



and the service  
guides our  
g.'

We are a community where:  
beauty and trust are treasured,  
justice and tolerance are promoted  
compassion and charity are encouraged  
goodwill and loyalty are cherished  
resilience and determination are needed  
forgiveness and love are required  
friendliness and respect are reinforced  
faith and Spirit are shared.



## Rationale of Religious Education

- Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church.  
*'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

<sup>2</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.3

<sup>3</sup> Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 7

<sup>4</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.6

- Religious Education is ‘the core of the core curriculum.’  
*‘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.... All pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.’<sup>1</sup>*
- Religious Education is the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ and is a rigorous academic subject in its own right. *Religious Education is regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines.*  
<sup>2</sup> As such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.  
*“Excellence in religious education, then, will be characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment. Classroom RE will be a challenging educational engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject material.”<sup>3</sup>*
- The outcome of Classroom 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”<sup>4</sup>*
- Whilst evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for some pupils, the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.

### **The Aims of Religious Education as stated in the RE Curriculum Directory are:**

- *To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;*
- *To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;*
- *To present an authentic vision of the Church’s moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;*
- *To raise pupils’ awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;*
- *To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;*
- *To stimulate pupils’ imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;*
- *To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;*
- *To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.<sup>5</sup>*

### **Religious Education - Curriculum Time Allocation**

10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. While the ‘Come and See’ RE scheme recommends 3 x 50 minute lessons, St. Stephen’s School understand that this equates to 2.5 hours and it may be necessary to teach Religious Education for longer periods (e.g. 2 hour afternoon block and at least an additional 30 minute session) in order to achieve the challenging objectives that the

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scheme sets. In most KS2 classes, six hours of Religious Education takes place across a two week block.

The 10% of curriculum time does not include Collective Worship.

### **Programme of Study**

The 'Come and See' programme is used as recommended by the Diocese as way to fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012): Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ.

### **What does St. Stephen's do to promote the Catholic Life of the school?**

- Attend pilgrimages and residential e.g Year 5 Saint Vincent de Paul Camp at Holy Island
- Mini-Vinnies
- Allow pupils to attend the Diocesan Festival in June
- Attend the Primary Diocesan Festivals
- Work with St. Mary's High School via their Just.Is Project transition days
- Charitable Giving via: CAFOD Family Fast Days; St. Cuthbert's Care 5p bus appeal; Harvest Festival for Refugee Campaign and The Peoples' Kitchen
- Rainbow Bereavement programme
- Promotion of Gospel values through our behaviour policy
- Monthly Bible story from Mr Taylor for KS1 and KS2 – with a focus on Old Testament biblical passages
- Celebrating pupils' achievements both in and outside of school through our Awards Assembly programme, where certificates are given for achievements in: Agent of British Values and Community Ambassador
- Attend Youth Friday Service in conjunction with Diocesan schools
- Attend Diocesan faith/evangelisation events e.g. Faith '15

### **What does St. Stephen's do to promote liturgical prayer in school?**

- Monday afternoon's whole-school collective worship delivered by a year group from: Year 2 to Year 6
- Attendance at Mass with Fr. Sean Hall
- A monthly whole-school Mass at St. Aidan's RC Parish
- Have fortnightly whole-school hymn practice
- Allow pupils access to high quality resources and books to enhance worship e.g. Stations of the Cross, an altar, book of the Gospels, lectionaries, missals, Stations to live by
- Choir who are able to lead and cantor Responsorial Psalms and Gospel Acclamations
- Engage pupils in the musical provision of the Mass and liturgy by allowing them to use their instruments (violin, woodwind, brass) to accompany hymns and songs
- Class prayer books
- Teacher facilitated worship
- Pastoral care groups with a pupil-facilitated liturgies
- Meditation
- Daily prayers
- Carol Services in school and church
- Nativity plays
- Travelling cribs at Christmas time and the travelling Advent Calendar story book
- Easter Liturgies for each day of Holy Week
- Liturgical dances

### **What does St. Stephen's do to promote Religious Education in school?**

- Devote at least 10% of curriculum time to Religious Education (excluding collective worship)

- Create exciting, inspiring and academic lessons, which seek to meet the attainment targets derived by Bishops' Conference
- Use supplementary resources e.g. John Burland CDs for music/scriptural understanding; Welcome to the Mass resources; Prayer Spaces in Schools; Come and See RE website to support teachers
- Attend all staff training delivered by the Diocesan Department for Education
- Deliver the Sacramental preparation programme for St. Aidan's Parish after-school and allow pupils from neighbouring schools (Catholic and non-Catholic schools) to attend the sessions. We also attend and facilitate the First Holy Communion preparation Masses
- Enhance the quality of our delivery by organising educational outreach visits to places of interest including (but not exclusively): St. Mary's RC Cathedral, Durham Cathedral, Bede's World, Lindisfarne (Holy Island); Jewish Synagogue as well as the Muslim Mosque.

For more information please visit:

[www.rcdhn.org.uk](http://www.rcdhn.org.uk) or [www.edurcdhn.org.uk](http://www.edurcdhn.org.uk)