St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School
Religious Education Policy

'The outcome of excellent Religious Education is 'religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.' (Religious Education Curriculum Directory (3 - 19) for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales 2012)

Rationale

At St. Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School we aim to provide an holistic education for all our pupils which seeks to form, as well as inform, our young people in preparation for adult life. We recognise the central role parents have in the religious education of their children and we aim to support them in this. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that "Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiving, respect, fidelity and disinterested service are the rule." (CCC 2223) Therefore, Religious Education is central to the life of our school and is an integral part of the school curriculum. We believe that RE should expose the child to the wider family of God, linking together the school, the parish and the home. All children regardless of academic or physical ability should know of God's love of humanity.

In promoting the love of Christ and love of our neighbour, we will endeavour to foster good interpersonal relationships between all members of the community. We reject all forms of prejudice and instead seek to include, strengthen and empower all serving the needs of all within our school community. (School Mission Statement)

Aims of Religious Education

The main aims of religious education are to assist parents in the Christian formation of our young Catholics, and to help pupils to recognise and appreciate the spiritual and religious dimensions of life.

In addition we aim:

- To help the pupils develop a personal relationship with Jesus, and to experience the Good News of the Gospel.
- To foster the pupils sense of mystery, wonder delight and joy and a sense of ritual.
- To offer a committed presentation of the Catholic Faith
- To enable the pupils to grow in their awareness of what it means to be a member of the Church and to grow as such.
- To invite the pupils to respond freely to the grace of the revealing God
- To encourage our pupils to reflect on their lives and on society in the light of the Gospel.
- To support the parents and parish in creating a Christian community built on the experience of prayer and liturgy.

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- To lead the pupils to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic tradition and the ways in which it seeks to express the significance of human life.
- To enable our pupils to move from an inherited faith to a personal faith.
- To develop in our pupils a sense of social justice.
- To consider moral issues, so helping pupils to form a sense of conscience in the light of the Church's teaching.
- To lead pupils to an awareness and respect of other religious traditions and cultures.

Planning for Religious Education

At St. Thomas Becket School, we support parents as the first educators of their children. We aim that through our planned Religious Education curriculum as well as through opportunities across the whole curriculum we can help the children to develop spiritually, emotionally and socially and so support parents in this important mission. We keep parents up to date with the foci of learning through termly RE newsletters. Teachers plan lessons from 'Come and See' and refer to the Age Related Descriptors and End of Year Progress Descriptors.

Planning should contain these elements:

- Our Religious Education programme: 'Come and See'
- The Church's Liturgical Year
- Prayer and Worship
- Relationships and Sex Education through Ten:Ten

Come and See

At St. Thomas Becket School our Religious Education programme is based on the expectations of Religious Education given in the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM DIRECTORY FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS. The Come and See programme facilitates this. Staff aim to be creative in developing and teaching the content through drama, art, music, and role play as well as making appropriate use of ICT.

10% of curriculum time is devoted to Religious Education.

Three topics per term are covered, each lasting four weeks. The overall themes are as follow:
Autumn Term

- Domestic church
- Baptism/confirmation
- Advent/Christmas

Spring Term

- Local church

- Eucharist
- Lent/Easter

Summer Term

- Pentecost
- Reconciliation
- Universal Church

Within each Come and See topic there is the following format:

Explore:

The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on the experience within their own livesconcerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way, the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of significance and value of the experiential events of everyday life.

Reveal:

Reveal is the heart of the process. The teacher and the children together discover the Christian understanding of the mystery of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explore the mystery of human life as revealed in the person, life and gospel of Jesus Christ. It will involve learning about Scripture, the teaching of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian faith and the lives of outstanding Christians.

Respond:

Remember is the first part of this section. The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. Rejoice is the second part of the section. There will be the opportunity to plan and take part in a celebration. Renew is the final aspect. The teacher helps each child to make an individual response and hold on to and make their own what they have understood of the topic.

The Church's Year

Although the Come and See programme takes into account the main festivals of the Church's Year, it is important that specific mention of these feasts is made so that the children become familiar with the structure of the Liturgical year.

Autumn Term:

Harvest, Holy Rosary, All Saints, Holy Souls, The Feast of Christ the King, Advent, Christmas.

Spring Term:

Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Easter. Summer Term: Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity, Corpus Christi, St. Peter and Paul, Our Lady.

Other Faiths

At St. Thomas Becket, we aim to develop the children's knowledge of other faiths and respect for people whose faiths' are different to our own. The other faiths we cover as part of our RE curriculum are Judaism and Islam.

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Assessment

Assessment is based on the content of Come and See and is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes developed through the exploration of themes. Assessment establishes what the pupils know, understand and can do. Children are assessed on their Knowledge and Understanding, which refers to their learning *about* religion, and on Engagement and Response which refers to their learning *from* religion. Children have input into discussing their learning at the end of each topic. Assessment is ongoing, using age related descriptors for each year group. Each term there is a dedicated staff meeting to moderate the children's work and a folder is kept of the moderated pieces to ensure consistency of judgement. Assessment is formally carried out in the Spring and Summer Term, and is assessed against the criteria given by the diocese.

Links with Home, School and Parish

In Year Three the children receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist. During this year the parents are invited to attend a programme of meetings at the parish church, to support them in their responsibility for the faith development of their child. The school choir sings at the Year 3 Communion masses as a sign of the partnership between the home, school and parish. All junior classes attend regular Wednesday morning mass at the church at least once a year and our Christmas Carol Concert and Passion play also take place at Our Lady's Parish church to involve the wider parish community. At the beginning of each term all parents receive an R.E. Newsletter. This informs them of the topics to be covered and gives suggestions of things parents might do at home to support the teaching within school. Parents can find out about their child's progress in Religious Education at the three parents evenings that take place over the course of the school year. The religious and spiritual progress of each child is included in their school report at the end of each academic year. The clergy play an important role within our school community. Our parish priest comes into school on a regular basis as a celebrant for our whole school, key stage and class masses. He also has a programme of visits every Monday where he regularly talks to individual classes about the R.E. topic being studied at the time. This is also an opportunity to consider the 'big' questions.

Spiritual Development

Opportunities to support the spiritual development of our pupils permeate the whole curriculum. The children are given opportunities in every area of the curriculum to question, think, reflect and wonder. Anything that will put children in touch with their imagination and with awe and wonder will encourage spiritual growth. This can be developed through story, which can comfort, challenge and affirm our beliefs, and through Scripture which develops a child's personal relationship with God. A sense of awe and wonder is developed through encouraging the children to take pride in themselves and others and appreciating that we are all creations of God made in his image and likeness. The children are encouraged to have an enquiring mind, become independent thinkers and learners and to think about others ahead of themselves.

Moral Development

Children in our school are encouraged to reflect on their actions and the actions of others. Through the Religious Education programme and across the curriculum in areas such as PHSE and RSE, the children can find moral values and moral dilemmas which can develop their growing awareness of moral questions and moral choices. The formation of moral conscience involves teaching children to understand the difference between good and evil, right and wrong, which contribute to the children's moral development. They are taught to appreciate God's gifts in themselves, in others and

in creation. They will begin to understand how people can strengthen or damage their relationships with one another through the choices they make.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- ➢ Co-ordinator for Religious Education to monitor plans
- ➢ Co-ordinator/SLT to observe teaching in line with school policy on class observations
- ➢ 'Book Look' allows a close scrutiny of work and marking to be carried out on samples of RE books and portfolios from every class. Individual feedback is given to staff
- ➢ RE Link Governor to be kept informed of progress
- ➢ Class teachers to keep an RE portfolio to capture examples of good practice which may not be captured in books across the year. They also form an integral part of RE assessment.
- ➢ Focal areas (prayer tables) are monitored by the RE co-ordinator. Photographs are kept as a record. These are occasionally copied and given to staff in order for them to carry out a selfevaluation of their display, or samples shared with whole staff as an example of good practice.

Moderation

Each term a staff meeting is dedicated to the moderation of RE samples of work. Teachers work across year groups and key phases to moderate the work. The RE co-ordinator collects work samples that have been judged against the age related descriptors to form a portfolio of work which is evidence of continuity and progression in RE across the school and ensures greater reliability of teacher assessment.

Relationship and Sex Education -See separate RSE policy

At St. Thomas Becket School the RSE programme we follow is called 'Life to the Full'. Endorsed by the
Diocese of Southwark, it is a web based programme for Relationships, Sex and Health education for Catholic primary schools and fulfils the statutory curriculum for RSE. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school. The programme includes teaching about personal health, physical and emotional well-being, strong emotions, private parts of the body, personal relationships, family structures, trusted adults, growing bodies, puberty, periods, life cycles, the dangers of social media, where babies come from, understanding the common good and living in the wider world.

Every lesson is grounded in Catholic faith and values-linking these to a wide range of practical life situations. (School Policies linked to the teaching of Religious Education at St. Thomas Becket include Collective Worship Policy; RSE; PHSE; Teaching and Learning; Marking; SEND)

RE WEEK

Prayer and Worship – See Prayer and worship policy

Linked policies: Prayer & Worship, SRE