

# Our Lady's R.C. Primary School



## Religious Education Policy

Last reviewed by Staff	Autumn 2023
Last reviewed by Governors	Autumn 2023
Person Responsible	RE Co-ordinator and Headteacher
Date of Next Review	Autumn 2024

Signed: *Miss E Wright* (Person Responsible)

Date: 1.9.23

Signed: *[Signature]* (Headteacher)

Date: 1.9.23

Signed: *C. M. Massingham* (Chair/Governor)

Date: 1.9.23

## Our Core Values & Mission

During Summer 2023 workshops, we revisited both our Mission Statement and Core Values. This involved everyone in discussion, reflection and prayer about the Values and Mission of our Catholic school. There was a calling to all to re-commit to our purpose and to work together to understand our roles and responsibilities as part of Our Lady's



## Our Mission Statement is:



*"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"*

*Our Mission is represented by this design. As with the statement itself, the logo was developed by all stakeholders, with the children in particular providing the symbolic ideas of **growth – the tree, love – the hearts and Christ – the Cross***

## The Core Values that provide the foundation for that Mission are:

'Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord' Proverbs' 19:17 **Kind**

'Love God and love people' Matthew 22:36-40 **Loving**

'You can always turn to the Lord when times are tough' Psalms 9:9-10 **Safe**

'Forgive and you will be forgiven' Luke 6:37 **Forgiving**

'I am the way, the truth, the life' John 14:6 **Honest**

'Rejoice always' Thessalonians 5-16 **Positive**

'Lord, your God shall you worship and him alone shall you serve' Matthew 4:1-11

**Respect**

'Grow in the grace and knowledge of Saviour Jesus Christ' 2 Peter 3-18 **Nurturing**

## Nurture

The School's six nurturing principles sum up our practice and theory. They underpin the context, organisation and curriculum.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. the importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT**

Our Lady's School is a Voluntary Aided Catholic School established to support Catholic parents in their responsibility for the spiritual, academic, physical, moral, cultural and religious development of their children in accordance with the teachings of the Church.

We offer pupils the experience to grow and develop in a loving community into mature Christians who live for the Father, in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit within the Sacraments of the Church. Both through Religious Education and in the general life of the school, pupils are prepared to witness to moral and spiritual values in the wider world. Religious education is the "core of the core curriculum" in our Catholic school. Our mission 'Learning and loving together, we grow with Jesus' helps develop the whole child as an individual.

Religious Education will be made available to every pupil by every teacher. It will be presented to pupils in a variety of forms with regard to pupil's needs and abilities. Class teachers will teach Religious Education through appropriate learning activities, experiences of life, and opportunities for prayer and worship.

Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own actions and relationships and to care for themselves, each other and the environment. The school will support the work of groups or individuals in the local parish and the dioceses and opportunities will be offered for pupils to learn about respond to some of the needs of the worldwide human family through charitable organisations.

By enabling pupils to learn and appreciate how beliefs affect people in their lives, Religious Education will make a vital contribution to the understanding, mutual respect and cooperation between Christianity and other faiths.

The policy reflects the school's Mission Statement and the main aims of the school which are:

- To make prayer, worship and liturgy real educational experiences and to contribute successfully to the development of each individual in the school community.
- To create a strong link between home, parish and school which prepares the child for life in the wider community.
- To ensure that the child's experience of relationships within the school has a significant influence on their understanding of relationships'
- To ensure that the curriculum provides a Catholic Christian setting in which children can grow in understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values.
- To show concern for all pupils, parents, and staff.
- To develop the whole child as an individual.

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## **THE AIMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Our Lady's School seeks to promote the growth towards wholeness of all those who share its life; a wholeness that comes from free response to God, who has called each person into being, and by whom all are loved and sustained. In this setting the School's Religious Education curriculum will:

- Make a significant contribution to the child's understanding of *Spirituality* and thus being capable of responding to the invitation of God and the challenges of life.
- Seek to help each person to live and grow in a *Word of God Community* based on Gospel values and to foster positive interaction between home, parish and school, which provides preparation for pupil's entry into the wider community.
- Promote the religious and spiritual growth of pupils in order to provide a *Welcoming Community* within which they can examine the relationship between all Christians and foster positive attitudes towards people of other faiths.
- Seek to encourage a *Welfare Community* where there is concern and respect for each other, for teaching and non-teaching staff, for parents, for the environment and for the needs of God's worldwide family.
- Promote a prayer and *Worshipping Community* to experiences such as beauty, joy and suffering, and to express their own thoughts and feelings.
- Seek to help pupils to explore a *Witnessing Community* where they can share their own experiences in their search for the truth about God.

The Religious Education programme in Our Lady's School will provide a comprehensive and systematic study of Christianity so that children will be enabled to:

- Grow in knowledge and openness to the mystery of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Become familiar with the person, life and teachings of Jesus, who is Saviour and Lord, reveals both the face of God and the fullness of what it means to be human.
- Grow in experience, knowledge and understanding of the Church, her life and teachings, her significance in the world today, and her concern for peace and justice.
- Develop a moral awareness as they reflect upon human conditions, in their own and other's lives in the light of the Christian message.
- Prepare for, participate in and appreciate liturgical prayer and worship.
- Grow in understanding and appreciation of Scripture and its place in Christianity, the Sacraments and the Church.
- Grow in knowledge and understanding of Catholic traditions and way of life.

Through sound teaching which reflects the pupil's needs and abilities, the School's Religious Education programme will:

- Be informed by a range of teaching styles and the whole variety of ways in which children learn, and will enable teachers to select from and devise appropriate learning activities.
- Affirm all pupils' value and worth, build on their own experiences of living relationships, and contribute to the development of self-esteem.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to recognise, appreciate and develop their talents and skills.
- Promote the development of independence and autonomy in children that they are encouraged to accept increasing responsibility for their own learning and are enabled to make ever more fully informed, mature and free responses and choices in relation to God, faith, stewardship, and the service of others.

## THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In order to fulfil our aims, Religious Education in Our Lady's School takes account of the School Mission Statement, whole school policies, the 5Ws model of a Catholic school, Caritas in Action, the Salford Diocesan Sacramental Programme, and the Church's liturgical year.

The school follows a curriculum based on the guidelines outlined in the Bishops Conference of England and Wales and is supported by the schemes: *Come and See* and *Caritas in Action*.

The children at Our Lady's, broadly following the Religious Education as set out in *Come and See* will learn about the Church's liturgy and about a variety of styles and settings for personal prayer. They will also learn about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, become more familiar with Scripture and explore and relate Christian beliefs to living a human life.

*Caritas in Action* assists in the delivery of the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church. There are seven themes: Dignity of the Human Person, Family and Community, Solidarity and the Common Good, Dignity of Work, Rights and Responsibilities, Option for the Poor and Vulnerable and Stewardship.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning in Religious Education is in accordance with the whole school policy on teaching and learning. A variety of teaching styles are adopted throughout the school to match the age, ability and needs of the children. These include:

- Whole class teaching, using stories, discussion, scripture, drama etc.
- Children working in groups-brainstorming, discussing, recording etc.
- Children working individually.
- Interactive Collective Worship and celebrations.
- Every aspect of school life.

### **Building the Kingdom**

We are a Building the Kingdom, Level 3 school. This means that our entire wider curriculum is enhanced with creative aspects of RE, for example, analysing art work, scripture and participating in child-initiated learning linked to the liturgical calendar that prompts children to wonder, in response to Big Questions. Building the Kingdom facilitates ways for our RE curriculum to be central within the wider foundation subjects, across the entirety of all teaching and learning.

### **Adaptation**

Adaptation is about matching teaching approaches to those of the learners. Within any group there is a range of ability, interest, background and needs, and the teacher will seek to ensure that each pupil can improve his or her starting point in each lesson and feel the gain of success. The curriculum is planned taking into account the needs of all pupils; the more able being extended as much as the less able supported. Adaptation will take many forms depending on the teaching style of the teacher and content of the lesson.

### **Assessment**

Assessment in Religious Education

- Is a judgement about the achievement of a pupil or group of pupils, not about grading children.
- Focuses on the unique contribution of the subject to pupil development.
- Is integral to the whole educational process.
- Is incorporated into teaching strategies and practices.
- Is directly related to ways of teaching as well as to what is taught.

**Such assessment will:**

- Enable the pupil to reflect on and acknowledge personal or group achievement.
- Help pupils to take the next step in learning.
- Enable teacher to monitor pupil progress.
- Enable teachers to communicate effectively with parents and interested parties about the achievements of pupils.
- Enable teachers to monitor the effectiveness of their own work.

The outcomes of assessment will be recorded in accordance with the whole school policy on Assessment, Recording and Reporting. Pupil progress and achievement in Religious Education will be communicated to parents at two Parents' Evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms, and in a written report in the summer term.

Assessment judgement is based on evidence from one or more sources such as observations, discussions and questioning, written and other forms of work.

**Evaluation of Learning**

Pupil learning at Our Lady's is evaluated during pupil/teacher discussion, children's work and through teacher assessment. Progress and achievement is assessed in terms of knowledge, understanding and appreciation, in relation to their age and capabilities of:

- Sacred Scripture
- The person, life and ministry of Jesus
- The Mystery of God
- The teaching and liturgy of the Church
- Prayer and worship
- Human dignity and moral responsibility

**Evaluation of Teaching**

The quality of teaching at Our Lady's is evaluated in terms of teacher's ability to relate effectively to the pupils and to engage and motivate them in their learning.

Teachers will provide opportunities for pupils to relate religious beliefs to their own experiences of life and to discuss religious issues in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Evaluations will be made by:

- Discussion which will inform members of staff and the RE coordinator of our planning and provision.
- Observation of displays and the classroom environment.
- Observation and monitoring of lessons and Collective Worship by the RE coordinator.
- Monitoring of schemes of work, half termly planning, lesson plans etc.
- Looking at samples of children's work
- Talking to children
- Marking and assessment of children's work.

**THE ROLE OF RE COORDINATOR**

The role of the coordinator is to ensure the implementation and ongoing development of the Religious Education Programme and to make a significant contribution to the School Improvement Plan.

**Personal development**

- Reading and study
- In-service courses
- Contact with other RE coordinators
- Contact with diocesan and other support services
- Model of good RE classroom practice

### **Staff development**

- Generate enthusiasm for RE
- Lead staff in the development of the RE policy
- Make information available for all
- Plan and set up school displays
- Informal and formal discussion with staff about needs and support
- Monitor progress in RE and advise the head teacher on action plan
- Organise in-service training

### **Curriculum development**

- Leading staff in addressing aspects of current practice such as planning, classroom organisation, teaching and learning strategies, Prayer and Worship etc.
- Responding to any needs, difficulties, changes or initiatives.
- Arranging special events and activities
- Monitoring current resources for the teaching of RE
- Taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources.

## SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

*“Love each other as much as I have loved you.  
If you do, people will notice and they will say;  
‘You are like Jesus’.”*

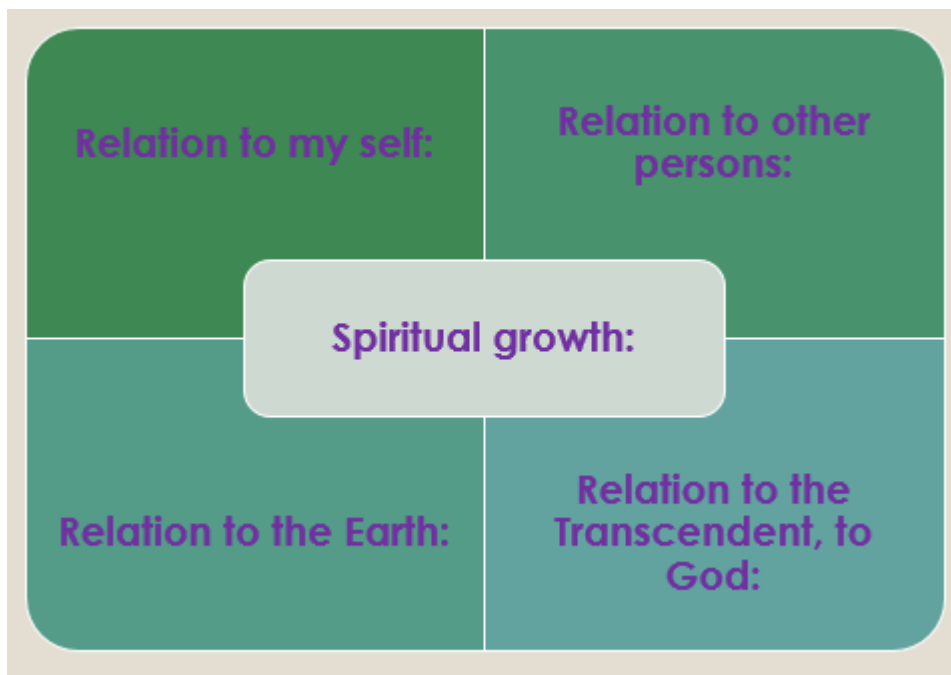
(Listen p.53)

At Our Lady’s School we aim to create a happy, loving family atmosphere so that our children feel valued and secure. We aim to enable our children to experience a sense of awe and wonder and to be touched by the mysteries of life. Through the *Caritas in Action* programme our Children are:

- Taught about the dignity, destiny and worth of each individual.
- Taught about the beauty, harmony and purpose of the whole creation.
- Encouraged to accept responsibility for their own actions and relationships and to care for the school environment.
- Encouraged to respect themselves, others, their own and others’ property and the environment.
- Encouraged to explore their feelings, thoughts and attitudes in a quiet and prayerful atmosphere.
- Given opportunities to respond to their new insights in creative and practical ways, and in the service of others.
- Helped to make informed choices by offering information, advice and support with regard to health and safety and personal relationships.
- Encouraged to behave in an appropriate manner at all times based on the school’s agreed expectations and Catholic moral teachings.

The approach to spiritual and moral development is ongoing and cross curriculum with the Religious Education Programme at its core.

- **Literacy:** Poetry, creative writing, listening to and respecting the view of others.
- **Numeracy:** Shape, pattern and symmetry in the natural world.
- **Music:** Listening to and appreciating a wide variety of music and responding to it emotionally. Music to reflect moods and evoke memories.
- **Science:** The miracle of life, growth, death and renewal (reflecting the liturgical year), forces, energy, power and light.
- **Art/Design Technology:** Explore and alleviate feelings. Putting child in touch with the environment (textures, tones etc.)
- **Physical Education:** Looking at self in time and space through dance, gymnastics, sport cooperation in games etc.
- **Geography:** Highest mountain, longest river etc.
- **History:** Famous people as role models and witnesses. Inspirational stories about bravery, kindness, unselfishness etc.



Children are encouraged to respect each other's views, respect and relating the curriculum to themselves, the Earth and to God.

### COMMUNITY LINKS

At Our Lady's we aim to link with the wider community at all opportunities. Particularly important are the links with parents, which are vital if we are to achieve the best for every child. The school works in partnership with parents, encouraging their involvement in a variety of school activities and celebrations.

The school supports the work of groups and individuals in the parish and the diocese. Opportunities are offered to pupils to learn about and respond to charitable organisations such as *CARITAS* and *CAFOD*. Our Caritas Team is a faith team made up of pupils in UKS2 who work hard to strengthen links between our school, the parish and the community. They lead fundraising and key projects linking with community campaigns and initiatives, to ensure that the whole school are involved in action for change.



Opportunities are offered to pupils to develop an appreciation of different cultural groups through participation in a range of appropriate cultural experiences and activities. Pupils are also encouraged to respect other faith, customs and practices.

## THE SCHOOL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME

In Year 3, children in Our Lady's parish are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. The school supports the work of the Sacramental team.

Preparation for these Sacraments seeks to bring together in a real partnership the three main contexts of the child's growing and learning.

- **The home**, where family teaching and support lay the foundations for everything else.
- **The school**, where the children are helped to live and to understand what is being experienced.
- **The parish**, which is the local expression of God's welcoming celebrating family.

Christian Initiation, begun in Baptism, has elements addressed to children and to parents, as well as a number of celebrations:

- Presentation of the children
- Celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation
- Celebration of First Holy Communion

The school, as an extension of the home and an expression of the parish, will continue and build upon that family style teaching that goes on in the home. In its daily prayer, its assemblies and other celebrations, the school will build upon what is happening in the home and in the parish.

The school also provides a range of experiences and opportunities to learn and understand. The School's Religious Education Programme assists the children to grow in knowledge of the sacraments and God's family.

Sacramental preparation is on-going and developmental throughout the school. The children continue to follow the Sacramental themes within the scheme thereby growing in understanding and thanksgiving for these sacraments.

## LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Religious Education permeates the whole of school life at Our Lady's, encompassing all curriculum areas and takes into account equal opportunities and any special educational needs. Religious Education has links with all whole school policies.