curriculum

Branches and Lenses

There are six branches in 'To know You More Clearly' – one per half term. The branches are:

1. Autumn 1: Creation and Covenant
2. Autumn 2: Prophecy and Promise
3. Spring 1: From Galilee to Jerusalem
4. 2: From Desert to Garden
5. Spring Summer 1: To the Ends of the Earth
6. Summer 2: Dialogue and Encounter

Each branch follows:

- Hear
- Believe
- Celebrate
- Live

At the end of each branch and lenses the children will:

- Understand
- Discern
- Respond

Within the curriculum audit, 2.5 hours per week are devoted to the teaching of Religious Education in Reception, KS1 and KS2. Nursery children attend for 15 hours per week and therefore received 1.5 hours devoted to the teaching of Religious Education.

An overview of Content ~ Concepts

Central to the programme is Christian belief in Jesus Christ, Word and Revelation of God. Each term a basic question – belief about the mystery of life is explored within the Catholic faith tradition.

Autumn	Where did I come from?	Life	Creation
Spring	Who am I?	Dignity	Incarnation
Summer	Why am I here?	Purpose	Redemption

Themes

The basic question ~ belief for each term is explored through three kinds of themes:

Community of Faith ~ Church themes:

Autumn ~	Family	~	Domestic church
Spring ~	Community	~	Local church
Summer ~	World	~	Universal church

Celebration in Ritual ~ Sacraments

Autumn ~	Belonging ~	Baptism/Confirmation
Spring ~	Relating ~	Eucharist
Summer ~	Inter-relating ~	Reconciliation

Way of Life ~ Christian Living themes:

Autumn ~	Loving ~	Advent/Christmas
Spring ~	Giving ~	Lent/Easter
Summer ~	Serving ~	Pentecost

The Process ~ Knowledge, Understanding, Skills & Attitudes

The process for delivering this scheme has three elements which enable the development of skills and the fostering of attitudes. In this process we help the children to:

Explore ~ Introduction to the topic where the children's life experience is explored, the questions it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon. The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own lives – concerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of significance and value of the experiences of everyday life. **Explore** will take **one week** of Religious Education time to complete.

Reveal ~ This is the **heart of the process** where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living. The teacher and the children together 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. **Reveal** will take **two weeks** of Religious Education time to complete.

Respond ~ This is where the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life. The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. This new understanding will enable them to make a personal response in their daily lives. **Remember** ~ is the first part of this section. Teachers provide the opportunity for the children to remember what they have understood and learnt. **Rejoice** ~ is the second part of the section. There will be the opportunity to **plan** and **take part** in a **celebration**. **Respond** will take **one week** of Religious Education time to complete.

The process encompasses a variety of teaching and learning styles, which enable the needs of individual pupils to be met.

The Approach Chosen

We teach RELIGIOUS EDUCATION as a subject separate from others and with equivalent status but with the option of linking the topics to other curricular areas as and when appropriate. As part of our whole school approach to the curriculum, we explore each religious theme within a different topic which shows a clear comprehensive, systematic, progression across the Year Groups.

Autumn

<u>Year 5</u>	<u>Year 6</u>
Ourselves	Loving
Life Choices	Vocation & Commitment
Hope	Expectations

Spring

<u>Year 5</u>	<u>Year 6</u>
Mission	Sources
Memorial Sacrifice	Unity
Sacrifice	Death & New Life

Summer

<u>Year 5</u>	<u>Year 6</u>
N	Witnesses
Transformation	Healing
Freedom & Responsibility	Common good
Stewardship	

Learning and teaching styles

We seek to provide a high standard of teaching and learning experience to enable each child to fulfill his/her potential. Our planning is designed to target the needs, abilities and experiences of the children.

- We aim to stimulate the children by the activities and tasks undertaken
- We celebrate quality work and all the achievements of the children by displaying it to its best advantage
- We use quality resources which are well organised and accessible to encourage the children to take responsibility for the organisation of their work
- We create opportunities for wonder, contemplation, reflection and celebration as appropriate
- We use adaptive teaching strategies

Planning

Long term planning: we follow the 'Come and See' programme in which the whole school explores each theme within different topics and the 'To Know You More Clearly' model curriculum.

Medium term planning: this is the responsibility of the Religious Education Lead who provides staff with medium term plans, including dates for each topic at the start of the academic year.

Short term planning: this is the responsibility of class teachers and they are encouraged to plan collaboratively in year groups where possible.

Differentiation and/or adaptive teaching methods are applied as in other curricular areas

- to enable children to succeed in the set task or activity
- to challenge children to go beyond their comfort zone of knowledge, understanding and skills
- to enable children to recognise and celebrate their achievements

Differentiation is provided through a variety of activities in which meet the differing needs and abilities of children. This is often through differentiation of task using the driver words or adaptive teaching strategies such as expected outcomes or by through varying levels of support. Teachers must refer to support plans of children on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Register.

Assessment

Assessment is focused by the overall aims and objectives of Religious Education. In 'Come and See' it is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of the themes and learning outcomes for each topic. In 'To Know You More Clearly,' it is directly related to the expected outcomes for each age group. Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do. It celebrates growth and achievements and enables further progress. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith. It does emphasise a wide range of achievement.

At St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School it involves:

Informal Assessment

- General observation of children engaged in classroom tasks and activities
- Observation of contributions to classroom displays
- Review of activities, lessons, topics
- Marking of written work
- End of topic or theme review questions

Formal Teacher Assessment

Formal teacher assessments take place each term, followed by a staff moderation meeting to secure the accuracy of judgements. Judgments are made by the class teacher on evidence against broad criteria, which allow pupils to respond at different levels. This is closely linked to the learning outcomes, expectations and attainment targets in the short term planning for each topic.

Attainment targets and Levels of Attainment

Assessment is undertaken with an activity chosen that enables children to show how they have met the learning outcome.

Recording

Recording provides evidence of achievement and can take the following forms:

- Written comments of children's work
- Visual evidence e.g. Photographs/videos of displays, drama, celebrations
- Religious Education has a particularly important contribution to make to the Foundation Stage. Teachers will be able to record progress of individual children through a range of topics in Religious Education. They will be recorded via the Early Years' Tapestry observation programme, in the Early Years' floor books and the formative assessment document.

Reporting

- Provides feedback to pupils on their achievements and progress
- Informs colleagues of the achievements of individual pupils and the areas studied by a class/year group
- Informs parents of the progress and achievement of their children
- Informs parents, governors, parish and external agencies of the content and quality of Religious Education being provided and the achievement of the pupils

Feedback to pupils takes the form of verbal and written comment in marking or assessing verbal or written work.

Parents are informed through the annual report.

Evaluation of teaching

Evaluation is continuous and is used to inform future planning and to examine how we have given the children opportunities to explore and better understand their experiences. We evaluate the children's responses, oral, written or as part of a display, opportunities for strengthening home and parish links, the effectiveness of our celebration of the topic and whether the learning outcomes have been achieved. Written evaluation should be completed on short term planning.

Evaluation of learning

Children are enabled to evaluate their own learning in the **Remember** and **Renew** stages of each topic covered and sometimes use concept maps to record their new knowledge or understanding.

Staff development

The staff receives updates and information from courses attended by the lead. Continued professional development is offered in house and externally.

Staff Induction

Staff who are new to the school will receive a copy of the 'Come and See' file or 'To Know You More Clearly' file for their age group and a copy of this handbook. They have an induction session and

midterm review sessions with a designated senior member of staff and will receive support and information from the Religious Education leader as and when required.

Resources – Teaching

Each class teacher has a copy of the ‘Come and See’ file or ‘To Know You More Clearly’ schemes of work provided by the Archdiocese. Each key stage has a set of Good News Bibles. The following are also available:

- Various other bibles
- Children’s prayer books
- Various books to help with assembly and Mass preparation
- Collections of story books related to topics
- Books and artifacts regarding other faiths/religions
- God’s Story books
- Churches story books
- God’s story and Church’s story PowerPoints

Worship

Worship is a valued and central part of daily life in our school, supporting the spiritual development and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. It reflects our Christian vision and values, offering opportunities for the whole school community to gather, reflect, and respond.

Worship takes place every day. Each Monday, Key Stage worship is held to introduce the weekly Christian theme, rooted in biblical teaching and the school’s vision. From Tuesday to Friday, worship continues within individual classes, enabling children to explore the theme more deeply in an age-appropriate and engaging way.

Worship is organised into two groups—Early Years & Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2—ensuring that content, language, and activities meet the developmental needs of all pupils. Staff plan, prepare, and lead worship on a rotational cycle so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the worship life of the school and to model the school’s values in practice.

Pupils are encouraged to take an active and meaningful role in worship. This includes helping to prepare the worship table, selecting music, lighting candles, leading prayers, sharing reflections, and participating in spoken responses. Through this involvement, children grow in confidence, develop leadership skills, and gain a deeper understanding of worship and its purpose.

Our worship aims to be inclusive, invitational, and inspiring. All pupils and staff are welcomed to participate in ways that are comfortable for them, regardless of background or belief. Through Worship, we seek to create a nurturing environment in which all members of the school community can explore spirituality, reflect on values, and consider the big questions of life.

Each Key Stage celebrates Christmas and Easter with a special assembly or production with relevant religious theme which varies in format.

Links with Parents

Recognising that the parents are the first educators of their children, we continue to work with them as partners during their children’s progress through the school. In particular, we work alongside

parents and the Parish priest in the preparation of their children for the sacraments and invite them to join with us in liturgical and other celebrations.

Parents are kept informed of the current topics via documents on our website which contain information about themes and topics.

At the end of each topic, families are welcomed in to school for an end of topic reflection.

Links with the Parish

Our pupils are the future church, and with this in mind we aim to form and maintain links with the parish through joint liturgical celebrations and by encouraging their support in prayer for those children preparing for the sacraments in school and in Church with the Parish priest. The Senior Leadership Team work closely with the Parish priest and members of the parish to support the sacramental programmes.

Preparation for First Holy Communion is delivered by SLT and the Parish priest through the 'With you Always' programme. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is ongoing and is addressed each year through 'Come and See' at the children's current level of experience.

The children join the parish for mass throughout the year as a whole school, and at least once each half term on a rota basis throughout the year.

Evaluation of Religious Education Handbook

Religious Education Handbook will be reviewed annually by staff and governors in order to ascertain whether it is still an accurate statement about the teaching of Religious Education in our school or whether any part of it needs changing or updating.