

ST. DOMINIC'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

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MISSION STATEMENT

*In Jesus
we love, learn, hope,
trust and care.*

Aims

- ❑ Build a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- ❑ Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life, through our commitment to raising standards of achievement in every area.
- ❑ Recognise individual differences, raising self-esteem and ensuring equal access to the curriculum.
- ❑ Strive for good relationships between pupils, staff, parents, parishes and the wider community.
- ❑ Recognise the richness of our multicultural community as a source of learning.
- ❑ Show an example in the way we care for, love and respect each other.

John 13:34-35

“The most important command,” Jesus said, “is this:
Love one another;
Just as I have loved you.
By this love you have for one another,
everyone will know that you follow me.”

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Introduction

As a Catholic community we believe that it is important to help each person develop a loving relationship with Jesus Christ. Reflecting the Gospel values, we wish to uphold the worth and value of each individual.

We wish to educate the whole person through the integration of intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional, psychological, social and physical development.

Religious Education is a core subject in Catholic schools and our aim is for the children to know God in a personal relationship and we foster this through our mission statement.

Aims and Objectives of Religious Education

The aim of Religious Education is to endeavour to help children become aware of God's presence and action in their lives and to have a personal relationship with him.

- To acknowledge, respect and learn about other faiths and cultures, leading pupils to a deeper knowledge and understanding of their religious traditions.
- To promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life.
- To promote knowledge and understanding of the response of faith.
- To promote the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose.
- The skills required to engage in examination of reflection upon religious belief and practice.

The Diocesan Policy on Religious Education commits the Diocese to support Schools in implementing the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and other norms of the Bishops' Conference.

The schools use the Age – Related Standards for assessment and the Curriculum Directory as the driver documents to inform all teaching and learning in Religious Education.

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Curriculum

In school we use the *Resource Framework for Religious Education in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Westminster* which is produced by Dr. Margaret Carswell. This particular approach to teaching Religious Education allows for the children to gain a deeper understanding of their relationship with God. There is a great emphasis placed on not only hearing and understanding scripture but also making links with it and their own lives today. A great deal of work is covered on encouraging children to reflect on scripture and notice how, because of these words, we make certain choices about how we live our lives. This form of teaching allows us as a school to drive forward our children's religious literacy, a particular focus of the Diocese.

The three-year curriculum cycle for Religious Education at St. Dominic's.

Table of the Three Year Cycle Linked to the Liturgical Calendar and RECD

	Year	Year 1	Year	Year 2	Year	Year 3
Autumn1	C	In the Beginning (Genesis stories of Creation)	A	Beginning with the Church (Sacraments of Initiation)	B	Beginning with God (The Burning Bush)
Autumn2	A	Advent to Christmas (The Birth of Jesus – the Gospel of Matthew)	B	Advent to Christmas (Christmas around the world)	C	Advent to Christmas (The Birth of Jesus – the Gospel of Luke)
Spring 1	A	People of Prayer Epiphany and Beatitudes	B	Jesus at Prayer (Passover)	C	Being a Sacramental Person (Sacraments of Healing)
Spring 2	A	Lent to Easter Almsgiving, Penance and Prayer Easter from the Gospel of Matthew	B	Lent to Easter (Easter from the Gospel of Mark)	C	Lent to Easter (The Stations of the Cross)
Summer 1	A	Easter to Pentecost (The Resurrection from the Gospel of Matthew)	B	Easter to Pentecost (The Resurrection from the Gospel of Mark)	C	Easter to Pentecost (Luke's Story of Pentecost)

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		The Pentecost Liturgy)				
Summer 2	A	Matthew's Gospel: The Kingdom of God (Parable of the Kingdom; The Gospel of Matthew)	B	Mark's Gospel: Discipleship (Discipleship; The Gospel of Mark)	C	Luke Gospel: A 'Godly' Life (The Good Samaritan; the Gospel of Luke)

Worship

Prayer and worship are a natural part of our school life and a real expression of the partnership of the wider community, especially the home and the parish, where the development of the whole person is nurtured.

Worship in a Catholic school should be joyful and purposeful in order for it to become a truly spiritual experience. Collective acts of worship take place once a week in class. Whole school worship takes place on a Monday morning. EYFS, KS1 and KS2 collective worship take place on Tuesday and Thursday and last for approximately 15/20 minutes. Parents are invited in to pray with us. The Sunday Gospel reading is the main focus of Monday's worship.

Worship themes are based on the liturgical year and the themes of the RE topics. Worship takes place regularly in the classrooms and is pupil and adult led and may take a variety of forms including prayer, song, meditation and makes use of Scripture and the oils, holding cross, candles and cloths in each class prayer box.

Prayer

Prayer is central to the life of our school for pupils and staff, providing engaging and creative experiences of the richness of the Catholic tradition.

Children participate in different forms of prayer throughout their school life (traditional prayer, modern prayer, silent prayer, hymns and praise). Prayer can happen anywhere and should be a relationship between God and the child.

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Liturgies

Children attend church on Holy Days of Obligation that fall in term time. Our whole school Commissioning Mass is celebrated in September where our year 6 children are commissioned to be leaders within our school community and receive a cross to mark their leadership role within the school. Staff make a pledge to support the children in their Religious Education and commitment to their faith. Staff receive a special candle to symbolise the guidance they will offer throughout the year to the pupils in their care. Parents make a promise to support the school and their children on their faith journey.

A special leavers Mass is celebrated in school for year 6 children at the end of the summer term. Year 6 children lead the Mass by participating in the preparation of the readings and prayers. The Mass ends with the year 6 children sending up balloons with their hopes and prayers for the future surrounded by the school community pupils, staff, parents and the parish priest.

HOME, SCHOOL, PARISH PARTNERSHIP

The school seeks to encourage links between the home, school and parish. We aim to work in partnership and seek ways of involving parents in the religious life of their children. A half termly newsletter is sent home at the beginning of each new topic which provides children with activities to try at home and ideas for prayer at home so parents can work with us in developing their child's spiritual understanding. Our St. Dominic's Gazette also focuses on the Scripture from Sunday's Gospel reading.

Everyone is welcome to our worship and parents are encouraged to attend whole school Masses, and class assemblies during the year. The school has close links to both our school parishes The Immaculate Heart of Mary and St Dominic and St Judes. The children visit the church regularly and both Fr. Patrick and Fr. Neil visit our school. Children take part in parish liturgies and participate in the planning and preparation.

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Time Allocation

Each topic lasts for a period of five to six weeks. RE is taught for 10% of the timetable. This represents at least 2 hours and 15 minutes for key stage 1 classes and 2 hours and 30 minutes for key stage 2 classes. Prayers, worship do not make up part of this 10%.

Teaching other Faiths

Respect for traditions and beliefs of other faiths are important in our multicultural community. Each term, one week is given over to the study of another faith. The school has chosen Judaism for the autumn term and in the spring and summer term we will alternate between Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism because of the wider community in which we live. Resources are bought for the whole school to be able to participate at the same time. In this way the pupils are introduced to the background and beliefs of people of other faiths and to recognise God at work in them.

Display/Resources

Each classroom has an RE/ prayer focus area with:

- our school's Mission Statement
- Crucifix
- Candle
- Bible
- Act of Worship boxes
- Prayer Bear and Book (EYFS and KS1)
- Capture That Thought Book (KS2)

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CHILDREN'S RECORDING of RE Work

Each year group has a special Religious Education book in which work is recorded helping pupils to seek meaning and develop understanding. This will document the work carried out in all topics through observations, examples of work, photographs and any other evidence that is deemed relevant.

These pieces of work illustrate how the same topic is covered from Reception through to Year 6.

Assessment and Recording Keeping

A copy of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) is available to all staff. Dr. Margaret Carswell's Resource Frameworks are all cross referenced to the RECD. Assessment are planned for at the beginning of each topic. Teachers are asked to assess each child every half term and give a 'best fit' judgement using the Age-Related Standards. This 'best fit' judgement will be based on evidence gathered from a formally assessed piece of work as well as other pieces of work that term. It is expected that teachers ensure at the planning stage that appropriate teaching and learning strategies are in place for each pupil to be challenged. Each teacher is expected to keep a record of each pupil's attainment during the school year. This data is entered onto the whole school's tracking system.

Attainment and progress in RE are made on the Annual Report to parents. Pupils Progress and Moderation meetings are tracked on a termly basis. Moderation in school and at Deanery and Diocesan level takes place regularly to ensure consistency within assessments between teachers and schools.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to have a Catholic ethos, which provides the context and stimulus for the growth of each child, as an individual and as a member of the school and wider community. Our teaching and beliefs show the children that all people are of equal importance in the sight of God.

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Inclusion

Inherent in our RE policy is the importance of the contribution made by each child and member of the staff towards a happy and caring environment in the school, by showing respect for and appreciation of each person as an individual, regardless of colour, culture, origin, sex, or ability. We aim for all children to have equal access to the RE curriculum, so that they are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and develop their full potential in recognition that we are all children of God.

Induction of New Colleagues

New members of staff meet with the RE subject leader to find out about the school's approach to RE as part of their induction programme. They are also sent on relevant training days run by the Diocese for example, INSET days for NQT's and CPDs for staff and governors.

RSE Policy

Our Catholic faith informs all our teaching and what we teach within the guidelines of the Catholic Church. 'Catholic faith has a distinctive understanding of the human person, of the relationships and of the nature of community' (Bishops Conference, 1994). RSE is seen as an important part of a child's development. Our programme is grounded within a moral and spiritual framework and follows both the CES and DFE guidance.

Common Good

At St Dominic's Catholic Primary School all pupils are encouraged to actively participate in the Catholic life of our school. The children show great enthusiasm for promoting our school Mission and are always keen to suggest ideas and organise activities that benefit other pupils and members of the local community that are in need.

Students are encouraged to be kind, caring and responsible citizens in school and are given opportunities to lead and take on leadership roles such as prayer monitors, class monitors, Our Doves and School Council representatives. Our Doves have a very important role to play in supporting the Headteacher and REC in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and assign support for various charities, locally, nationally and globally to engage, empathise and encourage the call to human flourishing. This autumn CAFOD's theme is very powerful within a global pandemic which emphasises "How do I keep my child safe, if we don't have water for handwashing".

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Appendices

1. Liturgical Colours
2. Traditional Prayers

Appendix 1

Liturgical Colours

Liturgies celebrated during the different seasons of the liturgical year have distinctive music and specific readings and rituals. All of these work together to reflect the spirit of the particular season. The colours of the vestments that the priest wears during the liturgy also help express the character of the mysteries being celebrated.

White - the colour of joy and victory is used for the season of Easter and Christmas. It is also used for the feasts of Our Lord, the feasts of Mary, the angels and the saints who are martyrs.

Gold – may also be used on solemn occasions Easter/Christmas.

Red – (the colour of blood) is used on days when we celebrate the Passion of Jesus on Passion Sunday and Good Friday.

It is also used for the birthday of the feast of the apostles and for the celebration of the martyrs.

Red – (the colour of fire) recalls the Holy Spirit and used at Pentecost and for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Green – seen everywhere in plants and trees, symbolises life and hope and is used during Ordinary Time.

Purple – helps us during Advent to remember that we are preparing for the coming of Christ. Lent, the season of penance and renewal, also uses the colour PURPLE.

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Appendix 2

Traditional Prayers

EYFS

Sign of the Cross
Morning and evening prayers
Grace before and after meals
Simple litanies of thanks and praise
Prayerful reflection on the day

Responses at Mass

And with your spirit
Peace be with you
Thanks be to God
Alleluia (greeting the Gospel)

KS1

All listed above, plus:
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be

Prayers at Mass

Lord, have mercy
Prayers of intercession

KS2

All listed above, plus:
I confess
Eternal rest
Act of contrition
The Rosary

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