



Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School
Aspire not to have more but to be more

Religious Education Policy

Holy Trinity is a Catholic Primary School where Core Values, underpin every aspect of school life. Our Mission Statement is:

*Inspired by Christ and His teaching,
Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School educates, nurtures and celebrates
the unique nature and worth of every member of its diverse family.*

The Mission Statement is summed up in our school motto: **'Aspire not to have more, but to be more'**

The aims for all of our school family are:

- *to promote excellence in all aspects of school life, developing each person's ability to recognize and strive for this;*
- *place Christ at the centre of our daily lives, so that our school family may be the leaven of the Gospel values promoted in our mission*
- *to recognize that all members of the community are life-long learners, prepared to accept challenges with confidence and determination*
- *to promote self-discipline and respect, never accepting bullying of any kind and to communicate this belief in a positive and proactive manner.*

These aims are revisited regularly to ensure their relevance and we work to ensure our statement on equality of opportunity and values are understood by all.

True education is directed towards the formation of the human person in view of his final end and the good of that society to which he belonged and in the duties of which he will, as an adult, have a share.

Vatican II, Gravimus Educationis.

1 Summary

The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human — that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation — is discovered.

This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps our children to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in both his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church. The religious provision within Holy Trinity School Curriculum exists to continue the religious formation of each child as a whole person, been made in the image of God and called to perfection in union with their Saviour, Jesus Christ. We recognise that this begins in the home and will be widened within the life and work of every area of the school. Religious Education is considered a core subject in our school and is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects our school considers as fundamental core knowledge.

For some, in our classrooms, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step-by-step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.

The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged children who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. This policy seeks to maintain and extend the outstanding provision of Religious Education, which permeates and informs every aspect of life within the community of Holy Trinity School. Specific aspects of policy, planning and teaching are highlighted and attempts have been made to draw together the many strands which are encompassed within this area.

As a Catholic institution, Holy Trinity School is exempt from inspection by secular agencies in regard to its conduct of Religious Education and is unaffected by the Education Reform Act. The school is not subject to the provisions concerning Religious Education, which is addressed to County Schools. Holy Trinity must apply the regulations concerning the frequency and composition of assemblies. This will be the case and these are easily encompassed within current practice.

The responsible persons in school for this policy is the Head teacher, **Carroll McNally** and the RE lead **Grace Beards**. The Monitoring Governor is **Ann Thompson**.

2 School Aims for Religious Education

- To support and encourage faith, when it is present, and to facilitate its emergence when it is not; by presenting a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- To present an authentic vision of the Church’s moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- To raise pupils’ awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- To stimulate pupils’ imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- To work as integral members in co-operation with the home and parish for the catechetical formation of the Catholic children and young people by bringing clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

2.1 The programme of work for Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School is *‘Learning and Growing as the People of God’*, as this holds aims which progress significantly in line with children’s thinking and growing awareness of their relationship with God. A number of resources that support learning within the Core programme supplement this.

2.2 Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has reflected anew on its catechetical and educational mission both universally and nationally. Through her teaching at the Council, encyclicals and locally, the Church has reflected on its task of handing on the faith to the next generation and helping to form religiously literate young people. This is the driving force that shapes the provision at our school.

2.3 There is continuity between the four constitutions of the Second Vatican Council, the Catechism that was published in 1992, the Curriculum Directory in 1996, Diocesan Curriculum Maps in 1997 and this Curriculum Strategy. The first two articulate and reflect theologically on what we as a community have received and believe. The last three attempt to order them so that teachers can share them systematically and progressively with pupils. The four areas of study listed below provide the keys to the Catechism, Curriculum Directory and this strategy:

Area of Study	Content	Source
Revelation	God’s Self-Revelation	<i>Dei Verbum</i> <i>Catechism</i> Part One: The Profession of Faith
Church	Communion of life in Christ	<i>Lumen Gentium</i> <i>Catechism</i> Part One: The Profession of Faith
Celebration	Living the Christian Mystery in worship and prayer	<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> <i>Catechism</i> Part Two: Celebration of the Christian Mystery Part Four: Prayer

Life in Christ	The search for holiness and truth	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i> <i>Catechism Part Three: Life in Christ</i>
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- 2.4 Our pupils have a right to receive authentic Church teaching and to have a curriculum that draws them into a systematic study of the saving mystery of Christ, which the Church proclaims. Our curriculum secures the link between what the Church teaches and the classroom by supporting teachers' short, medium and long term planning.
- 2.5 Our school community knows that our pupils' understanding of the Catholic faith and tradition does not always grow commensurately with other subjects. We believe that skills that learned in other literary subjects can be applied to RE and pupils should be encouraged to investigate the faith with the same enthusiasm and rigour as other subjects.
- 2.6 At Holy Trinity RE is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.
"The beliefs and values studied in Catholic RE inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school...Pupils have a right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them."
Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Low Week, 2000,
- 2.7 At Holy Trinity, RE is a core subject. Therefore, it must be of a quality to engage pupils' intellect, heart and imagination.
- 2.8 Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School will meet its stated aims by allocating 10% of teaching time to specific Religious Education; this does not include assemblies, hymn practice or Mass.
- 2.9 The core entitlement of all children is enhanced by access to preparation for the Sacraments in Years 3, 4 and 6. Collective worship is held every day; Mass is held each week on a fortnightly rotation for each Key Stage and four times each term for the whole school. Traditional liturgies such as the School May Procession, Harvest Thanksgiving, Benediction, School Corpus Christi Procession and Christmas and Easter celebrations, commissioning and leaving Masses, commitment celebrations and small prayer groups, palm Procession and Blessed Sacrament procession are also important markers of our Liturgical Year celebrations and worship.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Governors will:
- Ensure that the Religious Education provided in Holy Trinity School is in accordance with the Instrument of Government in Catholic Schools;
 - Appoint and maintain a Governor who will have special responsibility for reporting on Religious Education within the school, through consultation with the Religious Education co-ordinator. In this school that is **Ann Thompson**;
 - Ensure that parity exists in the financial provision made for Religious Education with other core curriculum subjects;
 - Report to parents on the nature of Religious Education provided within the school in a variety of ways such as information at the beginning of the school year, regular newsletters, the school Facebook page and the school website.
- 3.2 The Head Teacher will:
- Ensure that religious provision within the school meets the criteria laid down in the Instrument of Government;
 - Ensure that Religious Education receives parity of finance, planning, curriculum allocation and resources as that of other core curriculum subjects;
 - Make provision for the equivalent of at least one in-service training day to be allocated to staff development within Religious Education;
 - Ensure that Religious Education is a feature of the whole curriculum within Holy Trinity School and is not restricted to explicit lessons.
- 3.3 The R. E. Co-ordinator will be responsible to the Head for:
- Ensuring the continuity and progression of Religious Education in the school for each child;
 - Providing opportunities for staff development;

- Mapping curriculum developments and ensuring that the themes and chapters of the accepted 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' are met through long and medium term plans;
- Organising the allocated budget in order to resource the Religious Education department effectively, ensuring the availability of resources for all staff and maintaining a parity of provision to other core curriculum subjects;
- Effective assessment of the explicit Religious provision made within the school through evaluation of the scheme, its implementation and reporting upon such to the Governing Body;
- Organising the review of this policy document in consultation with the whole staff.

3.4 All teachers of Religious Education will:

- Ensure that the aims of each unit within the scheme are planned and delivered within their particular year group through whichever methods are deemed appropriate;
- Ensure that they are conversant with the teacher's handbook for their unit and understand their stage within the continuum of the scheme;
- Liaise with class teachers about aspects of Religious Education not formally taught within allocated lessons, where applicable;
- Support and encourage all pupils in their relationship with God the Father;
- Make provision for some form of Religious Education across the curriculum
- Provide a religious focal point within their classroom;
- Provide opportunities for children to learn and use the formal prayers specified in the Religious Education overview and scheme.

4. Planning Religious Education within Holy Trinity School

The Religious Curriculum

4.1 Religious growth and development, central aims of Religious Education, will not be confined to specific timetabled lessons within this school. It will be the basic aim of the whole school experience that all areas of learning and knowledge will stimulate and deepen each person's relationship with God. Specific reference will be made in each school policy concerning the embodiment of the mission statement in that body of knowledge and skills.

Specific Religious Education

4.2 The long-term plan which exists for Holy Trinity School is drawn up after consultation and makes reference to particular elements to be covered by each year group. These are:

- Learning and Growing as the People of God as foundation and aims
- Liturgical celebration
- Multi-faith elements
- Saints, and family life education

The long term plan indicates how the reoccurring themes of the Curriculum Strategy are extended throughout the school, how Sacramental preparation is included within the work of specific age groups and how prayers and spiritual development are also fostered and developed within each class.

4.3 Religious Education, which will make a positive personal impression on children, will be pupil-centred. It will start from a child's personal experience and continue on to extend their perceptions of relevance. Therefore, the staff of Holy Trinity School considers the themes of the Learning and Growing as the People of God scheme to fulfil the following general criteria:

- In respect of doctrinal, catechetical content and envisaged teaching method it takes into account both the children's ages and capacity to learn without distorting the Christian message;
- It is developmental and structured;
- It is based upon reinforcement.

The staff at Holy Trinity School make themselves aware of the developmental thrust of the programme in order to pursue effective delivery and learning outcomes.

4.4 Each member of staff has a handbook which details their year group's work and the cross-referencing necessary to use the other schemes and materials effectively. The handbook is the starting point for planning as the scheme is clearly supported by material which is available in school and has proved useful in past years.

The Catechism

4.5 The staff of Holy Trinity School makes reference to the Catechism. These statements are central to the planning and teaching of Religious Education within this school and the catechism references will be read and help form the teaching strategies for each unit of work, as they are developed.

Planning for Religious Education

4.6 Planning proformas exist within school for recording medium term plans. These will be used to record the detailed termly work of each year group.

4.7 When devising a medium term plan for a particular age range, dimensions of the following will be included:

- Themes which help children to become more aware of and to reflect on their experience of living in the world with others (experiential);
- Themes which will reveal to the children some aspects of God's plan for our salvations (doctrinal);
- Themes to help them respond to God's love in their lives (moral);
- Themes which help children listen and respond to God (prayer).

In planning, these particular threads may be highlighted in a particular way if this helps staff to see how each thread supports and develops another.

4.8 Key skills are seen as vitally important to many aspects of Religious Education undertaken at Holy Trinity School.

4.9 Religious Education is planned for from Nursery to Year 6. Within each year group speaking and listening will be a strong feature of all learning, with an emphasis on opportunities to explore and develop religious ideas. Writing and art are important features of Religious Education as the children are helped to record their deepening relationship with the Father in a variety of ways. Key skills are used within every age group to record and order thoughts and ideas. Presentations and discussions are used to allow everyone to develop ideas about our relationship with God and also the faiths and beliefs of other people. Research and investigation are important features of learning, especially at Sacramental preparation times. Artefacts and resource books, along with IT are used to supplement the core scheme and artistic impression and creation are encouraged as a way of sharing joy and peace with others throughout the school community. Drama and Dance are also utilised as another means of recording and exploring growing relationships with God.

5. Teaching Religious Education within Holy Trinity School

5.1 The Voluntary Aided Provision in the Education Acts is to allow for the Religious Education of pupils in accordance with the Trust Deed relating to the school (1944 Education Act, Section 28 (1)). In Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School, the Religious Education provided is to be in accordance with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church, as stated in the Article of Government in Catholic Schools.

5.2 Every member of the teaching staff within Holy Trinity School is responsible, in some way, for communicating ways in which our children may come to understand that they are called, in partnership with God our Father, to be co-creators and builders of the Kingdom of God. They are called to see Our Lord's endless love for them and strengthened through the Spirit, to share this love with others. As adults within the school community staff will use opportunities, both within explicit Religious Education lessons and throughout the whole curriculum, to give life to this message of salvation.

5.3 Planning is understood as a vital and crucial stage of outstanding teaching within this school and at this stage staff will have drawn together the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure learning is coherent and well rooted in the relevant unit of Learning and Growing as the People of God. Once planning is complete copies will be uploaded to the school's Learning Platform. Staff will have an understanding of the scope of the Curriculum Strategy in order to ensure that their planning is within the remit of that phase of the programme.

5.4 To make clear connections between the truths of faith and the pupils' experience of life are essential. At Holy Trinity, we refer to this as **experiential**. Our starting point in Religious Education is Revelation. God is always the initiator in the history of our creation and redemption; it is his revealing of himself that makes classroom religious education possible. To begin with, revelation ensures that we respect the revealed nature of Christian faith and understand how we have experienced this in our everyday lives.

From revelation we move onto Church; in other words, we consider how revelation gives life to the Church. The Church is the bearer of God's revelation and the means by which human beings live out their response to revelation, enlivened by the Holy Spirit. At Holy Trinity, we refer to this as **doctrinal** and this is the second part of the teaching sequence.

From here we focus on two aspects of the Church's response to God's revelation; Celebration – the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and Life in Christ – the moral life and the pursuit of holiness. At Holy Trinity, we refer to these two parts of the teaching sequence as **moral** and **prayer**.

Children are taught in chronologically grouped classes, usually by their own form teacher and, as such, all learning will be differentiated, where this is appropriate, from the top down; challenging the learning of those reaching and exceeding the expected attainment and scaffolding to support those who are working towards this. Staff at Holy Trinity School are valued as creative individuals. The Curriculum Strategy recognises that teachers may adapt the programme to meet the individual needs of the pupils within their class. A range of learning resources will support learning in each year group and the children will experience a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies. Children of all abilities, backgrounds and faiths (and none) will learn and collaborate together within each lesson.

- 5.5 Explicit Religious Education of a particular class or age group will be a continuous process, taking place every day in some form, at least twice a week explicitly but never at weekly intervals.

6 Equal Opportunities

- 6.1 All children will have access to either catechetical formation or Religious Education regardless of race, gender or ability. This education will be in accordance with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church.
- 6.2 The school seeks to raise awareness and celebrate world cultures, especially those of the children who are part of the school community.
- 6.3 Each child will have activities and tasks appropriate to their ability. Differentiation will be identified in short term planning documents.
- 6.4 Resources are available in school, which address a variety of aspects such as age and ability. We also recognise as a school community, that everyone is at different points on their spiritual journey. Materials are available for adults at times of Sacramental Preparation, which hope to make all parents, regardless of their own faith journey, comfortable with that which their child may be making.
- 6.5 Separate Masses are available for both Key Stages which recognises and celebrates the difference in age and comprehension found within our community. The staff actively seeks to enact Our Lord's wish, 'Let the children come to me'.

7 Assessing, Recording and Reporting

- 7.1 Assessment of pupils will be undertaken at Holy Trinity School in accordance with the wishes of the Bishops' Conference.
- 7.2 The targets from the Curriculum Directory will form the basis of assessment of the understanding of pupils within each year group. Formal recording arrangements have been developed throughout the school.
- 7.3 Staff record the coverage of each unit and its related targets on a class record sheet. This will indicate the pupil's progress through each Key Stage and indicate any theme, which requires consolidation.
- 7.4 Attainment levels will be provided at the end of each year for the cohort, outlining the overall achievement of all the children in relation to the strands assessed.
- 7.5 Evidence obtained from children's class work will also be used to form the basis for assessments. This will be used in conjunction with discussion, display work, speaking and listening tasks and, from time to time, formal testing arrangements. Questioning of pupils in an open-ended way will also be seen as a contributory factor in assessing both knowledge and understanding.
- 7.6 All staff will contribute to the RE portfolio, used to moderate learning, and will retain an assessment folder to evidence their judgements in relation to this.

8 Resources

- 8.1 Resources are available in a variety of media in order to deliver a broad and balanced Religious Education curriculum throughout the school.
- 8.2 All Bibles, books and other materials are housed in a purpose built Religious Education Department within the Key Stage 2 resource area.
- 8.3 The Religious Education co-ordinator provides INSET opportunities for staff and governors.
- 8.4 Newly Qualified staff of the school are encouraged to participate in all induction courses offered by the Diocese Information from courses offered by various providers is disseminated in full to all members of staff.

9 Health and Safety

- 9.1 At all times, children will be taught how to care for and handle equipment and media safely and with respect.
- 9.2 When working with tools, equipment and materials, in RE lessons and when on visits to places of worship or other appropriate locations, including those that are unfamiliar, pupils will be taught:
- about hazards, risks and risk control
 - to recognise hazards, assess consequent risks and take steps to control the risks to themselves and others
 - to use information to assess the immediate and cumulative risks
 - to manage their environment to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others
 - to explain the steps they take to control risk
- 9.3 We will be aware of certain health and safety aspects in the delivery of the RE curriculum. It is important that the children learn to use potentially dangerous tools properly and that potentially hazardous tools (such as sharp scissors and certain glues) be stored away in a safe place. Children will always be encouraged to wear protective clothing. Materials to be used within the lesson will be scrutinised to ensure they are suitable for content and message as appropriate to age and that they will no way be detrimental to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- 9.4 The use of laptops and Smartboard will follow the guidelines set out in the Display Screen section of the Health and Safety policy.
- 9.5 When organising any visits connected to this subject staff will complete a personalised risk assessment prior to the visit being approved.

10 Monitoring and Review of Policy

- 10.1 Monitoring the Implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of the Religious Education coordinator who will report findings to the Governing Body of the school. This will be in order to support progress and achievement in this area.
- 17.2 The Religious Education policy of Holy Trinity School will be reviewed every three years in the Summer Term. Those responsible for its review will be all teaching and non-teaching staff and this will be actioned through a staff meeting or INSET day, Governors will be invited to be present at this meeting.
- 17.3 This policy was created at the 1998 Religious Education INSET day and involved the whole staff of the school. Governors were invited to attend this day.
- 17.4 This policy was formulated by staff and ratified by the Governing body of Holy Trinity School on Monday 1st March 1999 and annually in subsequent years.