



St Thomas of Canterbury

Catholic Primary School

Where every child is special



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Religious Education Policy (next review, Spring 2024)



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School family.

We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves.

We will encourage everyone to be the best that we can be.

OUR SCHOOL AIMS

To guide our children to grow in the love of God and build relationships that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the school and society.

To develop an exciting, challenging and creative curriculum that produces confident and successful learners who are the best that they can be.

To develop high quality learning that enables every child to flourish, to discover their talents and be lifelong learners.

To establish a teaching and learning environment that encourages everyone to enjoy, to achieve, to be inclusive, to be healthy, and to stay safe.

To nurture a strong partnership between home and school.

To have respect and understanding for our school, our community and our world, helping our children to become responsible citizens and good role models.

OUR SHARED VISION

Every child at St Thomas of Canterbury is special and will achieve their full potential academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally through the provision of a loving community and rich and varied learning opportunities and the highest quality teaching and learning.

Every staff member at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to provide the opportunities that we want for our children and to do so as part of a loving community which has the highest expectations of and for all.

Every Governor at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to act as a critical friend to the School and to be accountable for the School's strategy. They will play a visible role supporting all children, their parents and staff at School and in the wider community, to provide the best environment possible for learning and spiritual growth.



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OUR GOLDEN RULE

We treat others as we would like to be treated

St Thomas of Canterbury is a Catholic Academy Primary School, a part of the family of schools within the Xavier Catholic Education Trust.

Special Considerations

1. The children are largely drawn from the four Churches, (St Josephs, St Marys, St Pius X and St Edward the Confessor), that constitute the large Catholic Parish of Guildford, in the diocese of Arundel and Brighton. Three priests serve these four churches.
2. The school welcomes all children and, whilst the majority of children in the school are Catholic, the school family includes children of many different religions and of none.
3. The children's experience of church varies from belonging to a supportive Catholic family to others whose only experience of Church is school.

Agreed Syllabus

St. Thomas of Canterbury uses the Religious Education Programme 'Come and See' by Victoria Hummell. This programme follows the Diocesan Syllabus approved by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales and adopted by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

Time Allocated

The time allocated for R.E. is as follows:

Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1	- 10%
Key Stage 2	- 10%
(This does not include times of Collective Worship.)	

Aims and Objectives

Religious Education promotes the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God. With this thought in mind, religious growth and development cannot be confined purely to the "academic" timetabled R.E. lesson. We seek to provide a whole-school experience, which stimulates religious growth and development hand in hand with academic and social progress.

Every child is at a different stage of a faith journey and this needs to be considered when providing for his/her religious needs. This may not always take place in the formal R.E. lesson, but should occur in other aspects of school life. We aim to help the children to experience, understand, celebrate and live their faith in ways suited to their age and development. The school tries to support, clarify and extend the child's experiences at home. We seek to proclaim the Gospel values of care, commitment, acceptance and respect.

Objectives

1. To provide a structured and balanced programme of Religious Education that helps to develop the knowledge and understanding of the mystery of the Trinity, of the Church and the central beliefs, which form the Catholic Faith.



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2. To encourage the children to appreciate, through their own experience of life, a love and sense of wonder and awe of the Gospels, Revelation and Tradition.
3. To promote enriching opportunities for prayer and worship, and to help the children to understand and appreciate the value of the Sacraments on their journey through life.
4. To promote the growth of sound personal relationships, including an awareness of the nature and importance of human sexuality, as part of God's plan for them and an appreciation of the values of the family.
5. To foster appropriate attitudes by showing regard and respect for the views of others, a tolerance and some knowledge, as led by 'Come and See', of the beliefs and traditions of other faiths.
6. To appreciate that living as a Christian involves a commitment to peace, justice, care and concern.

Content

In St Thomas' we are following the 'Come and See' programme which is developed through three themes based on documents from the Second Vatican Council. These themes are: Church, Sacrament and Christian Living.

The whole school explores each religious theme at the same time through different topics following a yearly teaching cycle. The following is the timetable of topics adopted.

THEMES & TOPICS	EARLY YEARS 1 & 2	YEAR 1 & FS 1	YEAR 2 & FS 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
Domestic church family	Myself God knows and loves each one	Families God's love and care for every family	Beginnings God at every beginning	Homes God's dream for every family	People The family of God in Scripture	Ourselves Created in the image & likeness of God	Loving God who never stops loving
Baptism/confirmation belonging	Welcome Baptism; a welcome to God's family	Belonging Baptism an invitation to belong to God's family	Signs & symbols Signs & symbols in Baptism	Promises Promises made at Baptism	Called Confirmation: a call to witness	Life choices Marriage commitment and service	Vocation & commitment The vocation of priesthood and religious life
Advent/Christmas loving	Birthday Looking forward to Jesus' birthday	Waiting Advent a time to look forward to Christmas	Preparations Advent; preparing to celebrate Christmas	Visitors Advent: waiting for the coming of Jesus	Gift God's gift of love & friendship in Jesus	Hope Advent; waiting in joyful hope for Jesus; the promised one	Expectations Jesus born to show God to the world
Local church community	Celebrating People celebrate in Church	Special people People in the parish family	Books The books used in Church	Journeys Christian family's journey with Jesus	Community Life in the local Christian community: ministries in the parish	Mission Continuing Jesus' mission in diocese [ecumenism]	Sources The Bible, the special book for the Church
Eucharist relating	Gathering The parish family gathers to celebrate Eucharist	Meals Mass; Jesus' special meal	Thanksgiving Mass a special time for saying thank you to God for everything, especially Jesus	Listening & sharing Jesus gives himself to us in a special way	Giving & receiving Living in communion	Memorial sacrifice The Eucharist the living memorial of Jesus' sacrifice	Unity Eucharist enables people to live in communion.
Lent/Easter giving	Growing Looking forward to Easter	Change Lent a time for change	Opportunities Lent; an opportunity to start anew in order to celebrate Jesus' new life	Giving all Lent a time to remember Jesus' total giving	Self discipline Celebrating growth to new life	Sacrifice Lent a time of aligning with the sacrifice already made by Jesus	Death & new life Celebrating Jesus' death & resurrection
Pentecost serving	Good News Passing on the Good news of Jesus	Holidays & holydays Pentecost: feast of the Holy Spirit	Spread the word Pentecost a time to spread the Good News	Energy Gifts of the Holy Spirit	New life To hear & live the Easter message	Transformation Celebration of the Spirit's transforming power	Witnesses The Holy Spirit enables people to become witnesses
Reconciliation Inter-relating	Friends Friends of Jesus	Being sorry God helps us to choose well Sacrament of Reconciliation	Rules Reasons for rules in the Christian family Sacrament of Reconciliation	Choices The importance of examination of conscience Sacrament of Reconciliation	Building bridges Admitting wrong, being reconciled with God and each other Sacrament of Reconciliation	Freedom & responsibility Commandments enable Christians to be free & responsible	Healing Sacrament of the Sick
Universal Church world	Our world God's wonderful world	Neighbours Neighbours share God's world	Treasures God's treasure; the world	Special places Holy places for Jesus & the Christian	God's people Different saints show people what God is like	Stewardship The Church is called to the stewardship of Creation	Common good Work of the worldwide Christian family



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The programme identifies these elements of the process of Religious Education:

1. **Explore:** This is the introduction to the topic where the children's life experience is explored, the question(s) it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon.
2. **Reveal:** This is the heart of the programme where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living.
3. **Respond:** This is where the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in every day life.

Our Policy for Religious Education

1. Mission Statement Ethos

Religious Education at St Thomas' begins with our general ethos, which seeks to proclaim the Gospel values of care, commitment, acceptance and respect. This philosophy permeates all areas of school life and all subjects taught.

2. The Bible

In our lessons, assemblies and liturgies, we try to introduce the children, in a way suitable to their age and stage of development, to the variety of literacy forms in the Bible, to understand its origins and treat it with respect and reverence. The younger children primarily build on their own experience and then are gradually introduced to the Bible.

3. Multi-cultural, Multi-faith society

Our school recognises that we live in a diverse society and seeks to reflect and celebrate that diversity. We try to develop the child's understanding of the self and to encourage attitudes of openness and sensitivity towards people whose religious beliefs and customs may be different to their own. We look to invite visiting speakers, look for suitable literature concerning the variety of celebrations and festivals, and seek opportunities on topics, music etc. to widen our children's awareness of other Faiths and cultures.

Two other religions are taught from EYFS to year 6 following the programme of study in "Come and See". These are Judaism, which is usually taught in the autumn, and Islam, which is taught in the summer. At least one week's teaching and learning time per year is given to each.

4. Teaching and Learning Techniques

A range of teaching and learning techniques is involved according to the age and needs of the child. Children are encouraged to aim at the highest standards of presentation and to display work for others to share. Children with special needs of any kind are central to our concern and every effort is made to adapt the curriculum to their individual needs and to recognise their talents. Every member of staff has a line manager who has special responsibility for their pastoral care and professional development, and is available to assist with personal problems. For children, their class teacher oversees pastoral care.





We seek to develop a sense of social justice in our children by supporting charities such as Mission Together, The Catholic Children's Society and the Poppy Appeal. We have strong links with our partner school in Busenya.

5. Home/ School Partnership

Parents are recognised and valued as being the children's first educators in their faith. We work to build strong partnership between school and parents through communication of the R.E curriculum, access to information and guidance on how to support their child's learning in R.E. The school website and Newsletters are used to do this. Parents are invited to their children's prayer services, assemblies, and class and school Masses. Teachers plan one homework task for each RE topic to foster our home school link and further develop the children's learning in R.E.

Assessing, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of pupils' work is an intrinsic part of the learning process. Teachers make professional judgments almost continuously about pupils' performance and each term teachers set a more formal assessment task for pupils to undertake.
- Teachers then use all this evidence to assess pupils progress and attainment in RE at the end of each term. This data is recorded and analysed in accordance with school policy.
- The school maintains a portfolio of pupils' work and teachers regularly moderate their judgments as year groups and as a whole staff. This ensures accuracy in assessment and helps staff identify the next steps in children's learning to ensure good rate of progress.
- Progress in achievement on R.E is reported to parents and carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Progress and achievement in R.E is reported to governors through an annual monitoring report to the governors.

Assessment for learning underpins the teaching and learning of R.E. Teachers therefore:

- share learning goals with pupils;
- help pupils to know and to recognise the standards to aim for;
- provide feedback which leads pupils to identify what they should do next to improve;
- have a commitment that every pupil can improve;
- involve both teacher and pupils in reviewing and reflecting on pupils' performance and progress;
- involve pupils in self-assessment.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, and R.E Subject Leader are responsible for the self-evaluation of the Catholic Life of the School. This process enables us identify what actions are required to further improve and build an effective Action Plan for R.E.





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This policy of St Thomas of Canterbury School upholds the school's ethos and Mission Statement. It must be read in conjunction with and implemented in accordance to the school's policies for Health & Safety Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding. Copies of these policies are available from the school website.

