

Intent

St. Mary's School is a Catholic school as part of the Christ the King Catholic Collegiate, in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Birmingham. The school bases its teaching on the Gospel message of God's immeasurable love for us, and invites the children to respond by loving God and by loving their neighbour as themselves. The children are encouraged to take Jesus as their model in seeking to live out their calling with compassion and love. St. Mary's School achieves this by teaching the children to know and love God and the Gospel teachings. This permeates all aspects of the curriculum and the daily life of the school. This teaching is celebrated in worship and liturgies, rites and rituals of the Catholic Church. Parents are encouraged to uphold and reinforce the fundamentals of the Catholic faith taught in the school.

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we believe in providing a curriculum that widens the experiences of our children leading them to have high aspirations. We aim to develop our children to compete in an ever-changing global society. Therefore, we equip our children with the necessary skills not only to cope with such a society but also to be able to excel alongside their peers. We create an environment that is safe, nurturing and loving in order to provide the best conditions for our children to achieve. The uniqueness of every child is embraced and we instil in them the belief that they are made in the true image and likeness of God. We recognise that parents are the first educators of their children and so we strive to work in partnership with them to enable the children to reach their full God given potential.

Implementation

RE is a core subject in our school, alongside English, Maths and Science, and therefore we devote 10% of our curriculum time to its delivery. We adhere to the Curriculum Directory guidelines and learning outcomes. This provides a cohesive approach and opportunities for whole school assemblies and liturgies as well as displays which are relevant to every child. The core of our curriculum is based on the RECD and the 'Learning and Growing as the People of God' scheme of work. These themes are developed with greater depth and breadth each year as the child progresses through the school, and form the core of learning in RE.

'What are we to teach?' Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

This document is intended as guidance for governors, teachers and parents. Its purpose is to guide teachers and help them to become familiar with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Its aim is to help schools and teachers to ensure that the religious teaching is faithful to the Catechism. It leads teachers through the content of the Catechism, so that they may make reference to the approved text itself. The essentials of Catholic religious teaching is present in the curriculum in our school, even if only in a simple and elementary way in the Early Years. Throughout the school years, the presentation of the whole Christian message must grow and develop so becomes ever challenging and central to the lives of our children. Teachers should make the time to read through this document to become familiar with the layout of the Catechism.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Catechism of the Catholic Church provides an excellent topic index which will assist teachers' own understanding of the faith. This is for teachers to use as a resource.

Lesson Structure and Design

In line with our pedagogical approach of 'chunking,' there are five distinctive parts to our R.E lessons:

Part one – Recap and Retrieve – Teachers display the 'Spiritual learning journey' for each unit. This demonstrates to the children the sequence of lessons in their current unit which allows them to recap what they have learnt previously and think about where their learning will be taking them next.

Part two – 'Get us thinking' – The children are given a religious quote or bible reference to engage them in the learning for that lesson. They collaborate their ideas with a learning partner and then write an independent response. Children are encouraged to make links to previous learning, Catholic Social Teaching principles and our virtues and values.

Part three– Teacher Input – The teacher will then introduce the new learning for that lesson. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of sources to engage the children such as scripture, videos, hymns and prayers etc. Teachers will ask higher order thinking questions to allow the children to answer in as much depth as possible.

Part four – Independent Activity – The children will then complete an independent activity based on their new learning. Teachers plan opportunities for these activities to be varied and engaging. At least one activity per unit should come from the 'high order thinking skills' document, provided by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Part five – Extension question – The children are provided with a differentiated extension question which allows them to explore their new learning in more depth. Once per unit, children have the opportunity to 'Choose my Challenge' where they decide which of the three questions they would like to answer based on their own assessment of their understanding. In their answers, children are encouraged to make links (scripture, hymns, Catholic Social teaching principles, Virtues and Values, prayer), describe how they can implement this in their own lives, give an example of someone who has lived this out and to ask 'I wonder...' questions.

Oracy within RE

During RE lessons, children are encouraged, particularly in the 'Get us thinking' section, to think, pair and share their ideas using their 'Deepening Learning Mat' as a scaffold. When answering questions or providing oral responses, the children are encouraged to listen attentively to others' opinions and build on and challenge in a positive way. Children also implement their oracy skills through activities where they act out a bible story or hot-seat a character of their choice. By the end of the curriculum, we aim for all children to be confident in their religious viewpoint and be able to 'talk and think like a theologian.'

Impact

When children leave St. Mary's, they will be religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age and capacity to think spiritually, ethically and theologically. Also, they will be aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

The age-related expectations are paramount when it comes to measuring attainment in RE. All units are robustly and systematically planned and assessed against these standards. Attainment records are completed at the end of each assessed unit (as decided by the Diocese) to show children's levels of understanding and the Senior Leadership Team monitor pupils' attainment and progress.

When analysing data, the RE lead looks at the trend from previous years and target groups (PP, gender, EAL, GD) to identify areas of strength and areas of improvement. At the start of the academic year, each class teacher selects three tracker children (one from each ability) and at the end of every unit, the age related standards grid is completed. This ensures that each child is provided with ample opportunities to demonstrate each standard for their phase.

The RE Lead will monitor the quality and impact of the curriculum through regular pupil voice, book monitoring and lesson drop-ins and assess the extent to which pupils know more and remember more.