

St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School

Religious Education, Prayer and Worship Policy



Updated January 2022
Review September 2024

The Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement, “In faith and love we learn and grow,” is central to the life of the school. It is displayed in all classrooms and the children are encouraged to think of ways in which they can strive to live out the Mission Statement.



The Importance of the Role of Parents in Religious Education

St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School recognises the central role parents have in the religious education of their children. 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, forgiveness, respect, fidelity and disinterested service are the rule.” (CCC 2223) As the Statement of the Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales on Religious Education in Catholic Schools ‘2000’ states, “The first educators in the faith are parents. It is they, above all others, who establish in their children the first sensitivity and responsiveness to the presence of God, to the practice of prayer and to the patterns of life in the community of faith, the parish. By their example in the home, and in their participation in the Mass and other sacraments, the foundations of life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down.”

Our Catholic School

It is in the spirit of the above statement that our school works. We see St Hugh’s school operating in partnership with the home and the parish communities to which our children belong. As the General Directory for Catechesis affirms, “This partnership between home and parish is enhanced by the role of the Catholic school in which the educational mission of the church finds a particular and important expression.” This ‘educational mission’ is our central role.

The Aims of Religious Education at our School

Religious Education lies at the heart of the curriculum and school life.

We aim to ensure that Religious Education attends to the needs of every pupil who has been admitted to the school and that it will:

- Enable all members of the school community to understand and to live our Mission Statement.
- Help pupils recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life.
- Lead to a deeper knowledge and understanding of Catholic and other religious traditions and the ways in which they seek to express the value and significance of human life.
- Allow space for searching and questioning.
- Challenge pupils to examine their own life stance, to deepen their personal faith commitment and to respect that of others.

Our Approach to Religious Education at St Hugh's

We aim to provide an environment where every child feels secure. We teach the children how to respect and value each other as individuals and how to care for one another so they help to foster a calm, happy and caring community.

We discuss our attitudes and behaviour and how they affect the well-being of other members of our school community.

We aim to teach children and each other, by example, in the daily life of the school.

We pray together, teaching both specific school prayers and how to pray spontaneously and peacefully.

We gather together for daily Collective Worship and to celebrate liturgy and Mass on a number of occasions each term.

Through R.E., Collective Worship and liturgies we teach concepts, knowledge of the scriptures, the Church and moral attitudes.

We follow the Religious Education Programme – Come and See.

We encourage home, school and parish links.

We welcome and actively encourage the involvement of the parish priest at St Hugh of Lincoln Church in Knaphill and we value their contribution to the life of the school.

We work collaboratively with the parish to prepare children in Year 3 for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. As Catholics we believe that Holy Communion is not just a “wafer” or a piece of bread but the true Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore the act of receiving Holy Communion is something sacred and to be carried out with great reverence.

We have an annual St Hugh of Lincoln week, which aims for the children to develop their faith journey by deepening their relationship with God and thinking about how they can live some of the values exemplified by St Hugh.

We promote the children's awareness of the local and wider communities by encouraging them to participate in charitable service and fund-raising activities.

We acknowledge that everyone is equal in the sight of God and follow a policy of equal opportunities.

The Religious Education Programme at our School

The R.E. curriculum is delivered primarily through the 'Come and See' programme.

In response to the question; 'Where do you live?' which was asked by the disciples, Jesus invited them to; 'Come and See.' (John 1:39) The disciples went with Jesus 'and spent the rest of that day with him'.

Central to the programme are three basic human questions and the three Christian beliefs that are the Church's response in faith.

Where do I come from? Life- Creation

Who am I? Dignity – Incarnation

Why am I here? Purpose- Redemption

In Come and See these big questions are considered in the light of the Scriptures and Traditions of the Church, as expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

"Come and See" is developed through three themes based on the above documents of the Second Vatican Council, which are gradually explored each time at greater depths. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian Living.

'It is necessary, therefore, that Religious Education in schools be regarded as an academic discipline with the systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. However, it should not simply be regarded as one subject among many, but rather it should engage in interdisciplinary dialogue. Religious Education in schools underpins, activates, develops and completes the educational and catechetical activity of the whole school.' (Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses the human search for meaning, God's initiative in Revelation who comes to meet us 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.

Explore

The teacher helps the children to begin to look at and focus on the 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 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, hold on to and make their own, what they have understood of the topic.

Multi-faith Programme

In accordance with guidelines from the diocese, children learn about other faiths in two weekly sessions throughout the year. In the first term, everyone learns about Judaism and in the third term, children in KS1 and KS2 learn about either Islam, Sikhism or Hinduism. EYFS reinforce their knowledge of Judaism. In line with British Values, children at St Hugh's are taught to respect everyone regardless of their religion.

Using the Programme

The school spends 10% of the teaching week on Religious Education in line with the requirements from the Bishops Conference of England and Wales. At St Hugh's, each class has 2 ½ hours of religious education each week which does not include Collective Worship. In early years, there is one whole class lesson each week and RE is built into the ongoing continuous provision.

Teaching Methods used in the teaching of RE at our school.

At St Hugh's the children have the opportunity to be taught in different ways.

- Whole class discussion and teaching.
- Group discussion and feedback.
- Responses with an element of choice if appropriate.
- Partner work.
- Individual research and study.
- Deeper Thinking questions to stretch and challenge

Teachers are encouraged to be as varied and as creative as possible in the methods they use in the teaching of R.E.

Children's Books and Marking of Work

Work is captured either in individual children's RE books or as a collective response in the class RE journal. The class RE journal is not marked but rather acts as a way of capturing learning and events celebrating our Catholic life, prayer or RE learning that lend themselves to this approach.

Each class teacher is responsible for the marking of recorded work in R.E. books. In line with marking in other subjects, each lesson has detailed success criteria which include scaffolding such as key words or Scripture references to support learners achieve high standards of work. Children are encouraged to self or peer assess their work and teachers check and assess work against the success criteria, identifying next steps. Children's responses to feedback are made in purple pen in their books. Detailed written marking is not required.

Assessment

Success criteria using the driver words are used to assess the children. The teachers complete an assessment of 2 greater depth, 2 expected and 2 working towards pupils for each topic using the diocesan framework. This refers to the National Standards in Religious Education and by using the Standards Indicators provided in the 'Come and See' Programme.

Each pupil's attainment is recorded on the school's assessment recording system. Comparison and analysis is then made with pupil's performance in other subjects, particularly English during termly pupil progress meetings. This enables the class teacher, leadership team and RE Leader to ensure progress is being made for every pupil.

Homework

Pupils are set R.E. homework where appropriate and in line with the Home learning Policy. This can be related to classroom R.E, involve research or the learning or writing of prayers.

Display and Spaces for Prayer and Reflection

All classrooms have a prominent Religious Education display relating to the current 'Come and See' topic. Key vocabulary and relevant driver words for their year group should be on display. Displays are in line with the school's low-sensory, communication-friendly spaces approach.

Classrooms have a cross or crucifix and the school Mission Statement on display.

All classrooms have a prayer table which stands alone and is seen as a sacred place within the classroom. Prayer tables should include: a crucifix or cross, a Bible, a candle and prayer tree for children's own prayer intentions. Prayer tables have a cloth of the correct liturgical colour of the season. The class RE journal is displayed on the prayer table.

There is a dedicated prayer corner in the school, displaying the school's six values: Friendship, love, respect, forgiveness, thankfulness and hope. In addition there is a prayer garden, designed by the children which provides an additional outdoor space for prayer and reflection.

Reporting

Parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring Terms give parents and teachers the opportunity to discuss pupil progress. At the start of the year there is a, "welcome to your new class," evening which allows teachers to inform parents about the methods and expectations of the R.E curriculum.

A written report is sent home towards the end of the Summer Term.

Monitoring

Monitoring takes several forms at St Hugh's, each of which are designed to upskill the teaching staff and improve the quality of learning for the children. Wherever possible, monitoring is collaborative in order to provide opportunities for staff to learn from each other and share best practice.

Lesson study: RE is part of the whole school lesson study programme. This provides the opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan and deliver lessons while focusing on improving the learning experience of children in the class. Staff in the group, discuss the lesson afterwards and interview children to assess the effectiveness of the lessons. Termly opportunities are given to the staff team to share learning from the lesson study process.

Book looks: Teachers bring a sample of their RE books to staff meetings each term and books are monitored collectively looking for progression, consistency, presentation, challenge and as a means to share best practice.

Learning walks: The leadership team and RE lead do regular RE learning walks and give verbal feedback to staff. Best practice is shared at staff meetings.

Pupil Voice: Pupil voice is sought through both questionnaires and through the lesson study process. The RE lead and SLT review the feedback and use it to form a focus for a lesson study cycle or feed into the school development plan. The RE Lead meets regularly with the RE followers to discuss the development of RE across the school.

Governors: Governors attend pupil voice sessions, learning walks and monitor the learning environment over the course of the year.

Moderation: RE work is moderated during sessions which include R.E. meetings for teachers, moderation meetings with other Deanery or Xavier schools and during R.E. co-ordinator meetings.

Spiritual and Moral Development

St Hugh's has always tried to create the atmosphere needed to fulfil our Mission Statement. We try to emphasise the qualities and Gospel values of love, friendship, hope, thankfulness, forgiveness and respect.

Prayer

We aim to help children value and respect the power of prayer and to use it to help strengthen the children's relationships with God. Pupils are provided with ample opportunity to pray in different ways including class liturgy, meditation, reflection and spontaneous prayer. We want to be a praying community. It is important for the children to know 'formal' prayer of the church which we may all pray together and which we all hear and say with the parish/family communities outside school. We also value 'formal' prayers which have been written especially for children and which hold meaning for them. With these two aspects in mind we aim to teach particular prayers increasing in difficulty as the children develop. We all pray collectively at school in the morning (in class or at assembly), before lunch and at the end of the school day. Prayer does not only mean 'formal' prayers. We do hope to help each other to listen to God speaking to us and to respond in our hearts and minds during moments of silence. We also encourage prayer writing by the children themselves.

All children understand that they can request personal intentions and can compile and share their own prayers. Each class has a prayer tree which provides a focus for prayer in the classroom. The prayer garden has been blessed by our parish priest and is recognised and respected as a very special place as is the shared Prayer Corner.

At school the children are taught to make the Sign of the Cross and know by heart the following prayers: The Lord's Prayer; The Hail Mary; The Glory be to the Father; The Morning Offering; The End of the Day Prayer; Grace before meals.

During Key Stage 2 children become familiar with and are encouraged to pray the Rosary: The Prayer for the Dead The Act of Contrition/Sorrow; The Responses to the Mass; The Hail Holy Queen; The Apostles Creed.

Collective Worship at St Hugh's

The Daily Collective Act of Worship is an essential element of our School Life. We value the opportunity to gather as a community which can pray together, sing together, share sadness together and celebrate good news together. On Monday and Wednesday the whole school gathers together for an act of collective worship. These are led by the Senior Leadership Team. Children attend separate Key Stage collective worship on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Liturgy takes place in the classrooms when children are

not attending an assembly. The class RE followers are actively encouraged to take part in the planning and delivery of class liturgies.

During Collective Worship, we celebrate significant and commemorative events both in the religious and secular calendars.

Liturgy

At St Hugh's we believe that celebrating the Mass together is important to the spiritual life of the whole school community. Wherever possible we try to make each celebration of the Mass a community celebration which involves the children, teachers, support staff, parents and parishioners. These masses are carefully prepared by the children and appropriate themes are chosen. The children welcome the visitors, serve the mass, under take the readings, prayers and offertory procession. Mass is celebrated to mark the beginning of the school year, the beginning of the major seasons of the Church Year, such as Advent, Lent and on Holy Days of Obligation.

Links with the Home

To provide the best Catholic education we believe that it is essential to establish and maintain links with the parents.

1. Welcoming Prospective and New Parents. We provide relevant information about the school on the website. We also invite parents to visit the school before applications are made. We organise an evening for parents before admission to the Reception Class, to give the parents the opportunity to meet each other, the Head teacher, the Class Teachers and representatives of the Governing Body and to find out all they need to know about the school.

2. Regular Information about the Child and his/her Progress and Welfare. The Head teacher and teaching staff are always very willing to talk to the parents about the education and welfare of their child. The Head teacher is generally available before or after school to see parents if they have any questions, suggestions or concerns. If she is unavailable the Deputy Head teacher may be seen or an appointment made through the school office. Parent Evenings are held in the autumn and spring term, when parents are invited to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Written reports are sent home every summer term.

3. Parents Supporting the Work of the Teacher at Home. The School website contains guidelines on how parents and carers can support their child's learning and wellbeing at home. There is a home-school reading scheme and a home-learning policy. Information about forthcoming topics to be covered in each subject is the subject of a meeting between parents and the teacher at the beginning of the year and is also provided on the website.

4. Providing Information about the School and What is Happening

The weekly newsletter conveys a wide range of information about the work of the school, special events taking place in the school or Church, upcoming Feast Days and Masses. Children in Year 6 get the opportunity to publish the newsletter before they move to secondary school, celebrating their learning and religious life of the school.

5. Parents and Parishioners Sharing the Religious Life of the School

Parents and parishioners are always invited to attend any celebration of the Mass.

Links with the Wider Community

We welcome the visits of the Parish Priest of St Hugh of Lincoln Church and other members of the

Clergy. We value the clergy's contribution to the teaching of R.E. in the classrooms.

We work very closely with deanery and Xavier colleagues sharing expertise, resources and ideas as well as organising special celebrations. We attend the annual Xavier Celebration of Mass at the start of each school year. As part of the Xavier Academy Trust, we are proud to celebrate and share our journey of faith with colleagues, pupils and members of our academy community.

We regularly encourage the children to participate in fund raising for the benefit of the Local and Wider Community.

Induction of New Colleagues

All new members of the staff must read very carefully the R.E. Policy and meet with the RE lead. They are encouraged to participate in diocesan training and observe colleagues.