

St Joseph's Voluntary Academy



Religious Education Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

For nothing will be impossible with God

Luke 1:37

St Joseph's is a place of learning where we grow in faith and feel safe, loved, and encouraged each day.

We value each and every one, knowing that we are stronger when we work together.

Through our virtues, we show care and respect for our family, our friends, our neighbours near and far and our Common Home.

We try to live like Jesus, with God and Saint Joseph by our side.

At St Joseph's, we aim:

- To encourage all the members of our community to grow daily in the knowledge and love of God
- To work to develop everyone as a whole person – spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, intellectually, and physically
- To encourage an appreciation of the need for compassion and good citizenship within our society
- To serve the Gospel, while demonstrating that differences of place, language, race and culture are gifts to be celebrated, not boundaries to divide.

We achieve these aims by:

- Creating a strong working and spiritual partnership between the governors, staff, parents and children of the school
- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum, working within the guidelines of the National Curriculum, and adhering to the Diocesan 'To see you more clearly' programme
- Aiming for every individual child in school to reach his or her full potential, with a fulfilling, happy and successful experience of school.
- **Rationale and Context**
- Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject amongst many, but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life."
- (Bishop's Conference of England and Wales 1988)
- We must acknowledge the many aspects of today's society which have a profound and unsettling effect on children and adults alike - some of which are directly obstructive to the growth of the faith and spiritual life that we aspire to nurture.
- Through our Religious Education program and our faith setting, we must act on the opportunities and rise to the challenges of living in an increasingly multicultural society.

- We must be rigorous in our delivery of the curriculum and the pursuit of the
 - knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and its context within an
 - increasingly secular, multi-faith society.
- **Religious Education: Aims and Objectives:**
- Religious Education will be treated as an academic subject, taught, resourced and developed as any other core subject.
- The ethos of Catholic education promotes the ideal that children should be able to achieve their full potential as unique individuals by fostering a sense of belonging and support. For those children from a strong faith background, it will be a chance for their faith to grow, for some it will be a chance to develop some knowledge of their faith and for some it will be the first opportunity they will have had to hear the Gospel message.

Through the use of the 'To see you more clearly' programme, as followed by the schools of the Diocese of Nottingham, we will aim to develop:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- Knowledge and understanding of some other faiths and religious festivals.
- The skills necessary to engage the children in:
 - examining and reflecting on religious belief and practice
 - study, investigation, and reflection
 - listening skills
 - thinking critically, spiritually, ethically, and theologically
 - making informed judgements
- Recognition of appropriate moral attitudes and self-responsibility
- Respect for truth and the views of others
- A sense of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life
- An appetite for the challenges and opportunities of living in a multicultural society
- We aim to teach all these knowledge-skills and attitudes with due regard to the age, ability, and special needs of each child.

Religious Education in the classroom:

- The whole school curriculum is underpinned by our School Mission Statement and founded on Gospel values. As such, we see all education as playing a part in revealing God in our lives. This impacts on our Religious Education both implicitly and explicitly:

Implicit are those opportunities which arise naturally during the school day – to lead the children through the curriculum, through problems and through relationships, to a wider religious, moral, or spiritual understanding of their implications. It is school policy to use such opportunities as they arise. Added to this, the school's active liturgical life enhances the curriculum and is shared by children, parents, staff, and parishioners.

Explicit are the planned periods, making up 10% of curricular time, devoted specifically to the

consideration and study of Religious Education. These follow lessons are planned in accordance with the 'To see you more clearly' scheme of work and include periods of time allocated to the study of other faiths and festivals. The scheme works on a yearly rotation of topics which follow the seasons of the Church and focus sequentially on faith within the family, the parish, and the wider community. Each term includes learning about a Sacrament, which is explored through relevant Scripture at the child's level of understanding.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion:

Staff will ensure that:

- activities match the academic abilities of children in their class, including provision for especially gifted or talented children and those with any kind of learning difficulty.
- no child is disadvantaged, whatever the stage of his or her own faith journey or whatever his or her own faith background.
- issues of equal rights, race or negative discrimination of any kind, arising through this subject, are handled with care and respect, in accordance with our faith and Mission statement.

The Role of the subject leaders:

Because Religious Education is integral to school life at St Joseph's and more than a Curriculum area, coordination is spread over the three areas of Collective Worship, Catholic Life and the RE Curriculum. Together, it is the job of the leaders to:

- produce and update the necessary policy documents within school.
- To keep up to date with curricular developments regarding Diocesan advice and the Religious Education Directory and feedback to staff, developing CPD where needed.
- To attend appropriate in-service activities and courses.
- To monitor standards of teaching and learning within school.
- To collect samples of work and evidence of appropriate assessment as part of the monitoring process.
- To manage the purchase and deployment of resources.
- To maintain and encourage a meaningful prayer and liturgical life within school.
- To liaise with the governors, parish priest and parish community and contribute to Parish life.
- To involve parents in the religious life of the school – encouraging their feedback and keeping them informed of developments, events, and opportunities to support the parish.

The Role of the Class Teachers

- To utilise the Diocesan-backed 'To see you more clearly' scheme of work as the core of their religious teaching.
- To use the 'Meet in my name' Diocesan resources to deliver the Religious Education Directory.
- To actively promote the faith life of the school, in accordance with its mission statement and Catholic ethos
- To ensure that there is an area in the classroom set aside as a focal point for prayer and thoughtful interactive engagement with relevant themes.

- To help maintain the spirituality and daily prayer-life of the school through collective worship opportunities and periods of reflection.
- To be actively involved in the Catholic Life & Mission of the school, being strong models to our pupils and helping pupils to fulfill their role as global citizens with a strong focus on the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

Involvement of Parents

Parents and carers are the first educators of their children and their involvement in school is the beginning of an ongoing partnership. We aim to help them to feel involved and important in teaching the children about the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Faith, as well as helping them to develop a personal faith.

- They are invited to all school masses and most liturgies, including instances where we visit the parish church to worship and celebrate.
- Together with parish catechists Fr Patrick provides a supporting course for parents of children making First Communions,
- We provide termly information letters about RE topics.

Resources

- Each classroom has access to Religious Education Directory (RED) resources, Bibles and a range of Bible story resources to support teaching and learning.
- Every teacher has an individual Ten:Ten login, providing access to subject knowledge, CPD materials, and resources to support Prayer and Liturgy.
- Topic boxes containing artefacts, books and teaching resources relating to a range of major world faiths are stored in school and available to support learning.
- Altar vessels and liturgical vestments belonging to the school are securely stored in the RE cupboard and are available for use during Prayer and Liturgy.
- The school has a dedicated chapel, providing a dedicated space to support Religious Education, prayer, worship and liturgical experiences.

Safeguarding

St Joseph's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

Like all subject areas, we work in full conjunction with the school's over-arching Child Protection Policy, and those listed below, but we also recognise that RE can provide opportunities for children to share personal feelings and concerns. All staff are expected to be vigilant to the nature and frequency of worrying or sensitive disclosures and to be aware of the subsequent process for safeguarding the child's welfare.

Other policies of relevance to RE:

- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Personal, Social and Health Education Policy
- School Safeguarding Policy
- We actively support the Government's 'Prevent' Agenda to counter radicalism and extremism.
- Policy Monitoring and Review:
- Last reviewed: October 2026
- Signed: Charlotte Webster

- This policy will next be reviewed: October 2027