



## **Blessed Robert Widmerpool Catholic Voluntary Academy**

*We walk kindly in the footsteps as we live and learn.*

### **RE Policy**

*"Faith can move mountains"*

*Matthew 17: 20*

The principles underpinning the spiritual development of our children are based on the gospel values of justice, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation. Children learn to appreciate the love of God in their everyday lives and in the world about them.

The life of the school is underpinned by the school's Mission Statement, which is displayed in every room in the school building and on display in the hall as part of a whole school piece of artwork. All school policies begin with carefully chosen Scripture extracts to ensure school life is driven and shaped by these values and the Catholic ethos.

The mission statement is:

*We walk kindly in the footsteps of Jesus Christ as we live and learn.*

### **Aims**

To develop children's:

- Knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life
- Knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose
- Skills to enable them to examine, question and reflect upon religious beliefs and practice.
- Ability to relate knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other areas of the curriculum
- Spirituality and personal relationship with God through a rich experience of liturgy
- Awareness of other cultures and beliefs, in order to respect and understand them
- Develop positive attitudes: eg, respect for truth, respect for the views of others; awareness of the spiritual, of moral responsibility, of the demands of a religious commitment in everyday life and especially the challenge of living in a multicultural, multi-faith society.

### **Learning and Teaching**

The school's curriculum exists as all the planned activities organised to enable learning and personal growth and development. It incorporates the range of extra-curricular activities which enriches the experience of the children and the 'hidden curriculum'-what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. Alongside this, stimulating, interesting visits and visitors are planned termly to complement the learning experience and bring learning to life in an exciting way.

Curriculum Religious Education has as its outcome:

*“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”*

Bishops Conference of England and Wales

Religious Education is at the heart of the school’s curriculum. The broad areas it covers are God’s self-revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ. It is accorded the same status and taught with the same rigour as the core subjects of the National Curriculum.

Religious Education is developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. In line with Bishops’ Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship.

The content of the RE Curriculum derives from the Come and See Programme, the church’s liturgical year, local, national and international events and children’s personal interests.

A thematic, knowledge, skills and experience- based approach to learning enables children to make connections and link ideas and areas of learning.

Expectations are extremely high. Children are encouraged to develop as resilient, reflective, resourceful learners who have strong, positive relationships with others.

The curriculum provision ensures access and opportunity for all children. Where necessary the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of individual children. Teaching assistants and other adult helpers are deployed effectively. They work with individual children or with small groups and also assist with the preparation of resources.

Provision maps in all classes, set out the nature of any special need or additional intervention and outlines how appropriate support is provided.

The children experience Religious Education through:

- Participation in a variety of liturgies
- Sacramental preparation
- Experience of prayer
- Service to the Wider Community
- Curriculum Religious Education

RE, in all forms, is celebrated on the school blog at [www.brwacademy.com](http://www.brwacademy.com) and on the school’s Twitter account @BRWSchool. Staff and children post blogs to share news, events and celebrations with each other, parents and the wider community.

The BRW School Radio promotes the school’s Word of The Week and the Catholic ethos of the school. The Year 6 Digital Leaders broadcast weekly shows including ‘Mission Mondays’ where the Word of the Week is discussed, alongside key messages, foci and events in the School RE calendar.

The Word of the Week is also displayed in the hall and in classrooms. It forms part of the Monday morning assembly for the children to focus on and live out during the week.

The school is committed to working alongside Chaplains from the secondary Catholic feeder school to enhance the teaching and learning across the school. The Chaplains work with children and staff from FS1 to Year 6 in a wide variety of ways which include: helping to plan the teaching and learning of Come and See topics; plan, prepare and help the children lead liturgies, assist Faith Ambassadors in evaluating prayer areas in the classrooms; assist class teachers and children in preparing Masses, supporting Class Teachers in developing subject knowledge and supporting the children to celebrate events and inform the wider community about related events on the school blog.

## **Planning**

The Curriculum Directory for Catholic schools is used to guide and inform the teaching of Religious Education. It guides the structure of the Come and See programme, used for planning and informs the process of each topic, opened up through; Explore, Reveal and Respond.

A variety of learning and teaching strategies are used across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

Planning increasingly reflects a commitment to taking learning outside and provides high quality outdoor learning opportunities. When and where possible, RE is linked to Forest School opportunities (e.g. Liturgies and learning in the Forest and outdoors) as it brings learning to life. This is an approach adopted by the school which is incorporated seasonally in each year group.

## **Assessment**

Religious Education is assessed in accordance with the newly revised Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools and Colleges approved by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Children are encouraged to evaluate their own progress at the end of each unit of work using newly edited versions of 'I Can Statements' in line with the new revised assessment expectations. Alongside this, children record their new knowledge, ideas, thoughts and further wonders in Topic Evaluation Booklets where thoughts, ideas and answers to the 'Big Question' for each topic are recorded. They also provide children with an opportunity to discuss and decide how to put their faith into action following their new learning. Year group targets are recorded in this booklet and displayed in classrooms. These are separated into three main themes: AT1 (learning about religion, 'the head,'); AT2 (learning from religion, 'the heart,'); and AT3 (the thought bubble; wonderment, further questions, opportunities to ponder). Topic Booklets are consistently reviewed and adapted by staff to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Termly assessment takes place using the Assessment Task set by the Diocese as a guide which is recorded in RE Assessment books. These are assessed by the class teacher and moderated termly with the whole school team and the SLT. Assessment books remain with the children throughout their time in school. Moderation within the Academy of schools takes place annually with representation from the diocese for further moderation. A member of staff also attends Diocesan moderation events to support, strengthen and verify assessments at a wider Diocesan level. Records of the work moderation and discussion notes are kept and filed.

Termly summative data is collected and recorded on the online assessment system Otrack, which has been newly adopted this term as part of the Our Lady of Lourdes Academy Trust.

WTS: *"I am beginning to understand."*

EXS: *"I am gaining in confidence and I am developing my understanding further. My new knowledge and understanding is growing"*

GDS: *"I feel confident in this. I understand this well." am gaining in confidence and I am developing my understanding."*

Expected progress is three codes progress per academic year. Data analysis occurs termly where a variety of groups are analysed and discussed at termly Pupil Progress Meetings.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching and learning is the responsibility of the School Leadership Team, supported by the RE Co-ordinator. The role of the RE Co-ordinator involves supporting colleagues, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The Co-ordinator informs the wider Leadership Team of an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

The RE Co-ordinator has specially-allocated, regular management time in order to review evidence of the children's work, update development plans and work alongside teachers to support and evaluate learning and teaching across the school.

Book Looks are carried out on a termly basis and more frequently with new members of staff. This is to provide support and guidance to new members of staff through the method of coaching. All members of staff and the Governing Body are invited to be part of this process. This enables judgements to be made both about standards and children's ability to access and relate learning to everyday life.

Children, staff, parents, Governors and wider community members are also asked to complete questionnaires and feedback forms regularly regarding various elements of RE in the school. The outcomes of these are analysed and used to drive standards in RE forward.

Lesson observations of religious education teaching across the school are made by members of the Senior Leadership Team.

Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year. Religious Education is always the first subject to feature in the Report Booklets. News about school life and related events are communicated regularly through parental newsletters.

Staff training ensures this process of monitoring and review is effective, therefore maintaining high standards in learning and teaching. A CPD plan in line with the School Improvement Plan is put into place annually according to the school, staff and children's needs.

## **Encounter, Discipleship and Missionary Discipleship**

As outlined in the Bishops letter in November 2018, a spiritual foundation for the school put firmly in place from this date and beyond is three-fold: ENCOUNTER, DISCIPLESHIP and MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP.

- ENCOUNTER: The school aims to endeavour to allow people of all ages in our parishes and schools to discover, or discover more deeply, the importance of a personal ENCOUNTER with Christ; so that they can become convinced that they are each loved by God and are invited to grow in their relationship with him. In order to achieve this vision, opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration have been developed alongside our comprehensive liturgical calendar. Opportunities are also sought and utilised to weave this in naturally into the teachings of the Come and See programme. All Assessment Booklet and classroom and school displays feature this three-fold vision.
- DISCIPLESHIP: Due to the personal encounter with Christ, the school community is encouraged to hear and respond to His invitation to be DISCIPLES, to follow Him more closely, and to seek to serve Him generously in our daily lives. This is achieved by emphasising the opportunity for discipleship within the Come and See programme and in everyday life in all we see, do, act, feel, hear and say.
- MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP: The school encourages faith-filled, joyful and outward-looking Christians who are growing in confidence to speak humbly of the difference that knowing Christ makes to our lives, and who bear witness to His love in our service of our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. Opportunities to 'put our faith into action' are provided frequently during the school year in line with the school's fundraising calendar along with other opportunities which may naturally arise.

The themes of 'Encounter' will be explored during Advent and Christmas, 'Discipleship' during Lent, and 'Missionary Discipleship' from Easter to Pentecost. These themes are woven meaningfully into Come and See curriculum topics, liturgies, school events and Catholic Life of the school.

## **The God Who Speaks**

"We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life." 1 John 1:1

During the year, we celebrate opportunities to speak to God and develop our relationship with Him. The Bible shows us how to understand the world, how we are called to live and relate to each other; it is truly God's words to us.

## **World Faiths**

The school recognises that children live in a multi-cultural, multi-faith society. In this context children are introduced to the background and beliefs of people of other faiths so that prejudice and misunderstanding can be overcome and children learn to appreciate that many people hold religious convictions and beliefs that are different to their own.

Links are made with the experience of other faiths. When the Christian understanding of a topic has been explored, the experience of another major world faith tradition is considered as and when it is

appropriate. One week within the Autumn term each year is dedicated to the teaching of Judaism. This occurs after the second Come and See topic. A further week is dedicated to the teaching of another religion in the summer term, namely, Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism.

## **Liturgy**

Prayer is central to school life and as a community worship takes a variety of forms.

Children have the opportunity to both participate in and lead liturgies. The Year 6 Liturgy Team prepare and lead KS2 Liturgy. The Year 2 Liturgy Team prepare and lead FS/KS1 Liturgy. Each class from FS to Y6 holds regular Liturgies led by the children. Faith Ambassadors and Liturgy Leaders can visit neighbouring class liturgies termly to broaden their experience of prayer and assist with the celebration and growth aspect of evaluation.

All children from Years 1-6 illustrate and record their own personal prayers and thoughts in individual, personal Prayer Journals. The children are free to access these as and when they wish.

Prayer areas in all classrooms provide a focus for daily class worship. Children are encouraged to pray spontaneously and also learn the traditional prayers of the Church. Each class has nominated Faith Ambassadors who serve to look after and monitor class display and prayer areas and assist with class liturgies. The KS1 and KS2 Liturgy Teams play a large role in providing training for class Faith Ambassadors and do so on a termly basis.

In addition to whole school assemblies, the main events of the Liturgical year are celebrated by the whole school through Mass, music, drama, dance and prayerful reflection. Parents and family members are always welcomed and encouraged to join in the celebration of these liturgies.

Liturgical celebrations include:

### **Mass**

- Whole school Masses which takes place frequently in the school hall and at key events in the school year and on Holy Days of Obligation (see Mass calendar)
- Mass in church as appropriate (Holy Days of Obligation are mostly celebrated in Church)
- Joint Class Masses linked to topics from Come and see

### **Celebrations**

- Services of Reconciliation
- Whole School Assemblies
- Key Stage Assemblies
- Class Assemblies
- Nativity Celebrations
- Advent Celebration
- Holy Week Celebrations
- The Harvest Festival
- The Academy Concert/Festival

## **Sacramental Preparation**

The sacramental programme for preparation for Reconciliation and Holy Communion is parish based, but is very well supported by the school, who plan and prepare the First Holy Communion Mass both in Church and in school. There are strong links between the Parish and school.

The preparation is linked with the relevant topics of Come and See. Liturgical celebrations take place both in church and in school.

## **Prayer**

Children start and end each day with prayer and Grace is said before lunch. Children are encouraged to say their own Grace after meals.

By the end of Foundation Stage children will have been introduced to:

- Sign of the cross
- Morning prayer
- Evening prayer
- Prayers before meals
- Simple responses at Mass
- Simple litanies of thanks and prayers
- Prayers for blessing of the Advent wreath
- Prayers for lighting of the Advent candle

By the end of Key Stage 1 children will have been introduced to those listed above plus:

- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory be to the Father
- Morning offering
- Simple Magnificat
- Act of Sorrow
- Mass responses
- Prayers at Baptism

By the end of Key Stage 2 children will have been introduced to the following in addition to the ones presented at Key Stage 1:

- I confess to you
- Eternal rest
- Act of Contrition
- The Rosary
- Stations of the Cross
- Prayers at Mass
- Litany of the Saints
- Prayers for sacramental rites

- Blessing, Receiving and Distribution of ashes
- Saints prayers

Children are given opportunities to reflect and compose their own prayers and to pray spontaneously.

### **Faith In Action**

The school supports and provides an opportunity for the Year 6 Liturgy Team to complete the Pin Level of the Faith In Action Award. The children attend after-school sessions as well as sessions which are held through the day and are encouraged to take a lead role in achieving the requirements of this award. Each child completes a personal Faith Journal. The completion for the award is celebrated with a dedicated ceremony in the Summer Term where the children are presented with their Journals after they have been assessed and a gold badge complete with a certificate.

### **Parish-School Links**

The school ensures it has strong Parish links with Corpus Christi Parish. These are strengthened by:

- Celebrating Mass in Church on Holy Days of Obligation
- Welcoming and inviting Parishioners to School Masses
- Hosting and supporting Parish clubs and events on the school premises
- Supporting Sacramental Preparation wherever possible
- Preparing and leading parts of weekend Masses at least once a month
- Organising children to speak at weekend Masses as and when appropriate
- Having a dedicated page on the school blog for Parish links (posting the Parish newsletter weekly)
- Displaying the weekly Parish newsletter in KS2 classrooms
- Fundraising for church related events and themes as and when appropriate
- Welcoming and inviting Father Wilfred in frequently to talk to the children
- Visiting the Church in addition to Mass times to support teaching and learning
- Inviting Parishioners in to read with the children

### **Resources**

The reference library is well resourced with a range of books which support children's work about Christianity and other world faiths and which introduce children to a variety of sensitive issues

A range of resources to use in Liturgy, reference materials, boxes of artefacts for all major faiths support the teachers planning for curriculum RE and a range of liturgies.

The RE Co-ordinator takes responsibility for regular review of resources so that priorities can be identified.

### **Serving the Wider Community**

The school works in partnership with the local, parish and wider community. Faith is put into practice through charitable works and loving service towards others. Children are encouraged to see,



seek and Encounter Christ in others. They experience Catholic values and practice being lived out in the way they come together in the school community.

Throughout the school year the children are made aware of their responsibility to care for one another (discipleship) and to be actively involved in helping others (mission discipleship).

The following charities are supported annually with others as opportunities arise throughout the year:

- Building Hope in Bunkpurugu (School completed – further fundraising to occur for more resources)
- Cafod
- Emmanuel House
- Clifton Food Bank
- Youth Fun Day
- Save The Children
- Shoe Box Appeal
- Royal British Legion

### **Equal opportunities**

All children are provided with opportunities to learn in a creative and encouraging learning environment which embraces a range of teaching styles. This approach motivates and supports children to reach their potential irrespective of race, gender, religious beliefs, age or ability reflecting the example of Jesus Christ at the heart of the Gospels.

A range of approaches and resources provide appropriate Religious Education for children with a range of different needs.

### **Home School Links**

Parents, or those who act in their place, are the primary educators of their children; consequently links between the home, the school, and the parish are especially significant. Strong, positive and frequent communication is fostered so that all relationships in the school community and beyond are based on mutual respect and honesty.

Lenten and Advent Travelling packs with resources and Liturgy ideas are sent home with all children throughout Lent and Advent. The Foundation Stage pupils have the opportunity to take home a Prayer Bear from the Summer Term and are encouraged to pray at home with their families.

Parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to become effective learners. In order to develop a real partnership between home and school parents are welcome in school and provided with information to help them support their child in developing as resilient, resourceful and reflective learners.