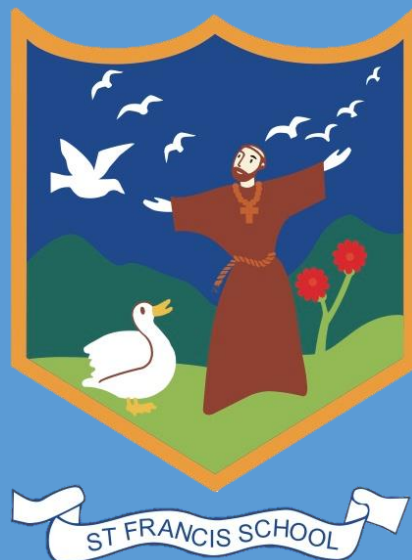


# POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



ST FRANCIS RC PRIMARY

2023-2024

St Francis Catholic Primary School, SE15 1RQ

## **Vision and Mission Statement and Gospel Values**

### **Our Vision**

*Providing every child with the tools to choose their path to success.*

### **Our Mission**

In St Francis children succeed because:

- ✓ We are an outward looking Catholic Primary school, which welcomes all children from the surrounding area. We work together to nurture our pupils, helping them to become resilient and inspired learners, who will become responsible global citizens of the future.
- ✓ We cultivate our pupils through our broad and diverse curriculum and loving Catholic Parish community
- ✓ We provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment that helps children feel respected, confident and motivated to achieve their goals.
- ✓ We also foster a spiritual and moral view of life that provides children with a sense of self-worth and a strong Catholic ethos

### **Our Gospel Values**

*Love*

*Honesty*

*Courage*

*Tolerance*

*Justice*

### **Jeremiah 29:11**

“I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for”



## **Policy for Religious Education and Collective Worship**

### **Aims of Religious Education**

Religious Education at St. Francis School is a journey through the presentation, understanding and development of the Catholic faith involving every member of the school community alongside the children's families and respective parishes.

Religious Education is an academic subject in its own right in the curriculum and is taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.

1. It is our aim to provide all children with the necessary skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding to assist them through this faith journey, enabling them to progress towards Catholic, Christian maturity.
2. We aim to provide all children with the opportunities to develop a closer, more personal relationship with God, whilst developing an understanding of their own values and importance as individuals, and respect for others, other faiths and other cultures.
3. We aim to prepare all children for life as Christians in the wider world through providing an environment based on the Gospel values of love, care, reconciliation, forgiveness, justice, tolerance, courage, honesty and a sense of self-worth.
4. We aim to enable all children to become more familiar with the language, symbols, signs and gestures of religious belief, and to practice their faith and worship within the environment of a Catholic Christian community.
5. It is our aim, through the use of the "Come & See" programme and other resources, to provide all children with a framework for life based upon the truth and wisdom of the living Gospel and sound educational principles.

### **The Religious Education Curriculum**

#### **The Religious Education programme**

From "Come and See":

The programme has been developed to respond to the needs of children today in their faith journey, to enable them to grow in their religious literacy and understanding in a way that is coherent with current educational principles. At the heart of the programme is the mystery of God's self-revelation of love through Jesus Christ. *Come and See* gives pupils the opportunity to explore the mystery of faith through Scripture and Tradition.

#### **Teaching**

St. Francis School follows the "Come and See" programme. There is a whole school approach to the teaching of Religious Education, although "Come and See" is taught as individual lessons. Where cross-curricular links arise however, these are fully developed. The scheme is used as a skeletal guide since introduced in 2012, it has been edited and built upon, making the delivery of RE in the school much more enriching and creative. Saints' days and other festivals are celebrated not only in

Religious Education lessons, but through Mass, Assemblies, Services and in-class prayers. In addition to these, the school focuses upon the preparation times of Advent and Lent in traditional style. Religious Education is also celebrated through display work.

In-service training is ongoing and is part of the school's self-evaluation process. St. Francis School celebrates our cultural diversity as a community. We follow the guidance in 'Come and See' to help the children show respect and appreciate the religious beliefs of others.

### **Time Allocation**

*"In the life of faith of the Catholic school, religious education plays a central and vital part. At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school. We are committed to classroom RE, then, because all pupils have the 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 (1 Peter 3:15). Religious education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school."*

***Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools (2000)***

As Religious Education is a core subject alongside Maths, English and Science, it takes up approximately 10% of the curriculum time, as recommended by the Bishops of England and Wales. This does not include time for collective worship or hymn practice. As we are a two-form entry school, assemblies for KS1/Foundation Stage and KS2 are held separately on a daily basis and last for 20 minutes.

During Advent, Lent and Holy Week special assemblies are allocated additional time. In addition to assemblies during Lent, the whole school take part in a special art project dedicated to designing and making creative Stations of the Cross as a school and using time to walk, reflect and pray through these stations created.

### **Planning, Assessment and Recording of Religious Education**

Religious Education is delivered as a broadly separate curriculum area and is therefore planned that way. Staff plan their activities from the topic and the RE Subject Leader monitors its effectiveness termly. Copies of medium term plans are kept in the Subjects Leader's file, together with samples of work which show differentiated attainment.

The planning process is under continuous review. Assessment for learning is used by class teachers in every lesson using children's responses, evidence from children's work, observations and discussions.

One topic per term is assessed formally and moderated using Diocesan Assessment Descriptors, as advised by Southwark Diocese. The RE Subject Leader maintains a record of these assessments.

Marking is undertaken in accordance with school policy.

Written comments, in relation to the learning objective, should be affirming, encouraging, thought provoking and challenging, above all being sensitive to the children's needs.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

All staff at St. Francis School teach in mixed ability classes and therefore differentiate the work where appropriate. Class teachers make a determined effort to enable a child with special educational needs to function at their own ability.

St. Francis School is committed to equal opportunities for all pupils and follows the Bishops' statement in the following Key Principles.

Every learner:

- has a divine origin and is a unique individual;
- is gifted by the Holy Spirit;
- has the right to be fully included in the life of the Church community;
- has the right to education and to have their potential identified and developed;
- has the right to be regarded as having equal value and worth;
- has the right to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum;
- has the right to genuine access to the whole curriculum;
- has the right to be challenged by and to achieve in the learning situation;
- has the right to share with and learn from others.

Differentiation: A Catholic Perspective C.E.S. 1997

### **Links with Home, School and Parish**

St. Francis School exists within the strength of the home-school-parish triangle and celebrates this partnership with parents and parish.

The home, Parish and School have distinct but complementary roles in the process of nurturing and educating the faith of our children.

The school has strong links with the Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school and takes a leading role in several of the services celebrated in the school.

The school, the parents and the parish give support to the sacramental preparation of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

Parents form a vital element in the Religious Education of their children. The school keeps Parents informed of their child's progress at Parents Evenings and in their annual report. The staff of the school are always willing to give advice and to support parents in helping their child on their journey of faith. Parents and parishioners are encouraged to attend Masses held in the school with the pupils on Thursday mornings. Parents receive a termly newsletter which outlines topics to be covered in R.E. This makes suggestions as to how parents can become involved with these themes at home. There is also a weekly newsletter, which covers all aspects of school life.

### **Other Faiths**

We appreciate how the beliefs and values of other faith communities can enrich our own spiritual existence. For two weeks of each school year, pupils will study other faiths. The whole school will focus on one particular faith for one week in the Autumn Term and one week in the Summer Term. The Other Faith topic will take place after the end of a Come and See topic.

All children will study Judaism in the Autumn Term at their own level. In the Summer term, children will learn about another world religion which includes: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. By the time children reach the end of the education in St Francis, they will have been exposed to each faith twice. This means they get a progressive education of these faiths which will give them a deeper understanding and respect for other religions and cultures. In addition, children will learn about a variety of festivals from other faiths. Where possible, people from other faiths will be invited into school to talk to the children and the classes in KS2 visit a place of worship.

### **Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is a central part of our school life. It is a regular feature of the school and takes the form of whole school, year group and class worship. It occurs in classrooms each day and at assemblies. Impromptu prayer and worship also occurs in the classrooms and in formal R.E lessons. Staff are aware of the expectations and importance of planning, delivering and promoting Collective Worship in St Francis RC Primary School through a document created by the school, 'Expectations of Collective Worship and Mass'.

### **Aims of Collective Worship**

Collective worship lies at the heart of St. Francis School daily life. It specifically aims to:

- provide opportunities for the development of a personal relationship with God;
- assist in the development of every child's spirituality;
- familiarise each child with traditional forms of prayer used in the Catholic Church;
- provide good liturgical experience;
- introduce a variety of formal and informal prayer settings;
- enable each child to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, His personality and His teaching;
- assist each child in developing a social and individual moral consciousness;
- enable each child to experience a sense of loyalty and belonging to a worshipping Christian faith community.

### **Mass and Assembly**

#### **Mass**

The school has a programme of regular masses; each week, one class or pupil group (e.g. Faith leaders) prepares and takes the leading role, supported by the Parish Priest. Attendance at Mass is sometimes in Phase groups, sometimes across Key Stages and Phase groups. Holy Days and special times require whole school involvement.

#### **Assembly**

Assemblies are held on a daily basis as a whole school in KS2 Hall.

Special assemblies take place to celebrate Lent, Advent and Holy Week and these are led by different classes. Each year, at least one class assembly focuses on the classes RE topic.

## **Display and Prayer Focus**

Classroom RE displays will relate to the topic being studied to stimulate further work or to celebrate the work that has been undertaken.

Each class has a prayer area to stimulate and facilitate reflection and prayer, linked with the topic and the liturgical season.

Other displays around the school will celebrate RE work done in each Year Group or Key Stage group.

## **Resources**

The resources for the teaching of RE include a variety of Bibles, stories with a biblical theme, prayer books, posters, artefacts, creative boxes and materials, themed books, ideas for services and assemblies, topics and music. The RE Subject Leader supports teachers in selecting suitable resources.

In each classroom there should be:

- A copy of the 'Come and See' book for that year group
- 'God Story' and 'Church Story'
- A selection of Bibles and religious books as part of the class reading materials (placed in reading corner)
- Resources for teaching and learning the current RE topic
- A box with resources for the focal area

## **Community Cohesion**

As stated in our Mission statement –

'We provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment that helps children feel respected, confident and motivated to achieve their goals. We also foster a spiritual and moral view of life that provides children with a sense of self-worth and a strong Catholic ethos'

Our policies and practices including Admissions, Accessibility, Disability Equality Schemes and Recruitment promote Community Cohesion.

# **Spiritual and Moral Development**

## **Spiritual 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.

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 and the Curriculum**

Religious Education (RE) has a rightful place in the curriculum. At St. Francis, RE 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, struggling, suffering, 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)

## **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 love
- there is a warm and friendly environment
- there is a supportive and positive attitude that understands their needs and builds on their successes
- there is mutual respect and consideration for all

## **Acts of Worship and Spiritual Development**

Our acts of worship are Christian in content and reflect and encompass Catholic practices of prayer and worship. They aim also to develop tolerance and respect for other religions, races and ways of life. They are:

- celebratory
- reflective and prayerful
- educational
- offer opportunities for pupil spiritual development

The daily act of school collective worship is reinforced by regular celebration of Mass, in line with the new guidance from the document '*Do this in memory of me: Celebrating mass in school*'.

Acts of collective worship are seen as a gradual process which helps the children to achieve understanding of one of the liturgical elements of our faith tradition e.g. greeting, silence, praise, listening, thanksgiving and offering prayer, and to help them understand and take part in the adult worship in the parish.

They are viewed as instrumental in:

- fostering a sense of belonging
- building a sense of community



- creating a climate of tolerance and respect for others, and for the faith traditions of others
- encouraging a sense of active participation and fostering leadership
- giving opportunities for self-expression through the arts

*“Celebrations of various kinds which help the children to understand some of the elements of liturgy (such as greeting, silence, community praise especially in song) have a great part to play in their liturgical formation and in preparing them for the liturgical life of the Church.”* (Come and See)

During Collective Worship it is important to:

- create the right atmosphere and setting e.g. the use of candles, music, posters;
- enable pupils to relax;
- make the best possible use of silence;
- lead the children in a meaningful experience of traditional prayers;
- lead the children to feel free to pray with openness and spontaneity;
- have the courage, as adults, to share feelings with the children;
- always respect their right to listen and be silent;
- ensure that our prayer reflects the essence of our lives - joy and sorrow, a sense of belonging, a feeling of loneliness, celebration and peace, anger and upset.

### **Moral Development**

Moral development is about a growing awareness of, and positive response to, the demands of living as an individual with others in the community. We need to consider how an individual pupil can best develop their unique way within our Christian Catholic community.

This can be achieved through:

- exploring the values which underpin beliefs and actions in the human family;
- understanding the following of Christ as a call to holiness/wholeness of life;
- reflecting on the values which Christ expressed in his life and teaching;
- exploring the values and ways of life of other world faiths, thus developing a range of skills:
- investigation;
- interpretation;
- communication;
- critical skills;
- emotional and social skills
- evaluation.

These will lead to the development of attitudes which may be grouped under the headings of;

- understanding;
- knowledge;
- right judgment;
- courage;
- reverence;
- awe and wonder.

Parents are the first teachers of their children and everything the school does in this aspect is subsidiary to this.

Children develop best morally when:

- respect and tolerance are exemplified by the adult community and by this means exemplified in the child;
- there is an emphasis on turn taking, sharing, listening, caring, accepting, encouraging, praising, patience and affirming;
- after explanation and negotiation there is an understanding of the need to conform to agreed standards of behaviour;
- pupils are offered a Catholic Christian framework through which to help them make informed decisions.

PSHE supports moral development through

- a house system of four Saints – St Francis, St Clare, St Joseph & St Mary - to foster a sense of belonging
- a lunchtime peer mediation system to provide mechanisms for children to support each other in resolving their problems
- Circle Time, to provide a safe environment in which children can express their feelings and opinions and explore socially acceptable patterns of behaviour
- developing pupils' social conscience and awareness of working for the wider community – support for a range of charities
- our specialists' rooms 'The Orchard' and the sensory rooms are places where all children in the school can experience a calming environment within which they develop their emotional intelligence.
- our Peace Garden – our reflection and memorial garden is a tranquil area where individuals, groups or whole classes may find peace

Following the Diocesan guidelines, pupils engage a programme of Education in Human Love, set in the context of Catholic teaching through the TenTen 'Life to the Full Plus' Programme.

### **Responsibility**

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for the Religious Education curriculum, and class teachers are responsible for classroom experiences. Staff are accountable to the Subject Leader, who, in turn, is accountable to the head teacher.

### **Policy monitoring and review**

The Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team and RE Subject Leader will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Head teacher and RE Subject Leader will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy.

We are aware of the need to regularly review our policy to take account of new initiatives, changes in curriculum or developments in technology.

Reviewed By: Ms Sonia Miguez Jorge September 2023

This policy will be reviewed again during the Summer 2024  
(unless any curriculum changes occur before this time)