



**Ss Alban and Stephen  
Catholic Junior School**



*“Nurturing every child to grow and flourish in Christ”*

# Religious Education Handbook



PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY

AGREED BY THE GOVERNORS

DATE FOR REVIEW

R.E SUBJECT LEADER

OCTOBER 2016

OCTOBER 2020

## **Religious Education Handbook**

Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School's Mission Statement "Nurturing every child to grow and flourish in Christ" is at the heart of the school's organisation and is therefore:

- Central to the life of the school in fulfilling its purpose as a Catholic institution.
- An expression of belief that is based on Gospel values and the teaching of the Church
- Holistic and encompasses all aspects of school life.

As a Catholic School, Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School aims to complement the Catholic home by cultivating the moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical development of our children.

We aim to foster a collaborative and cooperative environment based on Gospel values which makes every member of our school community feel welcome, valued and respected, regardless of race, creed, gender or disability.

We aim to foster Christian virtues and to nurture the Catholic Faith. As a Christian community, we shall promote a partnership between parents, the parish and the school which is based on mutual respect and responsibility and reflects Christ's teachings.

We acknowledge that to create a distinctive Catholic School requires the full commitment of all who belong to the school community to trust and respect each other's views and feelings.

All are valued and encouraged to make Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School a stimulating, enjoyable and satisfying place in which to work. The preservation and distinctive nature of Catholic schools depends on the faith, practice and standards of the teachers in the school.

At Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School, we aim to encourage our Catholic teachers to combine personal conviction and practice of faith with the required professional qualifications and standards. Nevertheless, we acknowledge with gratitude the devotion and service given by our non-Catholic colleagues and we recognise our obligations to them.

At Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School

- Each child will be treated as, and come to know himself/herself as, a unique person, who is loved by God, regardless of gender, faith or disability.
- Each child will be treated with respect and encouraged to respect others.
- Each child will meet with fairness and justice and will be encouraged to develop self-discipline.
- Each child will be educated in a school in which Christian values are evident in all we do and how we act.
- Each child will work in an environment in which pupils are happy and feel valued and which promotes and celebrates personal achievement in all aspects of school life.
- Each child will be made aware of cultural backgrounds and faiths which are different to their own.

- Each child will have opportunities to celebrate God's love in acts of prayer and worship both in school and in the parish.
- Each child will receive a grounding in the Catholic Faith based on the 'Come and See' programme for Catholic Primary Schools.
- Each child will be taught the teaching of the Catholic Church on topics which raise specific moral and religious issues, should they arise. At Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School we (Governors, staff, parents and children) shall care for one another so that we can always do our best.

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

The aim of Religious Education at Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Primary School is to provide our children with a comprehensive and systematic study of the mystery of God, of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold, the basis for them and the relationship between faith and life, in a manner which encourages investigation and reflection, awe and wonder by our pupils and develops the appropriate skills and attitudes which promote free, informed and full response to God's call in everyday life.

The beliefs and values studied in Catholic Religious Education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic School. Religious Education is, therefore, the core subject in a Catholic School.

We are committed to classroom RE because all pupils have the right to receive an overall religious education, which will enable them to engage with the deepest questions of life and to find reasons for the hope that is within them. At Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School, we aim to help pupils become religious literate with the knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age and capacity.

We aim:-

- to respect and promote the child's innate capacity for wonder, awe, reverence and imagination.
- to enable our children to take the initial steps on their faith journey.
- to increase the children's knowledge and love of God.
- to teach the Catholic faith and develop commitment to that faith.
- to encourage a loving and caring attitude towards family, friends, peers and teachers and all with whom they come into contact.
- to celebrate through worship and liturgy in a way appropriate to their age.
- to foster a respect for other religious and faith communities.

To achieve our aims we have an RE programme, 'Come and See', which takes into account the religious and educational needs of all the children in our school.

### **The objectives of Religious Education**

The objective of Religious Education requires the analysis, reflection and critical appreciation of sources and examples and a real sense of progression through the different stages of education. It requires the development of appropriate skills and attitudes which allows for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life and the use of skills in other areas of the curriculum.

The objectives of Religious Education at Ss Alban and Stephen are to:-

- present a systematic programme of the Christian event, message and way of life, which is at the heart of the whole curriculum, in a variety of ways appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
- provide opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection in implicit and explicit ways
- provide children with the language of religious experience – a literacy in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, people and objects.
- provide children with the opportunities to listen, think critically, acquire knowledge and make informed judgements.
- develop respect and love of their own Catholic faith and a tolerance and respect for the views of others by introducing children to the background and beliefs of people of other faiths.
- help our children to integrate all life's experiences and all learning into an ever-deepening appreciation of faith in Jesus Christ.
- meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in RE at Key Stage 2.

To fulfil our aims and objectives we use the 'Come and See' Catholic Primary Religious Education Programme which integrates the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Levels of Attainment and the new Religious Education Curriculum Directory. It is the programme prescribed by the Archdiocese of Liverpool and the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

### **Overview of the Content**

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.

These three doctrines of Creation, Incarnation and Redemption are developed through three themes based on documents of the Second Vatican Council. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian Living.

The themes occurs once each season time (Autumn, Spring, Summer) and are gradually explored each time at a greater depth, each theme building on the understanding of the previous theme.

Each topic will take 4 weeks to complete.

### **The Process**

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 the 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.

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

### **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.

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

### **RESPOND**

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. It begins by reflecting on what the children wonder about and gives time for remembering what they have understood and learnt. Rejoice is the second part of this section where there is opportunity to plan and take part in a celebration. It is essential that the children are involved in the choice of material to be used in the celebration.

GATHER	Consider how and where the children will begin the celebration.
WORD-LISTEN	Listen to some scripture – read or enacted RESPONSE How will the children respond to all they have heard?
RESPONSE	How will the children respond to all they have heard?
GOING FORTH	How will the children take away the message?

**Renew** is the final part of this section in which the teacher helps each child to make an individual response 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.

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

At the end of RESPOND each teacher should undertake an evaluation to inform future teaching and learning and include assessment for learning.

### **Planning**

The Bishops' Conference requirement of 10% of curriculum teaching time for Religious Education is indicated on class timetables. This time does not include time for Collective Worship (other than the Rejoice section), hymn practice, assemblies etc. There must be a balance between input, discussion and activity within each lesson.

**Long term planning:** the themes and topics framework sets out the programme for the year and its implementation is the responsibility of the School Leadership Team.

**Medium term planning:** the overall responsibility for medium term planning lies with the Class teachers with guidance from the Subject Leader.

It is his/her duty to ensure that time is allocated at staff meetings on a monthly basis for teachers to reflect on the theme pages, Come and See for Yourself, at the beginning of each topic, to assist their own understanding of the topic.

It is also his/her responsibility to ensure that teachers are delivering the correct topic, appoint start and finish dates, give guidance with resources and ideally lead the reflection for 'Come and See for Yourself' at the start of each topic.

Delivery of each topic requires approximately 10 hours. Two quarters of the time go to the first and last stages of the process (Explore and Respond respectively). Half of the time is allocated to the Reveal Stage. Short term planning is the responsibility of the Class Teacher.

### **Differentiation**

As with all other areas of the curriculum, the purpose of differentiation is to enable children to be self-motivated, succeed in the set task and to challenge their knowledge, understanding and skills and thus take responsibility for their own learning to enable them to progress.

We aim to enable children to recognise their achievements and to celebrate these.

- In 'Come and See' differentiation is provided through a variety of activities in Explore and Reveal, which meet the differing learning needs and abilities of the children.
- Also increasing sensitivity is paid to children of other faiths, and activities differentiated accordingly if necessary.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is focussed 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 the exploration of themes and the learning outcomes for each topic. Assessment establishes what children know, understand and can do. It offers support and motivation to the learner. It does not assess spirituality or the practice of the Faith. Assessment in 'Come and See' emphasises a wide range of achievement.

## **Informal Assessment**

At Ss Alban and Catholic Junior School, teachers are continually making informal assessments of individual pupils through observations, ability to ask and respond to relevant questions, class feedback and marking of children's work.

- Assessment for Learning as seen in pupils' RE books with evidence of self/ peer marking and teacher comments correcting errors and giving next steps in learning.
- A note of these observations is sometimes kept on the planning sheets or seen on evaluation sheets.
- Visual evidence – photographs of displays and activities
- Pupils' record of attainment.

## **Formal Assessment**

At Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School, one topic per term is now formally assessed as directed by the Christian Education Department. Our school has embraced the initiative to formalise each pupil's record of attainment which will follow them throughout their school lives. Each class has a file containing each child's individual record and any assessment documentation.

The RE Co-ordinator also has a copy of an above average, average and below average piece of assessed work for each formally assessed topic for each class.

Parents are advised on the school website of topics to be covered each term. They are also involved through discussion and observation of their children's work in the termly reporting to at parent consultation evenings. There is a written account of a pupil's progress on their Annual Report. This recognises the status of RE as a core subject in our Catholic School.

## **Evaluation of teaching**

Criteria and procedures for reviewing and evaluating the teaching of 'Come and See' follow the guidelines of the programme. Teachers comment on the planning sheets throughout and at the end of each topic. Monitoring of teaching is by teacher observation and review of children's work. This is undertaken by the SMT and RE Co-ordinator. RE is not normally a 'PPA subject'.

### **Evaluation of Learning**

Children discuss their work and that of others during each stage of the process. They are encouraged to reflect on aspects of the topic and to participate in the construction and assembly of class displays. During the Respond stage of the process the children are given time to review the topic, recalling what was valued, summarising and reinforcing learning that has taken place. The learning is often recorded through drawings, short writing and sharing new knowledge with the teacher. The focus of their learning is very much on taking their new knowledge into their lives.

### **Staff Development**

The subject leader attends all termly RE training sessions and reports back to staff with a written report and during the weekly staff meetings as matters arise. Staff are encouraged to attend 'topic' days organised by the diocese .

### **Staff Induction**

All new staff, including supply teachers, are given help and support in the planning and delivery of the curriculum, including the RE syllabus. The RE Subject Leader offers help and guidance in planning RE topics and providing resources etc. The ethos of the school is made known to Learning Support Assistants, ancillary staff and all visitors and students. Where possible, all non-teaching staff are included in services, liturgies and celebrations in school.

### **Staff Communication**

This is achieved through:-

- Pre-school briefings.
- Staff meetings, with agenda items regarding feedback from Co-ordinator training.
- Written communications to staff with regard to matters arising, on an informal basis.
- A weekly diary of events is emailed to all staff this includes any specific RE events.
- Informal meetings as matters arise e.g. over resources, for advice etc.

### **Resources Teaching**

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for the storage and maintenance of the RE equipment and resources. Each class has an appropriate copy of the 'Come and See' file, a crucifix and a copy of the School Mission Statement. Resources are available from a designated cupboard in the corridor near the school hall. Each class has a bible as well as some resources for the focus table. Further resources and boxes of resources for other faiths can be found in the subject leader's office. Hymn music can be found on CDs in the drawers near the CD player in the school hall.

### **Relationship of RE to the Whole Curriculum**

The School Mission Statement is at the heart of and informs all policies, including PSHE, Equal Opportunities, SEN and computing . RE is not a PPA subject. Whilst it occupies its statutory 10% of teaching time RE permeates the curriculum.

### **Collective Worship Statement**

As a Catholic School, we acknowledge God's presence and relevance in all that we think, do and say. We believe that worship in school can create a real sense of belonging among our children and staff. All are encouraged to participate in our daily acts of Collective Worship.

#### **Our main aims are:-**

- To introduce our children to the language of worship through song and prayer.
- To provide opportunities for our children to worship God.
- To support our children in responding appropriately to liturgical events.
- To enable our children to experience sacramental events.
- To support our children in considering their responsibility for their own moral and spiritual development.
- As Christians, to respond to the physical, moral and spiritual needs of others.

#### **Collective worship takes place:-**

- In all classes daily (though not necessarily at the same time each day)(See class time-table)
- During achievement and other assemblies each week.

#### **Guidelines for Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is a time for quiet reflection. To create the right atmosphere it is suggested that teachers use lighted candles and quiet music. Children are encouraged to be part of the planning process and are provided with the opportunity to respond with prayers of their own. We aim to create opportunities for thought and prayer, for stillness and silence. It is a time for fostering an atmosphere in which we hope to evoke responses from the children in many areas, which might include joy or sorrow, thanks and praise.

#### **Assemblies**

At Ss Alban and Stephen Catholic Junior School, we value the bringing together of the whole school or significant groups, as a way of developing group or school identity. Assembly is an international learning experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. As well as including an Act of Collective Worship we believe assembly can offer the following educational benefits:-

- An opportunity to celebrate achievements, extra curricular successes etc.

- An opportunity to share and experience differences.
- It fosters a sense of group identity.
- It is a time to reflect on common values.
- An opportunity for learning how to behave in a large social gathering.
- An opportunity for learning how to perform in front of an audience.
- An opportunity for family members to share time together during the school day.
- An opportunity for the children to see and get to know other members of the school community.

Liturgy and Celebration (not an exclusive list for each term; all take place in school unless specified)

### **Autumn Term**

Whole school assemblies

Welcome Mass (in school)

Reconciliation Y4-Y6

CAFOD (includes CAFOD collection)

All Saints Day – Mass

Advent assemblies

Carol Service (in Church)

Carol singing in the local community Archdiocesan Carol Service (Cathedral)

### **Spring Term**

Whole school assemblies

Class assemblies

Ash Wednesday – Service

Eucharist preparation Y3 (Church)

Mothers' Day Mass (in school ),

Holy Week assemblies

Stations of the Cross in School

Good Shepherd Activities

### **Summer Term**

Whole school assemblies

Y3 First Holy Communion Mass (Church )

Celebration Mass – Y3 Sacramental candidates & parents

Crowning of Mary Service

Good Shepherd Mass ( Westminster Cathedral )

SS Peter and Paul – Mass (School )

St Alban Feast Day assembly

Leavers' Mass – year 6 End of year school Mass – (in School)

End of year assembly

### **Personal & Social Education**

The school has a separate policy for Personal, Social & Health Education.

### **Spiritual & Moral Education**

All staff appreciate that the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical welfare of each child is their primary concern. The love of Christ is apparent in the school community through mutual respect and support.

All staff enable pupils to develop a compassionate, supportive and respectful attitude to each other.

### **Links with Parents and Parish**

“Any worthwhile programme for Religious Education must aim at bringing together home, parish and school, into a partnership of mutual understanding and cooperation.” The school’s contribution to the Religious Education of the children must not be seen in isolation. Throughout the year, opportunities are taken to support the Religious Education of the children by close co-operation with the parents and with the Parish of Ss Alban and Stephen Parish .

All staff are committed to fostering this partnership by:-

- Making parents welcome
- Being available and able to talk to parents about their children
- Providing opportunities for parents to share in a wide variety of school activities.
- Inviting parents to special celebrations
- Supporting parents with Sacramental preparation
- Liaising with the Parish Priest and Catechists to prepare children for the Sacraments

- Encourage children to attend School/Parish Masses
- Preparing liturgy for special feasts
- Visiting the community e.g. singing in the local nursing homes.
- Supporting Archdiocesan and other charities.

### **Preparation for the Sacraments**

We follow the Archdiocesan prescribed 'I Belong' programme. We seek to fully support and facilitate the programme in any way. Catechesis is now through the Parish and parents. We are fortunate in that a member of the staff is a Parish Catechist, thus providing an excellent link in the home/school/parish partnership. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school and wholeheartedly supports school/parish links.

### **Equal Opportunities**

At Ss Alban and Stephen School we aim to provide a breadth of education encompassing the National Curriculum in such a manner as to meet the needs of each individual. We ensure that the curriculum and school organisation express equal respect for gender, background, ethnicity and faith, offering them equal access to the full range of learning opportunities.

We aim to equip our children with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for participation in our modern multi-cultural society. We believe the whole essence of R.E. is to liberate the individual and to allow them to achieve their potential as one of God's children and indeed be 'God's Work of Art' (Eph 2:10).

### **Special Educational Needs**

Every individual child is treated with the utmost dignity and respect. We allow for children being at different levels and encourage them to grow as individuals at their own rate and relative to their own ability.

### **Displays**

Each classroom has a focus table which reflects each new topic and may also contain articles pertinent/sentimental to the cohort. All classrooms have a 'Come and See' display board which reflects the specific themes/topics throughout the year. There is also a nominated display board for R.E. in the school hall which is up-dated regularly.

### **Cross Curricular Links**

'Come and See' has a thematic approach which enables inter-relation with all subject areas. Teachers are encouraged to make lessons as creative as possible through extended writing in literacy lessons, drama, computing and art.