

St Luke Academies Trust



Expectations in the Teaching and Learning of Religious Education

Presented to Directors: November 2017

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Review date: December 2019

This policy outlines the aims and intentions for teaching R.E. at schools within St Luke Academies Trust.

Vision

The vision of St Luke Academies Trust, as set out in the Vision and Aims statement, is to develop each of its schools as welcoming and inclusive communities, where faith is nurtured, excellence in learning is achieved and pupils are inspired to serve others, following the example of Jesus.

We aspire to follow the Church's mission; to make Christ known to all people placing Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people's lives.

The Core Principles of St Luke Academies Trust, as expressed in *Principles, Practices and Concerns* (Bishops' Conference 1996) are that our schools will promote:

- the search for excellence as an integral part of the spiritual quest;
- the uniqueness of the individual made in God's image and loved by Him;
- the education of the whole person based on the belief that the human and divine are inseparable;
- the education of all, with the particular duty to care for the poor and disadvantaged;
- the promotion of social justice in every aspect of our work.

Aims

Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" in a Catholic school (Pope St John Paul II).

"The immediate aim of Religious Education is to promote knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, its relevance to the ultimate questions of life and the skills required to engage in religious thinking" (Broad Areas of Attainment in Religious Education).

Catholic schools serve diverse populations of pupils and within this context the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) makes the aims of Religious Education explicit. St Luke Academies Trust is committed to these aims:

1. To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;

2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
3. 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;
4. To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
5. To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
6. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
8. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

The outcome of excellent 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. (Religious Education Curriculum Directory p6).

RE Curriculum

The content of Religious Education (RE) and how it is assessed is determined by the diocesan Bishop for the schools within his diocese. Schools within this diocese follow the 'Come and See' programme for Religious Education.

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

In *Come and See* these big questions are considered in the light of the Scriptures and Tradition of the Church, as expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Come and See is developed through three themes, which are gradually explored each time at greater depths. They are *Church*, *Sacrament* and *Christian living*.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses the human search for meaning. 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 and 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 generally 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 generally 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.

Rejoice is the second part of the section. There will be the opportunity to plan and take part in a celebration.

Renew 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.

Respond will take one week of Religious Education time to complete.

The 'Come and See' programme incorporates pupils learning about other faiths. This is important for the following reasons:

1. Learning about the religion and cultures of those who do not share the Catholic faith is one of the ways in which Catholic schools embody the call to love one's neighbour. As the Church says, "The love for all men and women is

also a love for their culture. Catholic schools are, by their very vocation, intercultural." (Congregation for Catholic Education p61).

2. It is required by the Bishops, who state that the Catholic nature of our schools entails "a willingness... to try to understand better the religion of one's neighbours, and to experience something of their religious life and culture." (Catholic Bishops' Conference p3).
3. Many of the children in Catholic schools are practicing members of other faiths and our schools need to be places of hospitality for these children. It is an act of respect and courtesy that our curriculum helps them to reflect on the nature of their own religious identity. As the Church says, "All children and young people [including those of other faiths in our Catholic schools] must have the same possibilities for arriving at the knowledge of their own religion as well as of elements that characterise other religions." (Congregation for Catholic Education)
4. It prepares the pupils in our Catholic schools for life in modern Britain, giving them an understanding of the beliefs of others. This in turn will improve social cohesion and contribute to the common good by increasing mutual respect between those of different religions.

Curriculum Time

The teaching of Religious Education is accorded the status of a core subject at schools within St Luke Academies Trust and a minimum of 10% of curriculum time should be given to its teaching.

The Sacraments

The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are taught in Year Three and Confirmation in Year Six, with each school following a programme relevant to their particular circumstances and links with their parishes.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

There is an expectation that assessment will take place each term and inform a record of attainment level for each pupil kept by each class teacher. (Bishop's Conference Levels of Attainment in Religious Education.) This information, collated by each class teacher, provides a record of attainment and progress for each pupil termly. This assessment record continues as pupils go through the school. A formal reporting to parents takes place at the end of each school year.

R.E is a core subject and takes prominence, placed as the first item above English and Mathematics.

RE Subject Leaders

There will be an opportunity for RE Subject Leaders to meet three times a year. At these meetings there will be an opportunity to share good practice, plan collaborative events and to take part in moderation of books.

RE Policies

Each school will develop the following policies in relation to Religious Education and Catholic Life of their schools:

- Religious Education Policy
- Chaplaincy Policy
- Spirituality Policy
- Moral, Social and Cultural Policy
- Liturgy Policy
- Home, School and Parish Links Policy

RE Inspection

All Catholic schools and academies are subject to a diocesan inspection at least every five years. These inspections will be carried out by diocesan inspectors appointed by the Bishop.

Please also see Diocesan Protocols on Religious Education and Collective Worship on NORES Website