

**“I have come that
they may have life
and have it to the full”**

John 10:10



Religious Education Policy

Reviewed: September 2021

Our Vision:

Our vision is to enable our young people to live life to the full in a challenging and constantly changing world.

Our Mission:

Pield Heath House School owes its existence and special character to the belief that God loves us. The daily life of the school is nurtured by the teachings of Christ who showed us the Fathers Love: to believe; to hope; to forgive; to love.

We are a well organised educational community in which all young people are of equal importance and are valued for the individuals they are, regardless of race, culture or background.

We aim to provide these ideals in our relationships within our community.

We provide an educational community that is holistic as well as formal by involving parents, governors, and the local community.

We give all young people the opportunity for educational development to the highest possible level.

We aim to develop each individual's talents, abilities, skills and understanding, in order that they may live life to the full.

Our Values

Pield Heath 'CARES'

We are **Committed** to working collaboratively and listening to each other's views and wishes so that we can achieve more together

We are **Aspirational** for ourselves and others and encourage everyone to achieve and celebrate their accomplishments

We treat everyone with **Respect** and dignity and celebrate difference

We **Empower** everyone to be the best they can be

We **Share** our gifts, time and talents generously in order for our community to flourish

We seek to do this:

By creating a well organised educational environment in which each member of the school community is valued as a unique creation of God, regardless of race, culture and background, and opportunity is provided in the curriculum to raise academic achievement, together with the development of each pupils' talents, abilities, skills and understanding. We aim to help pupils with learning difficulties to develop their full potential through our policy of encouraging equal opportunities for all.

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1. Introduction

'What makes the Catholic School distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love'

(Declaration on Christian Education 8;RDI Vatican Council)

'Catholics believe that Religious Education is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values it communicates should inspire and unify every aspect of school life. It should provide the context for, and substantially shape, the school curriculum and offer living experience of the life of faith in its practical expression'

(Bishops of England and Wales 1988)

"The purpose of Religious Education in all Catholic Schools is to develop "religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically".

(Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools ES-1996)

Pield Heath House School subscribes to the above statements and has sought to embody this vision for Catholic Education in its Mission Statement and all the schools policies and practices. We see Religious Education as central to the Curriculum ('the Core of the Core Curriculum' Cardinal Hume 1988). The religious education lesson is often the starting point for the taught curriculum and a means to open out religious education right across the whole school experience. In practice, we endeavour to provide a curriculum which sees everything connected with human living, and the means by which we come to terms with it as part of God's self revelation to humanity.

The Scriptures, the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, Prayer and life experience are the main sources from which our religious education flows.

Pield Heath House School caters for students with moderate to severe learning difficulties autistic spectrum disorders and associated speech and language and communication difficulties.

2. Rationale

Pield Heath House School is administered by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster. As a Catholic School, R.E. is in accordance with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church and must fulfil the diocesan requirements. In addition, Church Festivals are celebrated usually with a Liturgy or a Mass. Worship is seen as an essential part of the religious experience. The Liturgy and Masses in themselves give a good general framework to the Christian faith. They also incorporate key elements of Christian principles such as being sorry, reconciliation, giving and receiving, giving thanks, listening, sharing and celebrating. A simplified liturgy is used and arranged to allow maximum participation from the students. Pield Heath House School is part of the Church and as such a sacramental community and the celebration of Mass is a central part of our worship. Students who are Catholic may be prepared to receive the sacraments where this is deemed appropriate and in consultation with families and clergy. Sacramental preparation is delivered on an individual or small group basis as and when appropriate and in consultation with families.

3. Aims

The aims of R.E. at Pield Heath School are to:

- Develop this RE Policy as an enabling framework in which all the students have the opportunity to develop their religious potential within all areas of learning provided in the school.
- Lead pupils and students into an understanding of the religious dimension of life and enable them to make their own responses to it.
- Help pupils and students to grow and develop in their faith through collective worship and personal and shared experience.
- Dialogue with the students and their parents to try to establish where the students are on their faith journey. Promote an awareness and exploration of Christian truths and values, with particular reference to the Catholic faith.
- Accompany students through their learning activities, their relationships, their joys and their sorrows in finding God who is Creator; Christ who is the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit who is the Inspirer.
- Help students to develop a proper relationship of care and service towards other people and themselves.
- Provide the experience of and encourage participation in a caring, worshipping and living Catholic community.
- Create an understanding and an environment where shortcomings are acknowledged to be in need of Christ's healing.
- Encourage opportunities to deepen knowledge and the love of Jesus.

4. Objectives for these Aims:

- i) To teach the students to know and love God
- ii) To develop the inner life of the school on the psychological, social, spiritual, moral, emotional and intuitive levels; so that values and attitudes and personal skills are acquired.
- iii) To promote faith sharing for students.
- iv) To promote faith sharing for the staff and school community.
- v) To focus the curriculum in a way that reveals God's love and care for His people.
- vi) To celebrate the gift of self and to build self-esteem.
- vii) To celebrate both individual and communal achievement through the liturgical life of the school.
- viii) To teach and encourage students to pray, using a variety of forms.
- ix) To develop school / parish links and raise awareness of the wide catchment area of our students.
- x) To provide opportunities for the RE Link Governor / Governors to take part in the life of the school eg. curriculum development discussion, liturgical celebrations, social events.

5. Elements in Achieving these Aims and Objectives

5.1. Scripture

We regard the Scriptures as one of the central elements in our Religious Education lessons because the Scriptures:

- Tell us of God's love.
- Show us that love is made clear in the life, death and resurrection of His son Jesus.
- Help us through reflection to come to recognise we are God's people.

We encourage the students to discover and explore something of their own personal story by choosing scripture stories which depict characters with whom they can identify or to whose experience they can relate; thus helping the pupils to understand and appreciate something of the richness of the scriptures.

We use the approach of “Godly Play” as a multisensory way to involve students in discovering, wondering and playfully responding to the stories from the Bible.

As a staff we are conscious of the need to be open to the meaning of scripture in our own lives so as to inform and enrich our teaching.

Effort is made to help students to see how the Bible is respected and revered in the Christian Community.

5.2. Teaching and Learning

We take Jesus as our model in our teaching methods. The teaching steps in, for example, the story of the Woman at the Well have become a source of inspiration as to the way we teach our students ways of

- Establishing a relationship with the students.
- Finding out where the students are.
- Interacting with them as they acquire knowledge and skills.
- Strengthening and supporting them as they internalise learning and make it their own, in order to become confident and committed learners

This model is reinforced through reducing barriers to learning through differentiated programmes which provide an individualised programme of study for our students with complex learning needs.

Opportunity is also provided to teach RE to the students in groups so that:

- Students will see what the implications may be for the learning needs of other students in the group.
- Students work together on RE problem solving tasks
- They use the RE activities as a context for developing other specific skills.
- The RE lesson builds up mutual trust, respect and confidence.

We believe that all our students are entitled to equal access to the RE Curriculum and should be allowed to express themselves according to their ability, for example, by using art to record ideas and where writing skills are less developed, all work is

valued. We should be aware of our students various cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds and be sensitive in our approach and the use of materials.

R.E. is a core subject and at Key Stage 2/3/4 covers 10% of the curriculum, this time does not include time spent in collective worship. The 'Come and See' Programme is used as the main source to deliver the curriculum, with 9 main topics adapted for the Semi Formal and Formal Curriculum throughout all Key Stages arranged in a 3 year cycle with the implementation of "Godly Play" as well as piloting some aspects of Dr Margaret Carswell's programme to enrich the whole programme with Scripture. (Appendix 1)

The programme sets out help students to explore the beliefs, values and traditions of the Catholic Church and of other faiths. A flexible approach is necessary to take account of the particular needs and abilities of the students. Other resources can also be used alongside the programme.

A whole school approach is used so that assemblies and special celebrations can be linked to the Religious Education Programme. Both departments are circulated with the assembly/special celebrations list at the beginning of the year. The same topic is covered throughout the whole school at the time, at the adapted level and coordinated with the Liturgical Year to provide the possibility of linking it with school assemblies and worship which provide the experience of participation in a caring, worshipping and living Catholic community.

Monday morning Acts of worship reflect the readings and Gospel of the Sunday Mass.

5.3. Learning

The quality of learning will be dependent on students:

- Being willing to participate.
- Being able to express their thoughts and ideas.
- Developing respect for others and the world around them
- Being given an opportunity to develop their spirituality e.g. through prayer and reflection, learning factual information relevant to the topic being taught.
- Showing an awareness of what they have done in R.E. and ultimately putting it into practice in their daily lives.

5.4. Resources

The allocation of resources is the responsibility of the R.E. Coordinator. When planning, teachers will need to identify the resources needed for each half term in advance and notify the subject leader. R.E. resources are available in the RE Resource Room located in the Victor Braun Centre.

These resources are added to yearly by the ordering of new equipment based on staff recommendations of need for effective delivery of the R.E. programme at an appropriate level.

5.5. Health & Safety

Risk assessment judgments are to be made by individual members of staff when using equipment or going on outings with students. It is the responsibility of the staff to be aware of any possible issues which may arise. Any specific issues relating to health and safety which need immediate attention should be brought to the Head Teacher's and Health and Safety officer's notice.

6. Evaluation

6.1 Assessment

Evaluation in Pield Heath House School is a continuous process and is used to inform decisions; it is the driving force behind the School Development plan. As such, we constantly review the distinctive nature of our provision and the special part Religious Education plays in sustaining and developing the Catholic ethos of the curriculum.

We recognise that evaluation and assessment of RE touches on areas of personal faith, beliefs, attitudes and values which may encroach on the private life of the student. We are aware therefore that assessment is concerned with learning objectives in the areas of knowledge, concepts and skills.

In line with the evaluation and assessment process of 'Come and See', we are continually adapting it to the needs of our students as we seek to:

- Assess and monitor students' progress.
- Diagnose and assist individual pupils learning.
- Provide a framework for future planning.
- Ensure breadth and depth in RE lessons.

- Recognise and affirm achievement;
- Give an accurate report of attainment to the student him/herself, the parents and to the student's next teacher.

6.2. Recording

A variety of forms of record keeping is used in line with Whole School Policy, for example:

- Photographs
- Samples of work
- Students exercise books
- Teachers' weekly/termly/yearly plans
- Teachers' observations
- Teachers' comments or appraisal of students' work/discussion of work with individual students.

6.3. Reporting

There is a report sent to parents and also for the student's team carrying out the Annual Review.

7. The R.E. Coordinator will:

- Take the lead in Policy Development.
- Disseminate 'Come and See' plans and assessments and keep the Religious Education handbook updated.
- Support colleagues in their organisation of curriculum time and planning.
- Attend regular Westminster Coordinator meetings at Vaughan House and any other relevant CPD opportunities. Keep up to date with developments and disseminate to colleagues – including INSET.
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources for Religious Education.
- With the SLT monitor planning and students work in key stages 2, 3, 4 and 5 identifying strengths and areas for development.
- With the SLT, consult with stakeholders to annually update the Religious Education SEF and submit to the Diocese.
- Monitor the curriculum content and learning / teaching experiences of students.
- Ensure procedures for effective assessment and efficient recording of students work are carried out.
- Work to school policies in teaching and learning and assessment including target setting.

8. Links with the Community

In order to facilitate the delivery of the R.E. programme in Field Heath House School a number of links with people outside the school have been made. Their advice, contribution and involvement is invaluable. (Appendix 2)

9. Parental Engagement

Parental involvement in the area of Religious education is important and is encouraged and achieved through:

- Subject and Masses & Liturgies booklets.
- Consultation & Parents Evenings
- Subject curriculum targets sent home
- Involvement with sacramental preparations
- Attendance at Christmas performances and other special events.

10. Cross Curricular Links

We seek to create a Christian ethos which should be reflected in all areas of the school. Just as R.E. cannot be separated from the general life of the school neither can it be separated from the rest of the curriculum. In developing understanding in science and humanities, there will often be a religious element since religion is about life itself.

An integrated approach is often most appropriate.

- Science
- Humanities
- PHSE and Citizenship
- Community Skills

11. Equal Opportunities

All pupils and students should have access to a relevant curriculum/programme which meets their individual needs. Materials used reflect the multi-cultural society in which we live and are checked for race or gender stereotypes. No differentiation is to be made between students as regards gender, ability, race, religion or social background. All have a right to develop self-esteem and respect for others and learn tolerance in the treatment and understanding of others. As not all students are Catholic, R.E. is open to the faiths of others and those who do not have any faith.

12. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The R.E. Curriculum Coordinators undertake termly in-service training, supplied by the Diocese of Westminster and Catholic Schools Service, to keep well informed of curriculum developments. The Managers then disseminate the information to the RE Department regularly.

13. Governors

It is the responsibility of the school and its governors to familiarize themselves with school policies. The curriculum managers are responsible for informing the Leader (Head Teacher) and governors of any amendments made to the policy.

14. Appendices

1. Come and See Programme
2. Community Links
3. Long Term Plans, Medium Term Overview and Weekly Medium Term Plans
4. AQA Unit Awards

Appendix 1: Come and See Programme

'Come and See' has been specially adapted to meet the needs of pupils and students at Pield Heath School. The entire programme has been designed to meet the needs of students aged 5-19 with Autism and additional learning disabilities operating academically in the achievement range of P3 – NC3. The programme is designed to be delivered through the Key Stages and each Key stage contains the necessary yearly cycle which relates to the original programmes year groups.

Appendix 2: Community Links

- Parish - Our Lady of Lourdes & St Michael, Uxbridge / Hillingdon Deanery
- Hillingdon Catholic Schools Forum (HCSF)
- The Baptist and Pentecostal Churches, Hillingdon
- Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, London
- Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hillingdon
- Gurdwara Sikh Centre in Ealing

- Links with Special Schools / Organisations
- St Joseph School, Cranleigh
- St John's School, Chigwell
- Caritas St Joseph's, Hendon

Date of Policy Review