

English Martyrs Catholic Voluntary Academy  
RE Policy



“We learn and grow as a family following in the footsteps of Jesus “

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**Related policies:**

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

English Martyrs Catholic Voluntary Academy was founded to pass on to the children the faith heritage of the local Catholic Community. Each child is valued as a unique individual, a child of God, made in the image of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In partnership with parents and parish and with God's grace, the school tries to discern and help the child to develop fully as a person with particular gifts and aptitudes. Guided and challenged by Gospel values, the school aims to provide a community in which the child will grow and experience the love of God, self and neighbour.

### ***'WE GROW AND LEARN AS A FAMILY FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS'***

#### **Aims of Religious Education**

The academy acknowledges that religious Education is a lifelong process and recognise that the primary years are significant in the lasting impression they make upon our children.

Religious Education in school is concerned with children understanding mankind's search for meaning, value and purpose in life. The religions of the World are classic expressions of this search and, for many people, provide the context within which the experience is to be understood. Through his or her understanding of this search, the child is helped towards a deeper awareness of their identity enabling him / her to grow and develop freely in a world of divergent beliefs and values.

Education is concerned with the development of understanding. Religious Education is concerned with the development of the understanding of religion as a significant area of human experience.

'Understanding' is used in a wide sense, being concerned with feeling and empathetic insight as well as an intellectual grasp of certain information. The child is not simply learning about religion, they are learning from it.

#### **The Religious Education Programme**

To fulfil our aims we use the '*Come and See*' programme of Religious Education. R.E is a core subject and should cover 10% of the curriculum. The further time is part of Collective Worship (see Collective Worship and Liturgy Policy). This taught RE time can be carried out in several shorter sessions throughout the week or in longer sessions. This time does not include time spent in collective worship.

It integrates the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Levels of Attainment and the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Children explore the mystery of Faith through Scripture and Tradition. Links are made explicitly in planning documents to the resources and plans are adapted to meet the needs of the unique cohort. The '*Come and See*' programme is used to deliver the curriculum, but other resources can be used alongside it.

The programme follows an annual cycle and each following the themes of God as our Creator, God as our Saviour and God as the Spirit are taught. Each Year Group has their own planning and series of topics to follow throughout the year. Lessons are very well resourced with both interactive stimuli, a variety of artefacts and making cross curricular links. There are three topics taught each term and 2 other 'faith' units; Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism. Come and See meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.

## **Planning**

Taking a whole school approach in using *Come and See*, we are confident that the breadth of the curriculum is being taught and there is good progression from year to year. There is a planning template for staff to use each topic. Please refer to the *Come and See* materials for more detail about planning and curriculum coverage.

The advantages of this approach are:

- Appropriate content for each group is ensured
- Planning and recording are easy
- Continuity and progression across the school are assured
- Communal celebrations are possible

## **Assessment and Record Keeping**

Each teacher has the responsibility for maintaining records on the children in their class. Summative assessment is carried out through an Assessment task three times a year focusing on a rolling programme of Attainment Targets and strands.

Assessments are regularly moderated by the RE Coordinator and by all staff during timetabled staff meetings. In addition to this RE work is moderated at Trust meetings and at Diocesan level with other RE Coordinators in the Nottingham Diocese. Regular advice from the diocesan Education Advisor is sought to assist with moderation. Progress against the end of year expectations are entered by class teachers onto the pupil progress forms. The subject leader then analyses attainment and progress at whole class and group level. This information is then used to inform action planning. RE is reported formally to parents in the whole school reports which go out to parents 3 times a year and staff are responsible for providing assessment information at pupil progress meetings 3 times a year.

## **Home, School, Parish Links**

We recognise the importance of parents as the child's first teacher and their role in faith development. Parents and staff do everything possible to work in close partnership. There are many opportunities for parents to engage in school life and our school seeks in partnership with parents and parish, to develop and nurture the catholic faith of our children. We strive to bring pupils to a fuller understanding and knowledge of the Roman Catholic tradition.

On Holy Days of Obligation (where circumstances permit) the staff and pupils of English Martyrs will celebrate mass in the Parish church. Children across the school in all classes prepare and lead class liturgical services to which parents and members of the parish are invited to attend.

Children are prepared for Holy Communion in the parish. Christmas and Easter celebrations take place in the church in consultation with the parish. Our friends of English Martyrs (FEM) are a group of parents and carers who give generously of their time and raise sums of money for the good of all our children.

Our Statements to Live By are shared with parents and with the parish through newsletters. Our weekly liturgies are based on the Statements.

Parents are:

- Given a warm welcome when they visit our school
- Given termly curriculum overviews which inform them of the topics covered in class, as well as ways they can support with their child's learning. This includes the Statements to Live By.
- Given an opportunity to give support / input with their child's RE Homework.
- Given weekly school newsletters containing RE information.
- Given a verbal report on their child's RE development during Parents' Evening.
- Given a written report on their child's RE development through progress reports 3 times a year.
- Given opportunities to be involved in all charity activities during the year for school or for the wider community as well as invited to all Masses and liturgies.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of worship will be evaluated regularly through observation, parents, pupil and staff surveys and feedback both written and verbal, to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. The R.E Leader and Head Teacher will monitor the RE curriculum through lesson observations, scrutiny of books, environment monitoring, collective worship monitoring and pupil interviews. This is in line with the school management cycle.

At English Martyrs, whilst we believe that academic rigour is as necessary in RE as in any subject, this should not negate spiritual and emotional development and learning which are not always possible to assess using formal methods, but are an integral part of Religious Education.

### **The Religious Education Subject Leader**

The first purpose of the RE subject leader's role is to help improve the quality of the teaching and learning that the pupils receive in Religious Education.

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Promoting the catholic ethos, mission statement and identity of our Catholic School
- Writing and keeping relevant documentation up to date
- Coordinating the teaching throughout the school by encouraging collaboration between year groups or key stages
- Being involved in the process of assessment, recording and reporting
- Monitoring the quality of teaching, the progression and continuity of Religious Education throughout the school
- Offering support and advice to colleagues
- Identify resource requirements
- Maintaining a strong relationship between the school and the Diocese, and with the school's Diocesan advisor. Attend the subject leaders diocesan meetings.
- Maintaining the high status of worship within the school
- Completing the Religious Education action plan and using it to inform the School Improvement Plan
- Keeping resources well stored, catalogues and available
- Ensuing the Curriculum Directory is understood and being followed
- Work with the designated governor for RE and report to the Governing Body on RE and the Catholic Life of the school

### **Environment and Display**

From the moment you enter English Martyrs CVA the school environment reflects that we are a Catholic school. There is a special area devoted to prayer and worship in our school hall. Our school mission statement is clearly displayed as well as the current Statement to Live By. Each classroom has a prayer area in a prominent place in the classroom and a display dedicated to current learning in Religious Education. Within the hall and foyer, displays of the children's work are evident as is work, statues of saints and the Holy Family and prayer boards and prayer areas. We also have a prayer area inside, the chapel and outside, the Prayer Garden where anyone may visit and sit and pray or enjoy silent contemplation.

### **Resources**

Whole school resources are kept in the Chapel for children and staff to access.

Each class has '*Come and See*' planning resources and access to the bank of interactive resources. Missions Together resources are ordered and distributed during Lent and Advent each year. Travelling Nativity bags are used by all key stages in Advent and Lenten Journeys during Lent.

### **Holy Areas**

Each class has a holy area for prayer focus, which should be in an area where all children can see it when they pray. The theme of the prayer focus should relate to the season of the liturgical year.

The holy area should feature a cloth reflecting the liturgical year or a feast day and some ritual objects. Cloths for the holy areas in each class reflecting the liturgical year are kept in each class.

Ritual objects may include pictures, icons, stones, bibles, flowers, bark, holy water, rosary, seashells or candles. Cloths and ritual objects are stored in the Chapel and they are the responsibility of the teachers and the children.

### **Wider Community**

We encourage involvement wherever possible with the community. At the heart of a vibrant and caring community, English Martyrs close network of local partners help to drive exceptional outcomes for children. Parents are also invited to our special events such as monthly masses, the Christmas Nativity, the Carol service and summer concert. We hold special celebrations and assemblies annually to thank our partners. Our parish links are strong with many volunteers from the Parish volunteering weekly in school, the parish support school fund raising events and there is a weekly school article in the Parish newsletter.

Across the curriculum, we aim to deliver full engagement and learning for each child. As well as promoting cohesion, community and partner engagement enhances our children's progress, resilience and resourcefulness by facilitating:

- A curriculum that is constantly challenging and innovative
- A richer school environment
- Direct mentoring support
- A range of encounters with possible professions
- A learning culture giving the freedom to experience, experiment and discover

### **Spiritual, moral and Social Education**

The Come and See programme encourages the children to think about their relationships and act responsibly. Year 5 and 6 children take on specific roles and leadership responsibilities within our school to develop their sense of community including helping with younger children at play times, this includes library leaders, sports ambassadors, the school council and learning mentors. (Our behaviour policy is founded on the principals of restorative justice). We link our Gospel Values to the British Values weekly through our statements to live by, please see appendix 3.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We believe that all children are entitled to equal access to the R.E Curriculum. Children with SEN, Gifted and Talented and EAL children should be allowed to express themselves according to their ability, for example by using art/drama to record ideas and thoughts where writing skills are less developed. All work should be valued. We should be aware of children's various cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds and be sensitive in our approach and the use of materials.

### **Other Faiths**

We believe that learning about other faiths and cultures is essential for a better understanding of their own faith and culture. The emphasis should be on similarities rather than differences.

Everyone will study Judaism during the Autumn Term. In the Spring or Summer term (whichever is longer) children will study a different faith Sikhism, Islam, or Hinduism in rotation.

However through topic based learning in other curriculum areas the children will also have the opportunity to learn about aspects of other faiths and cultures either current or historical.

### **Collective Worship**

Prayer is an essential part of collective worship. It is an important way of expressing our faith and talking to God. Helping children to pray, to learn our prayers, explore different styles of prayer and enable children to write their own prayers are all important parts of R.E

Children are expected to participate in all worship that takes place in school or is led by the school. This can also include Masses on Holy Days of Obligation, and Masses for special occasions such as English Martyrs Feast Day. This may include reading, drama and mime, bringing the Offertory, welcoming, dance, the use of instruments, singing and altar serving.

For further information about Collective Worship see Collective Worship and Liturgy Policy.

### **Other Events**

During other significant parts of the year the school provides other opportunities for the children to participate in prayer and reflection for example; Prayer group.

The school also actively aims to participate in Diocesan events as they arise.

### **Marking**

Work should be marked in accordance with the school's Marking Policy. Work should be marked in relation to the learning intentions. Key words must be corrected. Comments should encourage children to reflect, analyse and should be interactive.

Please also see

- Collective Worship Policy
- Catholic School Guide
- Collective Worship Guide
- Traditional Prayers Guide



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Non Negotiables**

#### **Aspiring to excellent practice within RE – English Martyrs CVA**

##### **Classroom Environment**

- Current Come and See display
- Driver words displayed and referred to
- The Big Questions displayed within the Classroom
- Updated Prayer focus area with reference to the liturgical year

##### **RE Books**

- Attractive front cover relating to the 'Come and See' or Mission Statement
- KS1 – at least four pieces of work per topic
- KS2 – at least four to six pieces of work per topic
- Use of Learning Objectives / success criteria where appropriate
- Use of 'I can' statements within books
- EYFS – Class Learning Journal (record of coverage)
- Use of AT2 to facilitate marking – reflect / wonder
- Examples of task which have been differentiated using levels of attainment
- Variety of tasks – writing styles, pictorial, cross topic, prayer etc

##### **Assessment**

- Termly Assessment Task
- Use of 'I can' statements and / or learning logs
- Targets / Big Questions within the books

##### **Lessons**

- Structure – prayer, main teach and reflection
- Evidence of pace and variety of activities
- Clear differentiation shown on planning and in delivery of lessons (refer to lesson observation sheet)
- Use of prayer and music
- Challenge and support

Appendix 2

**Statements to Live By and their link to British Values**

1	We are all special.					Blue	Red
2	I can say one good thing about myself.					Blue	
3	I can say how I feel.					Blue	
4	I can laugh and have fun.					Blue	
5	I know what to do if I see anyone being hurt.					Dark Blue	
6	I understand that rights match responsibility.					Dark Blue	
7	I try to stand up for myself and others without hurting others	Red				Dark Blue	
8	I try to be just and fair.					Dark Blue	
9	I can tell you how I look after myself.					Blue	
10	I think before I make choices that affect my health.					Blue	
11	I can work, play, rest and pray each day.					Blue	
12	Simple things can make us happy.					Blue	
13	I try to love others as I love myself.	Red				Dark Blue	Blue
14	I try to follow our school and classroom rules.	Red				Dark Blue	
15	I know I belong in a community that includes my school.	Red					Red
16	I know we are happiest when we are united.	Red					Red
17	I listen to what you say. I show that I am listening to you.	Red					Red
18	I co-operate with others in work and play.	Red					Red
19	I try to use words that make the world a better place. (Please, sorry, thank you)	Red					
20	I try to appreciate the beauty and the wonder in the world around me.					Blue	
21	I know that it is ok for me to make mistakes.					Blue	
22	I can learn from my mistakes and failures.					Blue	
23	I try to keep going when things are difficult and not give up hope.					Dark Blue	Blue
24	I know what humility means.						Red
25	I know when to ask for help and who to ask for help from.					Blue	
26	I can recognise comfortable and uncomfortable feelings.					Blue	
27	I know how to help others when they are in trouble.					Dark Blue	
28	I understand what trust means.					Dark Blue	
29	I try to forgive people when they hurt me.					Dark Blue	
30	I try to accept forgiveness from others.					Dark Blue	
31	I know how to show I am sorry.					Dark Blue	
32	I understand the importance of peace.					Dark Blue	
33	I know what human dignity means and I show that I respect others.					Dark Blue	Red
34	I stand up for people who are being treated unfairly.					Dark Blue	Red
35	I notice that we are the same and we are different.						Red
36	I try to be accepting of others.						Red

'British value' (as defined in statutory guidance)	Relevant universal human values (Schwartz)	
Democracy	Choosing own goals, independent, social order	Red
Rule of law	Social justice, a world at peace, responsible, self-discipline, freedom, respect for tradition	Dark Blue
Individual liberty	Freedom, self-respect, independent, equality	Blue
Mutual respect and tolerance (of those with different faiths and beliefs)	Sense of belonging, broadminded, moderate, equality, humble, respect for tradition	Red

