



## Religious Education Policy

I am a  
child  
of God  
*1 John 3:1*

### St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

Guided by God, St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve."

**"St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment"**

## **Introduction**

***“The pupils are at the heart of every decision made, including areas identified for continued improvement.” – CSI Report (June 2023)***

At St Gerard's, we believe that each child is unique. The recognition of this individuality, together with a concern for the total development of the 'whole child' is at the heart of our educational philosophy. This is in line with our Mission Statement, which is evident around our school. This is to remind all staff, parents and visitors of our reasons for learning. We feel that this development is best achieved in an atmosphere where personal relationships can flourish and children of all faiths are respected and given the opportunity to explore their own capabilities and potential, in the know that they have the support and encouragement of a caring community.

## **Mission Statement**

***“Guided by God, St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve.”***

Our Mission Statement underpins all that we do at St Gerard's. As a school community, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus and strive for all children to be their best. Children at St Gerard's embody the key words from our Mission Statement and thrive to live them out in all that they do.

## **Background**

St Gerard's is part of the local community. We accept Catholic children living within the parish of St Marie's. In addition, we admit a number of traveller children and children from the local refuge. Many of our children come to us from non-Christian faith traditions, with no religious beliefs or affiliations whatsoever. All are made to feel welcome and all of the children participate within the school's religious activities. Our school is part of the parish of St Wilfrid's.

## **Aims**

At St Gerard's, Religious Education pervades our whole school curriculum and address all pupils in our school, regardless of diversity of religious background and commitment.

We aim to:

- Help pupils recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life.
- Lead children to delve into a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and other religious traditions. .
- Challenge pupils to examine their own commitment and to respect that of others.
- Promote a welcoming atmosphere of co-operation where experience and expertise can be shared with mutual trust and openness.

## **Objectives**

- We provide a programme to all children that is in accordance with the standards and guidelines set out by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. We continue to follow 'Come and See' throughout KS2.
- We are also beginning the new curriculum 'To Know You More Clearly' from the Religious Education Directory in a graduated approach. This will begin with EYFS in autumn term, Year 1 in spring term and by the summer term, all of EYFS and KS1 will be delivering the new curriculum.
- We ensure that 10% of RE is taught within the curriculum time within all year groups.
- We respect our own Diocesan and pastoral practice and support parish sacramental preparation programmes for First Holy Communion and Reconciliation.
- We recognise that there will be vacancies in the stages and levels of faith experienced by individual members of our school community and promote strong interaction between home, parish and school to foster and embed true Christian attitudes.

## **RE in the Classroom**

***"A consistent and well-planned curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religious education" (CSI Report- June 2023)***

Our whole school curriculum is based on Gospel Values and as we see all education as revealing the mystery of God, we recognise two aspects of Religious Education within our school:

**Implicit** (or unstructured Religious Education) – those opportunities which arise in the course of the day to lead pupils through curriculum content or through relationships to a religious understanding of their implications. It is the policy of this school to use opportunities as they arise.

**Explicit** (or structured Religious Education) – those timetabled periods that give to an explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom. It is the policy of this school to allocate 10% of the curriculum timetable to Religious Education plus explicit teaching during assembly times.

## **Structure and Management of Religious Education**

***“Relationships are key to the success of the school and help to create the love, awe and wonder that is shared with pupils and staff each day.” – CSI Report (June 2023)***

All staff are responsible for being good role models and setting a good example for children. They embody the Gospel Values in all that they do and ensure that they promote religious teaching both implicitly and explicitly throughout the day. We have 9 teachers, including the Head Teacher, who have responsibility for providing Religious Education at St Gerard's. We also have a HLTA who holds the CCRS qualification and is responsible for supporting the Religious Education curriculum and Catholic life of the school.

### **The role of the Religious Education Coordinator**

The Religious Education Coordinator is Miss Sanders. She is responsible for leading a Catholic educating community. She leads an RE Team that consists of herself, Mr Landrum and Mrs Flint. The RE Coordinator ensures that the programme of study is given full regard as a stand-alone subject and within the whole school curriculum. She promotes close working between parish, home and school and provides clear leadership and support in the implementation and organisation of Religious Education. The Coordinator is also responsible for communicating regular updates to all staff regarding the subject.

### **The role of the Classroom Teacher**

Teachers who are delivering the new curriculum plan, teach and evaluate lessons in accordance with the Religious Education Directory. Other teachers plan, teach and evaluate lessons in accordance with the chosen RE programme, Come and See. All teachers ensure that planning and teaching are appropriate to the age and ability of pupils within their class. Class teachers are also responsible for encouraging children to develop their spiritual and moral awareness of theirs and others religions.

## **Requisition**

In order to provide the best possible Religious Education to our children, we place high priority on purchasing valuable resources to support this. By doing this, teachers are fully equipped to provide the best Religious Education to children both in and out of the classroom. There is generous funding available from the school budget to purchase resources and these are regularly updated. The Senior Leadership Team, along with the RE Coordinator, are responsible for sourcing high quality resources such as books, posters and music. Within school, there is a bank of RE resources which are organised and maintained by Mrs Flint. Each class also has access to God's Story books, Church Story books, Good News Bibles and a variety of other resources.

## **Staff Development**

We are committed to keeping Religious Education central to future developments within our school, as we continue to develop our whole school mission and ethos, based on the values Jesus taught us. The subject coordinator and other teaching staff attend Archdiocesan courses where necessary. The Senior Leadership Team, along with the RE Coordinator, also encourage staff to study for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies, as we see this as enhancing the provision for our pupils. Staff are also encouraged to read the 'Come and See for Yourself' materials to support their own subject knowledge. Where staff feel they need support, they report to the subject coordinator who provides adequate support using guidance from the Archdiocese. The RE Coordinator is also part of the Widnes RE Cluster Group and is able to share good practice during meetings. When staff are new to the school, they receive a Staff Induction Policy which states the Ethos and Mission Statement of St Gerard's. Staff are provided with training and support to ensure that they feel confident to deliver the programme. Where training is available within the Archdiocese, staff will attend. New staff are also invited to plan with the RE Coordinator or another experienced member of staff who are always willing to help and answer questions. All new members of staff will receive a copy of the RE Handbook that is a clear guide of the RE curriculum.

## **The Wider Church and Community Links**

We strive to bring the children in our care to a greater global awareness of the needs of others. We encourage a generous and spontaneous response to appeals, whether it is in the form of prayer or practical help (eg: fundraising, collections, donations etc.) We ensure that this education is embedded throughout the whole school life and curriculum and invite staff and pupils to participate in parish celebrations and events within the community. We also have strong links within the community to help those in need, such as local charities and food banks. We also encourage inter-action with other local schools and have links with our local secondary feeder school, St Peter's and St Paul's Catholic High School.

### **Special Educational Needs**

As a Catholic school, we are aware that all children are a unique gift from God, each with their own individual talents and needs. Our whole school approach to the teaching of Religious Education is inclusive and we ensure that children with Special Educational Needs are catered for within the teaching of the RED or Come and See. Pupils are able to work to their different abilities and all children are made to feel that they have achieved.

### **Equal Opportunities**

When teaching Religious Education, all children are treated with equal respect. All children are expected to listen to the views of other people, and respect that sometimes there may be a difference of opinion. In the delivery of the syllabus and other curriculum areas, children are introduced to the views, beliefs and cultures of other faiths and study this each year.

### **Related Policies/Handbooks**

- Collective Worship Policy
- Spiritual and Moral Development Policy
- RSE Policy
- PSHE Policy
- RE Handbook
- Collective Worship Handbook

### **Policy Updated**

Date: February 2024

By: Miss L. Sanders (RE Coordinator)