



OUR SCHOOL MOTTO IS:

## *Growing in Faith and Knowledge*

### OUR SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St Joseph's Preparatory School is a Catholic School, which was founded by the Christian Brothers and is a place where the staff and governors work to bring the Gospel values into all areas of School life and where prayer, worship and liturgy are seen as meaningful experiences.

Each child is encouraged to strive for the highest possible standards of work and behaviour, whilst learning to live as a well-mannered, self-disciplined and tolerant individual both inside and outside the classroom. The children learn to live as happy and caring members of a School community, which values their unique individual talents, and also the needs of others.

St Joseph's Preparatory School values and nurtures a close partnership with parents and encourages the forming of meaningful links with the wider community. The children are encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities in order to develop an interest in sporting, cultural and recreational activities.

St Joseph's Preparatory School up holds fundamental British values and encourages respect for all people.

St Joseph's Preparatory School recognises its legal duty to work with Local Safeguarding Children's Board acting on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of abuse.

We recognise that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and require a secure environment in order to learn effectively.

St. Joseph's Preparatory School's Safeguarding Children Policy follows the guidelines laid down by the City of Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children's Procedures and "Working Together to Safeguard Children"(2015) and " Keeping Children Safe in Education"(2016) (KCSIE)

Our motto 'Growing in Faith and Knowledge' encapsulates the School's Aims:

- To provide a caring, Christian community, in which individuals can develop fully.
- To strive for excellence in all areas – academic, sporting, musical etc.
- To provide an ethos which brings the Gospel message alive.
- To develop strong community links.

(St. Joseph's Preparatory School has achieved International School Status and is an Eco School.  
We are a Dyslexia Friendly School.)

*St Joseph's Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.*

## Religious Education Policy

Co-ordinator: Mr. J. Salt

Reviewed: May 2017

Review Date: September 2017

# St Joseph's Preparatory School

## Religious Education (RE) Policy

"The Religious Education provided in a Catholic school cannot be confined to teaching/learning specifically devoted to RE. Every school should seek to ensure that the message and spirit of the Gospel permeates all aspects of school life, that it informs the approach to and treatment of the entire curriculum and that it is reflected and communicated in the love and care with which both staff and pupils are treated." (Communicating Christ)

### Aims

At St Joseph's, we aim:-

- a) To nurture our children's faith and to foster their religious, spiritual and moral development.
- b) To place the school's Mission Statement at the heart of the school's Religious Education Programme.
- c) To give R.E. high priority in the school's curriculum not only as a subject in its own right but permeating throughout every subject and extending into the daily life of the school.
- d) To prepare the children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation.
- e) To ensure the liturgical year is reflected in the life and activities of the school.
- f) To teach the children to have respect for religious and moral values and have tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life.
- g) To develop the moral qualities of self-discipline, patience and consideration for others in the classroom and at play.
- h) To develop teacher's subject knowledge and understanding to ensure the curriculum is delivered to the highest standard.

**In order that these aims can be translated into workable objectives a structured programme for the teaching of RE will be implemented.**

**We will:-**

- Follow the Diocesan recommended RE programme - Learning & Growing as the People of God and to keep reviewing the Scheme of Work.
- Follow closely the events of the liturgical calendar.
- Reflect a programme of study that provides continuity and progression from the age of 3 to 11 years.
- Take into account the individual background, nature, ability and special needs of our children.
- To extend the curriculum for Gifted and Talented children in Religious Education and challenge their learning to their full potential.
- Ensure that RE exists alongside the National Curriculum in such a way that standards of attainment and methods of assessment can be devised and measured.
- Monitor and evaluate our RE programme.
- Provide quality resources in line with the importance attached to this subject in school.
- Allow adequate opportunities for professional development in RE.

### **Implementation of the R. E. Programme**

In RE there will be a variety of teaching methods and strategies. Generally RE will be taught as a mixed ability class lesson. Account will be taken of the specific needs of the individual child through differentiation. Pupils may also work individually or in groups. Whole school or departmental involvement takes place during assembly time.

### **Foundation Stage**

Nursery and Reception classes will follow the early stages of the Diocesan scheme and will be regularly monitored by the RE Coordinator.

### **Time Allocation**

We believe that RE lessons should account for approximately 10% of curriculum time. Additional hours for R.E. are identified in religious assemblies and Masses and collective worship.

### **Assessment**

- Nursery, Reception and Year 1 will carry out a baseline assessment during the first term – this will be kept in a file with the R.E Coordinator.
- Teachers will assess the basic knowledge taught in the Learning & Growing as People of God strategy through questions and activities which show that the children have grasped the meaning of the R. E. material, and if necessary, can apply it to certain situations.
- The work of all pupils from Nursery to Prep 6 from 3 units of work from the Diocesan scheme is assessed each year following a ‘traffic light’ system. The focus units change annually, on a rolling programme:
  1. The Liturgical Year
  2. Scripture
  3. The Sacraments
  4. Living as Christians/Prayer

Two pieces of work judged to be working towards, achieved expectations and exceeded expectations from each of these 3 units is selected and retained as evidence of what might be expected to be achieved by pupils, based on the descriptions given for top, middle & bottom achievement for these units.

In addition, 1 or 2 pieces of work from each unit of work from the scheme, from either an average, below/above average pupil from each class, is leveled in accordance with the Attainment Level descriptors for AT1 and AT2.

At the end of each academic year the book from a child who is consistently meeting expectations will be taken with the assessment sheets attached to 1 piece of work for each topic and will be stored by the coordinator.

In Reception, in addition to the ‘traffic-lighting’ of all pupils work in the three assessed units, two pupils from each of the working towards, achieved expectations and exceeded expectations questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the units using set questions.

At the end of the year the RE Coordinator carries out an analysis of all the data collected which provides information for the improvement of RE teaching and learning within the school.

### **Monitoring & Evaluating**

Monitoring and evaluating will be an ongoing process set against desired objectives agreed by staff. It will follow the priorities of the School Development Plan. The process is to be monitored by the Headteacher and RE Coordinator.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All pupils are entitled to equal opportunities (see school's Equal Opportunities Policy).

### **Multicultural Links**

Any children, within the school, of another faith, will take part in R.E. lessons, assemblies and Masses etc. but they will also have the opportunity to share their own beliefs with others.

Each year in the Autumn term, the whole school participates in Multicultural Week. Within this week, the children learn about a major world religion, its values, beliefs, celebrations and festivals. Nursery and Prep 3 focus on Judaism. Reception and Prep 4 study Islam. Pre-Prep 1 and Prep 5 look at Sikhism and Pre-Prep 2 learns about Buddhism and Prep 6 learns about Hinduism.

### **Resources**

The aim is to provide teachers' materials and relevant children's resources through the school based on the diocesan scheme. Children's reference material will be situated in the prep library. This includes a set of Good News Bibles, a set of Old Testaments and a set of Lions Children's Bibles. A selection of teachers' reference material is kept in teachers' classrooms, the resource room and the Headteacher's office.

### **Displays**

There is a crucifix or statue in each of the main rooms of the school. There is a R.E. area in every classroom which will be the focus for prayer and will be respectfully maintained.

Some classroom wall displays will reflect current topics in R.E. and may be extended into corridors and hall displays.

### **Prayer**

Prayer has an important role in our school for expressing and fostering faith.

Children are introduced to prayer in the Nursery as a normal part of daily life and from this beginning it is our aim to encourage the children to grow and develop their natural expression of love and faith throughout their school life.

Various methods of prayer are presented, such as formal and informal, private and communal, with the formal prayers being introduced progressively throughout the school. Children are encouraged to write their own prayers to share with others.

We begin and end each day with prayers, either as a whole school assembly or as class prayers. RE lessons will often contain an element of prayer. Prayers before and after lunch are said in the classrooms. There is also an opportunity for seasonal devotions e.g. The Rosary in October, Lenten Prayer, Stations of the Cross etc. Staff have an opportunity to pray and reflect with a daily 'Thought for the Day' and prayers prior to staff meetings.

### **Masses**

At St Joseph's School, Mass is the centre of Liturgical Worship, and as such has an established place in the life of the school.

Masses are celebrated regularly throughout the year including the important feasts

at St. Teresa's Church Trent Vale. The celebrant is Father Taylerson from St Teresa's.

Prep classes take it in turn to prepare these Masses or jointly share in the preparation and participation.

Parents and family friends are always invited to attend the school Masses.

Both girls and boys may act as servers at Mass, usually chosen from children in Prep 5 or 6 who are altar servers in their own parish.

Items for the Altar are kept in the store room alongside the other Religious Education artefacts incase Mass is needed to be held at school.

### **Sacraments**

Preparation for Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist takes place in Prep 3 and Confirmation in Prep 6. The programme of work used in preparing the children for these Sacraments is based on the appropriate units in the R.E. strategy. The children also have the opportunity to use study books to help with their preparations at home and in school. In addition children will receive external preparations in their own parish. As part of the preparation for the Holy Eucharist and Confirmation children have a day of reflection at Alton Castle.

Although we help and support in the children's preparation of the Sacraments, letters are sent to parents to encourage them to attend their own parish and inform the parish priest of their children's preparation and date of celebration of the Sacraments.

### **School and Community Links**

As an independent school St Joseph's draws children from many Catholic Parishes throughout the region as well as from other Christian and non-Christian denominations. The children share their experiences out of school with us, which helps to foster links with all their communities.

The children of St Joseph's are encouraged to care for each other and for the wider community by visits from people who help others in need. e.g. CAFOD, Father Hudson Society.

The school has a tradition for raising funds for those less fortunate than ourselves and will continue to support such charities as Douglas Macmillan Hospice, Age UK, CAFOD and Father Hudson's homes. The school also supports the work of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Rice International.

The school celebrates Harvest time in a variety of ways. These include celebrating a whole school Mass, bringing in food to distribute to needy members of the community and collecting money to support various charities which include Christian Brothers, CAFOD etc.

At Christmas children donate boxes to the Samaritans Purse "Operation Christmas Child"

During Lent the children raise money for a number of charities through class projects including sponsored events (spelling), bring and buy sales and activities.

The children bring flowers to honour Mary during a May assembly and May procession; most of these flowers are taken to wards at the local hospice.

### **The Role of the R. E. Coordinator**

The Coordinator is responsible for:

- Supporting and keeping staff informed of any changes taking place in R.E.
- Updating and reviewing the policy.
- Keeping an up-to-date action plan.
- Attending meetings and other relevant courses and reporting back to the rest of the staff.
- Ensuring the implementation of the R.E. scheme.
- Monitoring and evaluating the teaching programme.
- Resourcing the subject.

### **Information and Communications Technology**

We are developing the use of Computer software to support R.E and this will be used where appropriate. The children also have the opportunity to use the Tector Suite and laptops where necessary. The ICT resources include internet access. Staff members also have access to laptops for cross-curricular links within all subjects, including R.E.

### **Health and Safety**

- Class teachers are responsible for ensuring that health and safety measures are taken during RE lessons.
- Teachers should take care when using candles in the classroom. Candles should be lit using a safety gas lighter and kept away from children. Candles should be extinguished when no longer needed.
- The use of candles is given during Collective Worship and Mass. Teacher and children should remain vigilant to ensure attention is paid to lit candles.
- Care is to be taken by children when using scissors and drawing equipment.

### **Spiritual and Moral Development**

Children have the opportunity to reflect, explore and develop their own sense of spirituality in RE through:

- An awareness and understanding of their own and others religious beliefs.
- Showing respect for their own and others' religions.
- Attending Masses in school and in church.
- Daily worship including collective worship, worship groups and class worship.
- The breadth of the curriculum used.
- Participating in daily prayer.

In all areas of school life, the staff and pupils uphold and encourage British values.

**Review** - The R.E. Policy will be reviewed annually.