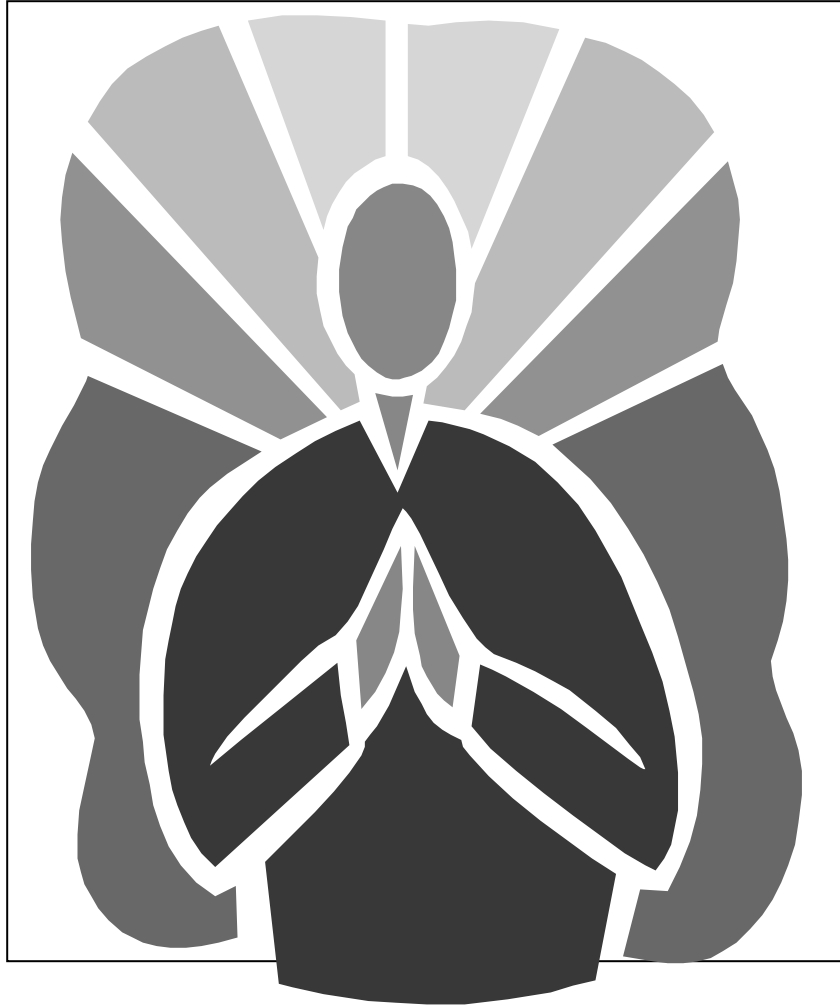


Religious Education Policy



St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Together Through Christ We Grow and Learn

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

Our aims in teaching Religious Education are to enable children:

- To build a loving relationship with God Our Father, through prayer, worship and the life, words and actions of Jesus Christ as recorded in the scriptures.
- To nurture, guide and spiritually enrich our children on their Faith Journey.
- To encourage the children to develop self-respect, respect for others and God's creation.
- To develop the children's awareness of their responsibility in the local and wider community.
- To imbue the children with a sense of responsibility for their actions and enable them to develop a spiritually informed conscience and sound moral judgements.
- To foster a living commitment to the Faith.
- To ensure that Religious Education continues to have a central place in the curriculum, permeating every aspect of school life.
- To celebrate other faiths to enrich children's understanding of the world around them.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

Organisation of Curriculum Time

Classroom Religious Education is a dynamic encounter between the child, the teacher and the authentic teaching material, in context of the living Catholic Faith of the whole school community. It demands excellence in the teaching materials that are offered. Come and See enables teachers to make clear links to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Bishop's Religious Curriculum Directory.

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

The basic question/belief for each term is explored through three kinds of themes.

Community of Faith ↔ Church

Celebration in Ritual ↔ Sacraments

Way of Life ↔ Christian living

The Community of Faith ↔ Church Themes are:

Autumn: Family ↔ Domestic Church

Spring Community ↔ Local Church

Summer: World ↔ Universal Church

The Celebration in Ritual ↔ Sacraments Themes are:

Autumn: Belonging ↔ Baptism / Confirmation

Spring: Relating ↔ Eucharist

Summer: Inter-Relating ↔ Reconciliation

The Way of Life ↔ Christian Living Themes are:

Autumn: Loving ↔ Advent / Christmas

Spring: Giving ↔ Lent / Easter

Summer: Serving ↔ Pentecost

Come and See is developed through three topics, three distinctive starting points which are based on the Second Vatican Council. This means that a theme can be explored through a different topic. The content is structured so that there is cohesion and progression in what children do and learn. For each topic, there are clearly stated learning outcomes, achievable learning objectives and a variety of experiences and activities for each of the learning objectives. In addition to this, each lesson is linked into the Curriculum Directory and it is delivered through a process recognised in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- **Explore:** by exploring their life experience to discover value and significance
- **Reveal:** by hearing, understanding and reflecting on the Christian message
- **Respond:** by bringing it to mind, by celebrating and by applying it

The scheme must also be supplemented to ensure coverage of current events such as the Year of Faith, the inauguration of the Pope and liturgical celebrations. The supplementary materials provided by the Diocese are recommended.

Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD)

*St Vincent's follows the Come and See programme of work which is faithful to the organic nature of the RECD's programme of study and follows the appropriate topics and themes. It is creative and dynamic by supplementing the use of a variety of resources in all key stages e.g. through drama, art and music.

* The content of curriculum religious education meets all the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.

*The Religious Education planning will make reference to the Curriculum Directory links. Teachers will also include children friendly RECD links where necessary to support teaching and learning.

Guidelines and Strategies

In line with the recommendations of the diocese we devote 10% of the teaching week to Religious Education. (Foundation Stage / Key Stage 1 - 2 ¼ hours per week, Key Stage 2 - 2 ½ hours per week). This excludes whole school and key stage assemblies, daily prayer, Mass and other forms of worship.

Religious Education is planned using Come and See and is recorded on the relevant Come and See Planner. All Religious Education Planning is saved on the school network in the relevant folder and guidelines are stored on the network in the Planning and Guidance folder.

Classroom Religious Education

We must always be mindful that we are role-models for the children in our care and that the sincerity of our commitment to Religious Education should manifest itself in all areas of school life; in our attitude to work, how we welcome and treat the children, adults and everyone who comes to our school.

Teachers must have a thorough understanding of Come and See. The aim of the programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose, within Catholic tradition. Links are made with pupils' own experiences and universal experiences. Reference is also made to other faith traditions.

Children are encouraged to learn through a variety of approaches using a range of resources.

Appropriate and sufficient resources are available to ensure that all children have complete access to the curriculum.

Prayer Focus

Every classroom needs to have a prayer focus which is used during prayer time. (A purple cloth/drape is used for the seasons of Advent and Lent a green cloth/drape for Ordinary Time and a white/gold cloth to mark Christmas and Easter). The class teacher and pupils may choose the religious artefacts and books to be displayed on their prayer focus. Each class has its own prayer and worship bag that contains a range of special materials and religious symbols that can be used as a reflection focus in lessons. It is recommended that these reflect the current Come and See topic or what is happening in the religious calendar (Harvest, Saint's days, Feast days etc.) children are encouraged to contribute their own special objects to the display.

Religious Education Displays should include key words relevant to the topic. Bibles on the prayer tables should be open showing a scripture that is taught during the current topic.

Every class must have Child-led Worship resource pack on/beside their prayer table.

Prayer & Worship

On their first day at St.Vincent's new pupils are presented with a St.Vincent's Prayer Book to welcome them to our own school. All children should know and understand the School Prayer and the Mission Statement 'Together Through Christ We Grow and Learn'. Morning and evening prayers are to be followed in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. In Key Stage Two pupils select daily prayers when it is their time on the 'Prayer Rota'. Children are also expected to know the traditional prayers of the church (Our Father and Hail Mary), the Act of Contrition (in Key Stage 2) and are encouraged to write and share their own prayers. Different forms of prayer and worship are encouraged and all classes are expected to incorporate meditation into their daily routine, enabling the children to have time to be still.

Child led worship

All classes will have a child led worship rota and pupils will take it in turn to organise and lead a class worship using the pack assigned for each class. Children will be given planning time prior to the worship and any

resources they may need access to. Children will be able to use their class worship bag independently and make their worship time special.

Each class teacher has the responsibility to ensure that prayers are said after the morning register and at the end of the day. During these occasions time should also be given to silent prayer, meditation and reflection on current affairs, personal and social issues. Grace is said in the dining hall before each meal sitting.

Assemblies are celebrated daily:-

Monday: Whole School Assembly celebrating individual and group achievements with links when appropriate to the preceding Sunday Liturgy.

Tuesday: Celebrated in the classroom by individual classes and their teachers.

Wednesday: Separate assemblies for Key Stage 1 and 2, which may be led by the Head teacher, other members of staff or a visiting speaker. Topics covered may include spiritual, moral, social and community issues, which may be followed up in the classroom e.g. bullying, racism, homelessness and famine.

Thursday: Separate assemblies for Key Stage 1 and 2 devoted to prayer and praise through music. Children have the opportunity to learn and sing traditional and contemporary hymns and/or songs of praise

Friday: Whole school assembly led by the children in each class on a rota basis. The children are encouraged to plan assemblies as far as their age and ability allow. These assemblies may be a celebration of the curriculum, or based on the Come and See topics, the liturgical year, Bible stories, social, moral or school issues etc.

In addition to this to celebrate the religious learning throughout the term a key stage celebratory assembly takes place to share thoughts, work and prayer. This is led by the Deputy Head and the parish priest.

All assemblies have a Catholic link.

Mass

Mass is celebrated in the school hall or the local church of St. James', on our patron's feast day, holy days of obligation and for the final Mass of the school year. The children in Key Stage 2 prepare Mass on a rotational basis and are responsible for the First Reading, Bidding Prayer and selection of hymns. A copy of the mass and readings is kept in the Mass Folder in the Staff room.

Parents and Staff are warmly invited to attend whole school masses and celebrations.

A mass is held at the beginning of each academic year for all staff as a way of reflecting on our aims for the coming year and strengthening support for each other.

Year 4 children join their peers from other schools in Westminster at the Advent Service held at Westminster Cathedral in the Summer Term.

Year 3 children join their peers from other schools in Westminster at the Good Shepherd Mass held at Westminster Cathedral in the Summer Term.

Year 6 children organise their own special leavers' Mass held in the summer term in which they reflect upon their achievements at St. Vincent's and look towards their future at secondary school.

Services

Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend confession in school during the season of Lent.

Year 3 pupils will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Eucharist (First Holy Communion) in their own parish.

There are special services for Christmas, Ash Wednesday Service and Easter Celebrations. A Marian procession takes place in May.

Music

Music plays an integral part in the religious life of the school and is used to enrich the times when we come together as a community to celebrate Holy Mass and assemblies.

Quiet music is used at assemblies for times of personal mediation and reflection, to help the children focus their thoughts and feelings and to create an atmosphere of peace, tranquillity and calm where the children can talk to God.

We use music and song as a form of individual and group prayer and encourage the children to see this as an offering of their gifts and talents to God the Father.

The music for Holy Mass is a liturgy in itself and should therefore reflect the theme of the Mass for the day. In this way it becomes a continuation of the readings and of the Gospel message Jesus has for us.

Through song the children are invited to share more fully in the celebration of the Eucharist and can make personal offerings and contributions to the Mass in a way that is both relevant and fulfilling. Both the Easter and Christmas celebrations use music as a way of reflection upon these feasts.

At Christmas the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One take part in the preparation of music, drama, dance, readings and artwork. Key Stage Two takes part in the preparation of music and artwork.

At Easter Key Stage Two takes part in the preparation of music, drama, dance, readings and artwork. The Foundation Stage and Key Stage One take part in the preparation artwork.

Music is a way of expressing ourselves to God, an expression of our love, joy, thanks, sorrow and praise. These feelings are shared throughout the world, among the wider community of the Church's Family and so within the selection of music used in school. We try to represent and incorporate other cultures and their way of praising God, especially those of parents and children of our school community.

The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.

As Religious Education is an integral part of St. Vincent's, the Common Good underpins relationships and behaviours throughout the school and beyond within the wider community. The children are responsible for creating their own rules based upon their faith and their rights as citizens. These growing displays can be found across the school in every classroom.

In each pupil, student, member of staff and visitor we are called to see the richness of God's creation and to undertake our work knowing that in each unique person we see Jesus Christ. This gives those of us who lead and work in our schools an awesome responsibility to develop everyone's talents to the full, seeing and responding to Christ in one another. For Catholic schools Christ taught us that our neighbourhood is universal : so loving our neighbour has global dimensions.

St. Vincent's is fully committed to promoting community cohesion:

- **Teaching, learning and curriculum** – helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action – for example through the support at least one charity per term, and to participate in a variety of activities to raise funds. Some examples include sponsored tasks and a news film for the NSPCC, carol singing for Shelter and annual collection boxes for the Catholic Children's Society. The children also contribute foods for the Harvest Festival, which are given to the Westminster Food Bank. Furthermore, to develop children's respect for other cultural backgrounds we have made an international link with a school in Nepal. This link allows children to understand the vast cultural differences in our world but to also respect different faiths and backgrounds.
- **Equity and excellence** – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups. For example through supporting learning for all members of our wider community the school supports students from St. Mary's College, Roehampton University and the Institute of Education who wish to teach in Catholic Schools. A number of parents who are studying for Childcare courses complete their placements at St. Vincent's. Work experience students from local schools complete placements including those from local Secondary Schools.
- **Engagement and extended services** – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations: including links with different schools and communities and the provision of extended service with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups. St.Vincent's is a fully extended school and is looking to develop links with other further afield than the immediate locality, including nationally and internationally for example by building links with our partner school in Nepal. St.Vincent's is committed to the teaching of other faiths and promoting understanding of different beliefs and cultures. Serving a highly diverse community St.Vincent's celebrates this with regular events involving the whole community such as an annual International evening, termly cultural assemblies and participation in local multi-faith celebrations.

Chaplain

Our school chaplain is Father Christopher (St. James' Spanish Place) who regularly visits the school and liaises closely with the teachers in the preparation of the liturgy. He is also a member of the school Governing Body.

Pupil School Chaplain

Children in Years 5 and 6 can apply to be a Pupil School Chaplain at the beginning of each academic year by writing a letter or attending an interview explaining why they think they would be good in this caring position. Pupil School Chaplains will be involved in helping to organise religious events, services and will be expected to organise daily reflective activities (weaving, prayers etc) in our school prayer gardens. They will also carry out termly monitoring of classroom prayer tables.

3. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Subject Leader(s) will :

- Take the lead in policy development.
- Disseminate Come and See plans and assessments and keep the Religious Education portfolio updated.
- Support colleagues in their organisation of curriculum time and planning of Come and See.
- 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.
- Organise masses and services including the Christmas and Easter Celebration with assistance from the Music Leader.
- Liaise with the school chaplain to ensure they are available for Masses, Confession and class visits
- With the SLT consider Religious Education Action Plans and Reviews.
- With the SLT monitor books and plans in Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2, identifying strengths and areas for development.
- With the SLT, consult with stakeholders to annually update the Religious Education SEF and submit to the Diocese.
- Lead Religious Education Open Mornings for parents.

The Class teachers will:

- Organise their timetable to allow for 10% of curriculum time to be given to the teaching of Religious Education.
- Be responsible for the planning and teaching of Religious Education in line with the Come and See programme of study including clear differentiation so all children are appropriately supported and challenged.
- Be responsible for the assessment of Religious Education work each year and completing the Religious Education Learning Journey's for each child per term with an overall teacher assessment after February and May assessment weeks based on the New Standards Framework.

4. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Advisor

The school will receive an annual visit from their designated school advisor.

Senior Leadership Team

The school SLT will monitor books and planning in each Key Stage. They will give individual and general feedback celebrating strengths and identifying areas for development.

Teachers

The church has a responsibility to provide an intellectually rigorous religious education curriculum. As teachers we have an obligation to our pupils to ensure that what we offer is enabling their achievement in knowledge, skills and understanding.

It is important when planning that teachers have a good understanding of the expectations at the end of each Come and See topic, so that the activities offered will provide pupils with opportunities to achieve a range of levels.

Assessment

Foundation Stage

- All members of the class will be formally assessed throughout the year.
- The class teacher will assess a child's understanding of Religious Education through the different areas of learning.
- The teacher's annotations on children's progress will be recorded in their Religious Education portfolio
- Learning Journeys will be filled in each child's Religious Education Folder.

Key Stage 1 and 2

- All members of the class will be assessed throughout the year. The class teacher will use the Learning Journey statements taken from the Age-related standards Framework published by the National Board of Religious Inspector and Advisers (July 2018).
- Children's pieces of work will be recorded in their Religious Education book and the class teacher will note any progress made using the child's Learning Journey. It is important that what is being assessed is from the age-related standards.
- Each child's Teacher Assessment judgement should be recorded and saved on the excel spreadsheet in Assessment> Religious Education> Year group and in SIMS after February and May assessment week.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

In Catholic education we are aware that all knowledge and understanding comes from God. We desire to seek opportunities and capitalise on moments of experience and understanding, which take pupils beyond themselves. The subject of R.E. plays a central role in spiritual, moral and personal development '*It is the foundation of the entire educational process*' (Religious Education in Catholic Schools Bishop's Conference 2000). '*It promotes spiritual and ethical thinking*' (Religious Education in Catholic Schools Bishop's Conference 1996). The Respect and Rejoice section of Come and See offers particular times when pupils may reflect prayerfully.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Inherent in our Religious Education policy is the importance of the contribution made by each child and member of staff towards a happy and caring environment in the school, by showing respect for the appreciation of each person as an individual, regardless of colour, culture, origin, sex or ability.

We aim for all children to have equal opportunities regarding access to the Religious Education curriculum, in order that they are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and develop their full potential in recognition that we are all children of God and that everything we do is the greater glory of God.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Staff are trained to care at all times and will ensure safe handling of materials and resources.

NB. Candles / votive lights can help to invoke a prayerful atmosphere; but one must always be mindful of safety:

- Do not allow hot wax to drip. Always ensure candle holders are stable, non-flammable and placed on a metal tray, then immediately extinguished at the end of prayer/reflection time.
- Always ensure children are made aware of the dangers of candles
- In case of an accident an extinguisher or fire blanket should be to hand.

It is controversial if children should be allowed to carry lighted candle / votive lights. Whilst not advisable for children in Key Stage 1 this is left to the discretion of teachers of Key Stage 2 children.

Appendix A Religious Education Guidelines

Religious Education Expectations (updated October 2018) *Together Through Christ We Grow and Learn*

Timetable *Catholic Schools. must devote 10% of curriculum time per week to the teaching of R.E. This 10% does not include prayer time, assemblies or masses.*

Foundation Stage:- 1 hour weekly

KS1:- 2 hours 15 minutes weekly

KS2:- 2 hours 30 minutes weekly

Try to allocate significant blocks of time e.g. KS1:- 2 x 45, 1x 30 minute, KS2:- 3 x 50 minute lessons.

Classroom Practise

Every Class needs to have an attractive prayer focus and a worship basket near or next to the prayer table. Here are some ideas of what to include:- drapes (purple during Christmas and Lent), religious statues, candle, plant/artificial flowers, religious books / pictures relevant to the topic, artefacts brought in by children. Class prayer and worship bags should be used in lessons / prayer times as a reflection focus.

The children should focus on this area when praying. All lessons must start with the sign of the cross and a prayer/song.

Books

Each topic is to start with a topic sheet that will be completed by the pupils to show their religious knowledge and understanding (saved in Planning and Guidance folder).

- Each topic is to end with a Respond booklet (saved in Planning and Guidance folder)
Each book to have a 'God is' box stuck at the front with pictures and words that the children input themselves by hand (KS1) or on the computer (KS2).
- All work must be dated.
- Each piece of work must be headed with the relevant Come and See objective LO: I can Explore, LO: I can Reveal, LO: I can Respond)
- In the Nursery 1 piece of work per topic is expected.
In Reception a minimum of 2 pieces of work are expected per topic.
In KS1 4 pieces of work per topic are expected.
In KS2 6 pieces of work per topic are expected .

- R.E. books and folders should include 1 piece of I.C.T. work per child per term.
- A range of activities should be incorporated into every topic including drama, extended writing and creative art work using a range of media.
- When planning Come and See Reveal objectives pupil's activities should include differentiation for HA, MA, LA, SEN, G/T and Pupil Premium pupils where appropriate.
- When marking pupils work it must be recorded whether the Come and See objective has been achieved. Targets should be linked to the Come and See objective and be positive. If work is illegible it needs to be annotated.
- Children should self-assess their progress against the learning objective by using traffic lights.
- Children should constantly be reminded how special R.E. books are and as a result work and presentation within them should be of a high standard.
- Throughout the year, teachers will add to each child's Religious Education Learning Journey Assessment Grid and set a target. A Teacher Assessment judgement of Emerging/Developing/Secure/Exceeding will be made for each child following the February and May Assessment Weeks. These will be based on evidence of progress as recorded on each child's Religious Education Learning Journey Grid. The final Teacher Assessment judgement made in May will be reported to parents.
- The children should be given a target once per topic to help them to progress to the next level.
- At the end of the academic year the Learning Journeys should be used to give the child an overall R.E. Teacher Assessment.
- The RE Reflection box will need to be completed by the children each term. These are found under the Learning Journeys (not EYFS).
- Teacher assessment for Religious Education will be moderated both internally by SLT and during designated Staff meetings and externally in partnership with other schools.

Appendix

Diocesan Policy on Religious Education (2012)

The whole Catholic school is part of the Church's ministry to evangelise and catechise. Through the centuries, the Church has educated young people and adults as part of its life. The witness, by the staff and pupils, to belief in Jesus Christ and the Catholic way of life, is itself a teaching and learning experience.

In school, religious education is, in the first instance, education in the Catholic faith; pupils learn about the Catholic tradition and from it.

"Religious Education is central to the curriculum of the Catholic school and is at the heart of the philosophy of Catholic education. Religious Education has developed in a way that reflects the particular identity of our Catholic schools in England and Wales. It teaches about the faith in the context of a school which proclaims the Gospel, and invites the individual to respond to the message of Christ. As the individual responds to this invitation, growth in faith and knowledge helps the pupil to respond to the call to holiness and understand the fullness of what it is to be human. For some, then, Religious Education will also be received as evangelisation and for some, catechesis." (1)

Classroom religious education has its own content, methodology, assessment and culture. The broad areas it covers are God's self revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ. It should be accorded the same status

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and taught with the same rigour as the core subjects of the national curriculum. It is open to inspection and assessment by public examination and at Diocesan level . It is an important contributory factor to the passing on of the community's faith from one generation to the next.

It will be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject and requires 10% of the length of the taught week at each stage of education.

Classroom religious education has as its outcome:

“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” (2)

Accordingly, the following requirements apply to Religious Education in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Westminster:

1. Whole school religious education is to provide for a lived faith experience through worship, retreats, assemblies and action for social justice. The religious education department contributes to this whole school direction.
2. Classroom religious education is to be resourced as a core subject and allocated 10% of teaching time at each Key Stages 1-4 and 5% at Sixth Form.
3. The classroom religious education curriculum is to be delivered in accordance with the general norms laid down by the Bishops' Conference: Religious Education Curriculum Directory (3-19) (2012); Statement on Religious Education (2000) and any Diocesan guidelines.
4. Classroom religious education is to be assessed in accordance with the general norms laid down by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales: Age-related Standards in Religious Education (July 2018).
5. Classroom religious education is to be inspected according to the current Diocesan inspection framework.

Useful curriculum resources can be found on the Diocesan website by following the respective links as follows:

- Religious Education Curriculum Directory (3-19) (2012)
- Bishops' Statement on Religious Education (2000)
- **Age-related Standards in Religious Education (July 2018)**.
- In-service training
- Diocesan Inspection Framework and SEF
- Curriculum Support
- Our Catholic Schools: their Identity and Purpose (The 'Red Book') (2010)

(1) Religious Education Curriculum Directory (Bishops' Conference, 2012), p.3

(2) Religious Education Curriculum Directory (Bishops' Conference, 2012), p.6