



*Through God's grace, a community growing in
knowledge and understanding*

St. Laurence Catholic Primary School

Religious Education, Prayer and Collective Worship Policy

1. Introduction

"We believe that all learning is about God. As such, the teaching and learning of Religious Education is at the very heart of our curriculum. While RE exists as a discrete subject area in its own right, the skills, concepts, attitudes and beliefs learned in the subject permeate every area of life at St. Laurence School. In addition RE presents pupils with academic demands and challenges equal to those of other curriculum areas" (adapted from the Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools – Bishops' Conference 2002).

We use the East Anglian Diocese RE Curriculum Scheme (to be reviewed by the Diocese in October 2015). This relates to the national RE Curriculum Directory

This policy provides a framework through which the school expresses its prayer life. The governors recognise their responsibility to nurture and support the prayer life of the children and the school community. We recognise that young children have a natural aptitude for prayer. They are open to God and respond in joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world around them. Every child and member of staff is given a school prayer book.

Collective worship is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic ethos. The school holds a daily act of collective worship, enabling the children and staff to come together to re-focus our day with God at the centre.

This policy works in harmony with the policies for:

PSHE and Citizenship
Sex and Relationships Education
Equality
Inclusion

2. Religious Education (RE)

2.1 Aims of Religious Education

Through Religious Education we aim to:

- a. help pupils to grow in confidence in God's love
- b. continue to develop their sense of awe, wonder and reverence in the world around them
- c. develop within children a reverence for God and all things of God
- d. help children in their search for the meaning of life through the way in which God reveals himself in Christ, developing an understanding of the Gospel
- e. give RE equal status to that given to all core subjects in the curriculum
- f. put God, and therefore religious education, at the heart of the life of the school
- g. teach RE in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church
- h. provide opportunities for children to celebrate their faith through liturgy, sacrament and prayer
- i. develop a respect for each other and all people, including those of different faith and cultural backgrounds
- j. contribute to the child's understanding of morality, choice and responsibility for their present, youth and adult life
- k. foster in all the understanding of God's Kingdom through work in our local and wider community
- l. foster in all the desire and importance to care for God's world (linked to Pope Francis' encyclical letter 'Laudato Si', 2015)
- m. ensure the liturgical year is reflected in the life and activities of the school
- n. develop an understanding of other world faiths
- o. strengthen the relationship between home, parish and Catholic cluster schools
- p. provide adequate resources in terms of both personnel and materials required to

- implement the policy
- q. provide in-service training for teachers so that they have opportunities to deepen their own faith

2.2 The Role of the RE leader:

- a. To develop the spiritual life of the school and to extend the Catholic ethos.
- b. To play a significant role in strengthening the links between home, school and parish. This includes providing prayer folders to new families to the school, Mass books to Year 3 families and liaising with Parish with regard to the sacrament of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.
- c. To monitor, assess and advise on the planning, teaching and learning within RE. The RE leader will also maintain links with the Local Authority General Advisor for Humanities and RE.
- d. To ensure the suitable use of resources and maintain the RE resource cupboards.
- e. To organise The First Holy Communion Programme for Year 3 including the sacrament of Reconciliation
- f. To organise Advent and Lent Reconciliation services for whole school.
- g. To organise staff retreats
- h. To ensure that new staff are aware of:
 - The school prayer folder
 - The “Comfortable in God’s Presence” booklet
 - The prayer list
 - The guide about setting up class altar

2.3 RE Assessment

This is undertaken during each unit of work.

Assessed pieces of work are moderated at REleaders meetings within the Diocese.

RE levels will be recorded on Target Tracker in the same way as other core subjects

2.4 .RE Time Allocation

About 10% of the timetable must be given to RE:

Key Stage one =2 hours

Key Stage two =2 hours 30 minutes.

Our acts of collective worship are not included in this designated curriculum time.

2.5 Planning

- a. Teachers should plan for each RE topic in advance of teaching it.
- b. Teachers should plan for a range of learning opportunities, including discussion and different ways of recording work.
- c. Recorded work (written and pictorial) should be valued and work should be recorded weekly.
- d. The main focus of RE at St. Laurence School is on knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- e. In the autumn and summer term two weeks are devoted to the learning about other World Religions.
- f. Teachers plan with the Co-ordinator for visits, such as retreats and to both our Parish church and the cathedral

3 Prayer

3.1 What is Prayer?

Prayer is:

- a. simply being conscious of the presence of God
- b. a personal relationship with God

- c. the raising up of the mind and heart to God
- d. praising and thanking God and asking for his support
- e. being open and attentive to God
- f. following in the footsteps of Jesus and by saying the Our Father, copying His example of praying to His father
- g. about fostering community and a sense of being one with others and with God
- h. as much a part of Christian life as eating, sleeping and breathing
- i. an expression of faithful love

3.2 With Christ at the centre, our aims are:

- a. to recognise that the natural joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation in the world is the beginning of Prayer.
- b. to create and maintain a stimulating and appropriate environment where prayer can be fostered and developed fully.
- c. to enable our pupils to be confident that God is always there for them and they can pray or speak to him at any time.
- d. to develop in children the awareness of God's presence in all of creation.
- e. that children become aware of God's presence in the church
- f. that children may learn reverence for themselves, others and all things
- g. that prayer be both formal and informal
- h. that children have the opportunity to expand their consciousness to the pain and hurt of real people around them
- i. to develop an openness to God - to know we are all unconditionally loved by God.
- j. to give children opportunities to use/create their own prayer
- k. to teach children common Christian prayers, introduced gradually from Foundation to year 6
- l. to begin each day with a prayer, as well as Grace before lunch and a prayer at the end of the school day.

Appendix 1 contains the list of prayers to be taught from Foundation to Y6.

4 Collective Worship

4.1 Aims of our Collective Worship

Collective worship in our school aims to provide an opportunity for all pupils and staff to participate fully in:

- a. Contemplating the mystery of God
- b. reflecting on spiritual and moral issues
- c. exploring their own beliefs
- d. responding to and celebrating life and God's environment
- e. experiencing a sense of belonging and developing community spirit
- f. developing a common ethos and shared values
- g. enriching religious experience
- h. growing in liturgical understanding and development
- i. reinforcing prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition
- j. taking time out to "wonder at", "to come to terms with" and "to give worth to"

4.2 Collective Worship in our school

Collective worship in our school will follow the Liturgical year and will take a variety of forms which will include:

- a. Sacramental celebration
- b. Other celebrations eg Holy Week, Harvest
- c. Reflection, including retreats
- d. Meditation Assembly

- e. Silent prayer
- f. Hymns and scriptural readings
- g. Involvement of cross-curricular activities e.g. art and drama
- h. Whole school and class groupings
- i. The 'Value of the Month' Assembly

4.3 Celebrating Mass

Whole school Eucharist celebrations in school highlight special occasions and are celebrated with all the children, staff, parents and parishioners. Children also have the opportunity to participate in class Masses.

5 Including Everyone in the Religious Life of our School

We ensure all children of all faith backgrounds are given the same opportunities within Religious Education. Similarly, all children will be given the same opportunity to take part in the prayer life of the school.

Our Religious Education and prayer life are predominantly Catholic. At the same time, we celebrate and value the contribution that children of other faiths make to everyone's spiritual development. We welcome the opportunity to explore differences and similarities between different faiths; we recognise that such exploration provides everyone involved with the opportunity to strengthen their faith.

6 Staff Development

All teachers will attend the Diocesan Catholic teaching certificate course (2015-16) provided by the Margaret Beaufort Institute; this will also be offered to teaching assistants.

7 Review of Policy

This policy was reviewed in Autumn 2015 by staff and governors.
It replaces 3 separate previous policies (RE, Prayer, and Collective Worship policies)

Next review due: Autumn Term 2018.

This policy has undergone an Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Prayers taught from Foundation to Year 6

Foundation

The Sign of the Cross
Glory Be To the Father
Our Father
Grace before meals
Introduction to simple Taize chants
Introduction to simple sung mass responses

Year 1/2

All of above	Simple examination of Conscience
Hail Mary	Phrases from the Psalms
Parts of the Gloria	Stations of the Cross
Act of Contrition (own)	

Year 3/4

All of above	Eucharist prayers
Lord have Mercy	The Creed
Holy, Holy, Holy	The Rosary
Lamb of God	
Short Act of Contrition	
Prayers before/after reconciliation	
Prayers before/after Communion	

Year 5

All of the above
The Way of the Cross
The Gloria
Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Phrases from the Psalms
The Magnificat

Year 6

All of the above
Litany of the Saints
Prayers for Special Feasts

Policy Name: Religious Education, Prayer & Collective Worship

Policy Date: September 2015



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT for SCHOOL POLICIES

		Yes / No	Comments
1.	Does the Policy/Guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:		
	• Age (for policies affecting staff)	N/A	
	• Disability	N	
	• Sex	N	
	• Gender reassignment	N	
	• Pregnancy/maternity	N	
	• Race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)	N	
	• Sexual orientation	N	
	• Religion or belief	N	Pupils from different religious backgrounds receive the same RE lessons. The RE curriculum is primarily Catholic based but regularly includes study of other faiths. Pupils from different religious backgrounds are given the same opportunity to participate in prayer and collective worship. Acknowledgement is made for children of other faiths.
	• Marriage / civil partnership	N	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	Y	Pupils from non-Catholic backgrounds may respond differently to the Catholic emphasis in RE, and may feel less comfortable participating in Catholic-based prayer & worship – staff are sensitive to this in the implementation of the policy and the school acknowledges the needs of these children. Where requested, the school has agreed to make allowances for pupils of non-Christian backgrounds
3.	If we have identified potential discrimination are any exceptions reasonable, legal and justifiable?	Y	DfE Advice for School Leaders (Sept 2012) on the Equality Act 2010 explains that there are exceptions for schools of a religious character that allow for

			prominence to be given to Christian symbols/visits without equivalent provisions being made for other faiths. It also explains that schools are not acting unlawfully if they celebrate Christian festivals and have daily collective worship of a Christian nature and do not provide equivalent acts of worships for other faiths.
4.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	N	The importance of our prayer and collective worship strengthens the Catholic ethos of the school, which parents value.
5.	If so, can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
6.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	Overall, the impact of the policy is positive, and staff make allowances in individual cases where requested (see above)
7.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	

Equality Impact Assessment carried out by: J Scally, M J O 'Sullivan & B Quail

Date: September 2015