

**ST CECILIA'S CATHOLIC INFANT  
AND  
NURSERY SCHOOL**



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
HANDBOOK**

**SUMMER**

**2019**

## **1 The Mission statement**

It is the responsibility of all who teach in a Catholic School to help the children in their initial stages of the search for some kind of meaning to life. Our Mission Statement is at the heart of all that we do in school and we hope provides an excellent foundation for our children's future lives.

### **Mission Statement**

*St Cecilia's Catholic Infant and Nursery School strives to be a family community, inspired by the teachings of Christ where each individual is valued, nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential.*

*Living together, Loving together, Learning together*

### **Aims**

We aim to create a welcoming environment and foster a meaningful Catholic ethos, which involves the home and parish community in the life of the school.

We aim to provide a child centred, broad based curriculum, which enables children to fully develop their talents, gifts and skills.

We aim to nurture confidence and self esteem.

We aim to inspire curiosity and encourage empathy for the global family community.

We will achieve our aims by

- Delivery of the 'Come and See' religious education programme.
- All adults presenting as good role models showing respect to each other.
- Providing opportunities to celebrate God's presence through prayer and reflection.
- Use of positive praise, encouragement and school rewards to celebrate success.
- Encouraging parents and the local community to work in partnership through assemblies and celebrations.
- Participating in projects such as CAFOD and Nugent Care, which promote understanding and empathy for the wider world.

*Love One Another as I have Loved You*

## 2 The Aims of Religious Education

*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 for Catholic Schools, 2012

In the life and faith of the Catholic school, religious education plays a central and vital part. At the heart of catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school.

We are committed to classroom religious education because all pupils have the right to receive an overall religious education, which will enable them to engage with the deepest questions of meaning and life ... *finding reasons for the hope that is within them.* (1 Peter 3:15)

Religious education is the core subject, which is central to the life of the Catholic school. It is the systematic study of the mystery of God, as discovered through the Bible and particularly through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. It examines the teachings of the church and the lives of the saints and explores the relationship between faith and life.

The Joint Pastoral Letter on Catholic Education (Bishops' Conference 2007) reminds us that 'classroom religious education in a Catholic school is primarily educational' and states that excellence in religious education is achieved by

- clarity of succinct religious learning objectives
- key content
- by appropriate methodologies
- rigour
- richness of resources
- achievement of identified outcomes
- accurate methods of assessment

At St Cecilia's Catholic Infant School Religious education is taught discretely and developmentally. Further opportunities are planned for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross-curricular lessons allowing them to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively. Religious education allows children to engage with their own and others' beliefs and values helping them to develop good attitudes and dispositions, instilling them with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning.

At St Cecilia's Catholic Infant School we aim:

- To respect the child's innate capacity for wonder, awe, reverence and imagination and to enable them to think critically about questions of meaning and purpose.
- To support our children in taking their first steps on their faith journey.
- To increase the children's knowledge of and deep love for God enabling them to be His joyful witnesses in the world.
- To teach the Catholic faith and to foster commitment to that faith.
- To encourage in the children a loving and caring attitude toward family, friends, classmates, teachers and all with whom they come in contact.
- To celebrate through worship and liturgy in a way appropriate to their age.

To achieve our aims we have a religious education programme which takes into account the religious and educational needs of all our children in our school. Religious education is for all and is a collaborative activity.

### **3 Objectives of Religious Education**

The objective of religious education is to include analysis and reflection, critical appreciation and sources and examples, and a real sense of progression through the different stages of education.

The objectives of religious education in St Cecilia's are to:

- Give a systematic presentation of the Christian event, message and way of life in a variety of ways appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
- Provide opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection.
- Provide children with the language of religious experience – literacy in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, people and objects.
- Provide children with the opportunity to listen and think critically – to acquire knowledge and make informed judgements.
- Foster appropriate attitudes, respect for truth, and respect for the views of others by introducing children to the background of beliefs of people of other faiths so that in our multi-faith society prejudice and misunderstanding can be overcome at an early age.
- Meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in RE at Key Stage One.

At St Cecilia's we believe that the unequivocal support of the management is necessary to achieve these aims and objectives. We allow 10% of the taught week in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One for religious education.

## 4 The Religious Education Programme

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use the *Come and See* programme recommended by the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

### Overview of Content

*Come and See* is developed through three themes based on the documents of the Second Vatican Council. These themes are gradually explored each time at greater depth. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian living.

The basic question or belief for each season time is explored through three kinds of themes.

Community of faith <--> Church

Celebration in ritual <--> Sacraments

Way of life <--> Christian Living

### Church

The **Church** themes occur in each season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme.

#### Autumn – My story – my family – Domestic Church

To start the year *Come and See* begins with my story: within a **family**. The Church honours the family with the title Domestic Church because it is here that parents ‘by their word and example are the first (teachers) heralds of faith with regard to their children.’

#### Spring – Our Story - local community – Local Church

After Christmas the children explore the theme of local Church, which is our story. The **parish** is where people gather together to celebrate and practise care and love for each other. The **diocese** is the community of the Christian faithful.

#### Summer – The story – the worldwide community – Universal Church

The year finishes with the story of the **worldwide** community; the universal Church. ‘In the Church, God is calling together his people throughout the world.’ ‘The order and harmony of the created world result from the diversity of beings and from the relationships that exist among them.’

## **Sacrament**

The **sacramental** themes occur once in every season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous one.

**Autumn** – Belonging - born into Christ's life

Following on from an understanding of belonging to a family the theme of **Baptism** introduces the understanding of being initiated into belonging to the Christian Church during Key Stage 1.

**Spring** – Relating – God's love in our lives – **Eucharist**

In the spring time after learning about the local Church community, the Sacrament of the **Eucharist** is explored. This is the sacrament of communion with Christ and the Church. This sacrament is at the heart of **Come and See** since it is at the heart of Christ nourishing his people.

**Summer** – Inter-relating – service to the community – **Reconciliation**

The sacrament of **Reconciliation** forms part of the work of the summer time when there is the opportunity to learn about the joy and challenge of relationships and God's love and mercy celebrated in this sacrament.

## **Christian Living**

The **Christian Living** themes occur in each season time and each theme gradually builds on the understanding of the previous theme.

**Autumn** – loving – celebrating life – **Advent Christmas**

The **Advent – Christmas** theme considers the gift of God's love in Jesus. Christmas and our preparations celebrate the wonderful gift of Jesus and offer the witness of loving as a way of life. 'The Word became flesh so that we might know God's love'.

**Spring** – giving – the cost of life

In the spring season **Lent** and **Easter** are explored. Jesus' love for humankind knows no limit. Jesus offered his life and gave an example of giving as a way of life. 'Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the feast of feasts. 'The Resurrection ...remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something which transcends and surpasses history.'

**Summer** – serving in love – feasts to celebrate – **Pentecost**

The study of the Ascension and Pentecost completes the Easter story and shows how the gift of the Holy Spirit strengthens the community and enables Christians to give witness to a life of joyful service. 'In this age of the Church, Christ now lives and acts in and with his Church, in a new way appropriate to this new age.'

Each theme is explored through different topics in each age group.

## **The themes of each season**

### **Autumn**

The three autumn time themes are developed in the light of an understanding of Creation.

- Family <-> Domestic Church focuses on life as a gift, myself as a unique and loved creation, the creative love and care that can be expressed in family groups.
- Belonging <-> Baptism/Confirmation focuses on the call to belong, the creative potential that belonging develops; and Baptism and Confirmation, sacraments of the gifts of God's love and friendship.
- Loving <-> Advent / Christmas focuses on the capacity for entering into loving relationships and the perfect gift and revelation of God's love, Jesus, born of Mary, born as one of us.

### **Spring**

The three spring time themes are developed in the light of an understanding of Incarnation.

- Community <-> Local Church focuses on the people of God gathered in Christ, united in the journey of faith, in care for one another, in sharing their story and in celebration.
- Relating <-> Eucharist focuses on the invitation to know Jesus, to live in communion with him and with one another.
- Giving <-> Lent/Easter focuses on Jesus' loving self-giving on the cross, the Father's love that raises him to new life and the challenge to Christians to follow Jesus' example of self-giving.

### **Summer**

The three summer themes are developed in the light of an understanding of Redemption and the Holy Spirit.

- Serving <-> Pentecost focuses on the on-going mission of Jesus Christ in the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Inter - Relating <-> Reconciliation focuses on the love, compassion and forgiveness of God the Father revealed in Jesus and poured out by the Holy Spirit to bring forgiveness and reconciliation in the sacrament of Reconciliation.
- World <-> Universal Church focuses on the same love revealed in the diversity of the world and its people, and in the gifts of the Spirit that bear fruit in love, joy, justice and peace for all people.

## **The process**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses the human **search** for meaning, God's initiative in Revelation and our **response** of faith. This pattern guides the structure of the programme and informs the process of each topic, opened up through **Explore**, **Reveal** and **Respond**. This systematic structure enables children to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

### **Search – Explore**

This is the introduction to the topic where the children's life experience is explored, the questions it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon. The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on their experience within their own lives – concerning themselves, their relationships and their world. In this way the children are led to a deeper understanding, clearer vision and the discovery of the significance and value of the experiential events of everyday life.

**Explore** will take one week of Religious Education time to complete.

### **Revelation – Reveal**

This is the heart of the programme where knowledge and understanding of the catholic faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living. 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.

**Reveal** will take two weeks of Religious Education time to complete.

### **Response - Respond**

This is where the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life. **Remember** is the first part of this section. The children will respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. This new understanding will enable them to make a personal response in their daily lives. This part begins by reflecting on what the children wonder about. This is followed by the opportunity for the children to remember what they have understood and learnt. **Rejoice** is the second part of the section. There will be the opportunity to plan and take part in a celebration. It will be essential to involve the children in the choice of material to be used in the celebration. **Renew** is the final part of the section. The teacher helps each child to make an individual response to what they have understood about the topic and to hold on to it and make it their own. In this part the children will think about how they can apply learning to their lives.

At this point the teacher will undertake an evaluation, which will inform future teaching and learning and include assessment for learning.

**Respond** will take one week of Religious Education time to complete. The process encompasses a variety of teaching and learning styles, which enable the needs of individual pupils to be met.



## 5 The Approach Chosen

### Foundation Stage Approach

The Foundation Stage describes the phase of a child's education from the age of 3 to the end of reception at the age of 5 or age 3 to 7 in Wales. In the foundation phase religious education drives the whole curriculum. Through engaging, practical, integrated activities, children can learn more about themselves, other people and the world around them and develop their religious knowledge, skills and understanding. Religious Education makes an active contribution to the areas of learning outlined in the curriculum for the foundation phase but has a particular and important contribution to:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Literacy
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Throughout the programme for Nursery and Reception the process is divided as follows

- **Whole class core input** (teacher led)
- **Adult directed group activities** (teacher or assistants work with groups of children) and
- **Continuous provision** (child centred learning across the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage)

**For years 1 and 2 there will be a choice of two formats, Foundation Stage or as below for years 1 to 2.**

**The structures** within both **Explore and Reveal** comprises of the following sections:

1. **Learning focus:** the overall focus of the session.
2. **Content:** some suggestions or input to develop the focus.
3. **Some key questions:** these are suggested questions that will encourage the children to wonder and reflect on what they have heard or seen; other questions may also arise.
4. **Some suggested activities:** the third section offers some activities. It is not an exhaustive list nor is it to be supposed that children will complete them all; they are simply guidelines. Wherever possible they are differentiated but will of course need to be adapted to the ability and interests of the children. There are some links for special needs children using symbol-supported text.

The **Respond** structure is the same for Foundation Stage as well as for Key Stages 1 and 2. This is the opportunity for children to respond to what they know and understand by three means.

1. **Remember:** here the children will be prompted by a variety of means to demonstrate what they wonder about (AT2) and what they remember (AT1).
2. **Rejoice:** is the opportunity to celebrate the children's new knowledge and understanding of the topic. The children will contribute to the celebration by recalling and suggesting readings, songs and prayers which have been significant.
3. **Renew:** this is where the children can make an individual response to what they have learnt and experienced and consider how they might apply it in their daily lives.

See **appendix A** for an overview of the themes and topics addressed each term by each year group.

## **Planning**

The Bishops' requirement of 10% of the taught time for Religious Education is indicated clearly on the classroom timetables. This time does not include collective worship, hymn practice or assemblies.

### **Long- term planning**

The senior management is responsible for choosing an approach, ensuring that 10% of curriculum time is allocated to teaching of Religious Education and monitoring timetables to ensure quality time for Religious Education.

The themes and topics framework of ***Come and See*** sets out the programme for the year.

In classes where there are mixed age groups the teacher needs to work out in collaboration with other teachers and the support of the Religious Education subject leader, which topic will be explored in a particular class or a particular year group to ensure differentiation and avoid duplication. Within all classes, teachers will need to have regard for the attainment levels when developing activities for children of different age groups and abilities. It is important to track individual children's' experience of the topics to ensure full coverage and avoid duplication. The school leadership needs to monitor this to ensure the avoidance of repetition.

### **Medium term planning**

The Religious Education Coordinator is responsible for:

- Allocating the starting date for each Theme
- Allocating the appropriate amount of time for each part of the process
- Allocating time for the exploration of another Faith (Judaism) or Religion (Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism); if it is being covered this term
- Hi-lighting significant feast days, relevant celebrations and global dimension e.g. CAFOD family fast day
- Indicating which classes planning, teaching, assessment and books are to be monitored
- Indicating which formally assessed Theme will take place each term and then collating the assessment data and transferring it onto 'whole school' tracking

The overall responsibility for medium term planning lies with the religious education subject leader. It is essential for the understanding of the topic that teachers reflect on the **theme pages, Come and See for Yourself** at the start of the topic. These are the same regardless of age group because they all explore the theme, which underpins the topic. Ideally this reflection is best done as a whole staff, but if this is not possible they may also be done individually, in year groups or key stages.

The **overview**, which is the medium term plan, is to be found at the start of each topic. A copy of this is on the **Come and See** website so that teachers can adapt it to the needs of their class. Where there are teachers using the same overview it is good practice to discuss these together.

### **Short term planning**

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Selecting appropriate activities to ensure the achievement of the learning focuses and overall learning outcome
- Stating the days on which these activities are to take place
- Indicating groupings to show how the differing needs and abilities of children are to be met
- Planning time for formal assessments as necessary
- Evaluating their own teaching
- Hi-lighting the activities chosen for the formal assessed topic each term
- Following the school tracking procedures for information gathered during on-going assessment
- Completing the Record of Attainment sheet at the end of each term
- Passing on assessment data to the Religious Education Coordinator
- Passing on the Record of Attainment sheets to the next class teacher

Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher. The teachers use the planning model agreed by school in conjunction with the diocese annotating the planning sheets from the **Come and See** teachers' manual.

### **Differentiation**

As with all other areas of the curriculum the purpose of differentiation is to enable children to succeed in the set task or activity undertaken and to challenge them to take the next step in learning. Differentiation challenges children to be self-motivated and to take responsibility for their own learning, and enables them to recognise and celebrate their achievement.

Children learn in different ways, so as with other subjects, it is necessary to provide a range of learning activities using a variety of media.

In each topic there are attainment level indicators, attainment level summaries and symbols showing the possible activity levels required by the activity.

### **Additional learning needs and/or disabilities**

It is essential to take into account all children with a variety of additional learning needs and plan accordingly. Some ideas are found within the topics. The symbol \* indicates the Widgit symbol

supported text website which has a number of resources which are referred to in ***Come and See***. These resources may also be used with children who do not have special needs. There are ideas for using Widgit symbol supported text through web links.

The following approaches take into account a wide range of special needs.

- Providing opportunities to eat or taste, to look at, to smell, to touch, to listen to and to engage with (a multisensory approach)
- Providing a variety of materials, toys, food, interactive objects which engage children's curiosity and involves them in sharing and taking turns (motivational stimuli).
- Music – songs to sing, music to move to and especially songs with sign language and action songs. Music is often an effective way of marking the start and finish of a session and creating a sense of celebration or reflection/stillness.
- Sign language and text accompanied by symbols or illustration are essential tools to support understanding of the spoken and written word.
- Using a variety of media to animate a story and bring a theme to life; for example, objects named in the story or key to the theme or the use of puppet or role play.
- Reassurance and predictability are especially important. A familiar structure for each lesson builds confidence, and if a change is planned it is important to let children know. Some children may benefit from a visual schedule to guide them through the sequence of activities.

## **6 Assessment**

Assessment is focused by the overall aims and objectives of Religious Education. In ***Come and See*** it is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through learning about and learning from religion. Assessment establishes what children know, understand, and can do and how to progress. It offers support and motivation to the learner. It does not assess spirituality or the practice of faith. At the beginning of *Explore* and *Reveal* there is an indication of the Areas of Learning and the Attainment levels which are covered. At the end there is a summary of the levels for that topic. Assessment in ***Come and See*** emphasises a wide range of achievement.

In our school it involves:

### **Informal assessment**

In St Cecilia's informal assessments are made through ongoing observation of children engaged in classroom tasks and activities, and through the observation of contributions made to classroom displays. Teachers mark written work and give comments that are positive, encouraging and developmentally appropriate. Much is made of verbal feedback to the learner. Achievement is reviewed at the end of the task, activity, lesson or topic, and evaluation of planning helps to inform assessment.

## **Formal assessment**

Formal assessment is in line with the archdiocese recommendations and guidelines. Currently, we are in the process of implementing and embedding assessment of each child against the (draft) standard indicators for Religious Education. In the Foundation stage evidence to support assessment is found in floor books and Learning Journeys including for example photographic evidence. Links are made with Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Areas of Learning of the EYFS. In Key Stage 1 formal assessment is guided by the draft standard indicators on a three year cycle so that each theme is assessed formally once throughout the primary phases. Assessment tasks are identified by the Archdiocese to support teachers in their assessment and to provide consistency for moderation purposes.

Assessments are undertaken during **Remember**. An activity is undertaken that enables the child to show how they have met the Learning Outcome. Following moderation the outcomes are added to a class tracker and then marked against the standard indicators for the particular year group. Children are assessed to be 'working towards' 'expected' or 'above' for Religious Education. In each topic teachers use the standard indicators to ascertain what children can be expected to know and understand and can do. Regular informed judgements on a wide variety of evidence against broad criteria allow learners to respond at different levels.

While teachers will be making professional judgements about children's performance almost continuously tracking the children's progress against the standard indicators will lead to a cumulative judgement about attainment. Teachers will need to make a best-fit judgement of a child's attainment. This process of making judgements about learners' attainments will inform decisions about future planning. When gathering evidence teachers draw on the full range of work produced by pupils in the normal everyday teaching and learning process. They should focus on the clarity of evidence collected and make brief telling annotations in relation to significant attainments.

## **7 Recording**

At St Cecilia's evidence of achievement is provided through recording. Pupils are involved in self-assessment and progress in dialogue with the teacher. There is visual evidence in the form of displays and photographs of celebrations and class work. Evidence of recording can also be found in individual children's workbooks and year group portfolios as well as notes from observations in EYFS. Evidence of work is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child. Evidence of attainment is recorded on class tracking sheets in line with the whole school assessment system for core subjects.

## **8 Reporting**

At St Cecilia's children discuss their attainment with their class teacher. Knowledge of attainment is shared in the class setting and with the parallel class group, key stage or whole school as appropriate. Certificates and badges can be awarded for areas of attainment at the celebration assembly. Parents are advised by letter, in advance of topics to be covered asking for support with resource materials. Displays are built up with annotations of children's comments. Parents are invited to termly open evenings to discuss their child's progress. Teachers comment on achievement against the theme using the language of the (draft) standard indicators. As it is the

core subject in Catholic schools, RE appears as the first subject on the report. Throughout the year governors are made aware of the content and quality of Religious Education being provided and the achievement of the pupils.

## **9 Evaluation of Teaching**

Criteria and procedures for reviewing and evaluating the teaching of ***Come and See*** and the monitoring of teaching follow the guidelines given by the archdiocese. Teacher evaluation, which includes assessment for learning is ongoing and informs future teaching strategies. Teachers make comments on the planning sheets. Teachers are observed in the classroom situation. Displays are discussed with teachers and examples of good practice are used as exemplification. Children's work is also monitored. All teachers evaluate use of resources to support the topic and there is feedback by and to all staff.

## **10 Evaluation of Learning**

Children discuss and think about their work and that of others. They are encouraged to reflect on particular aspects of the topic, to assemble class displays of work and to focus on them independently as well as when directed by the teacher.

During the **Remember** section of the process children respond by remembering and celebrating all that they have learnt. They begin by reflecting on what they wonder about and go on to remember what they have understood and learnt.

During **Renew** the children are helped by the teacher to make an individual response and to hold on to and make their own, what they have understood of the topic. In this part the children will think about how they can apply their learning to their lives.

## Appendix A

### Autumn Term

Themes and Topics	Nursery and Reception	Year One	Year Two
Domestic Church/family	Myself	Families	Beginnings
Baptism/confirmation Belonging	Welcome	Belonging	Signs and Symbols
Advent/ Christmas Loving	Birthday	Waiting	Preparations

### Spring Term

Themes and Topics	Nursery and Reception	Year One	Year Two
Local church Community	Celebrating	Special People	Books
Eucharist Relating	Gathering	Meals	Thanksgiving
Lent/Easter Giving	Growing	Change	Opportunities

### Summer Term

Themes and Topics	Nursery and Reception	Year One	Year Two
Pentecost Serving	Good News	Holidays and Holydays	Spread the Word
Reconciliation Inter – relating	Friends	Being Sorry	Rules
Universal Church World	Our World	Neighbours	Treasures

