

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



*In the Light of Jesus
we Learn to Shine*



*St. Alban
Catholic Schools'
Partnership*

Chaplaincy Policy

In the light of our mission statement we aim for each child to recognise his or her self-worth; to realise that they are individual members of God's creative plan and as such, they are special and unique. The specific role of the chaplain is to work with others to offer spiritual and personal support in a manner that demonstrates the care and compassion of Christ. As a staff we also acknowledge that acting as a Christian community, we will often act as chaplains to one another and to the children and parents by our normal everyday actions and behaviour.

The Role of Chaplaincy in our School

It is important to realise that 'Christ's ministry continues through ordinary people, with strengths and weaknesses, striving to live Christian lives' (Chaplaincy: the Change and the Challenge). At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we recognise chaplaincy as fulfilling a number of roles:

- Those involved in chaplaincy would be very active in supporting the pattern of worship in the school
- Chaplains would also play a role in the development of talents and ministries among the staff and pupils
- Chaplains would also act as a listener and give support to those who might seek their help

St. Joseph's Chaplaincy Team

The school Chaplaincy Team is made up of governors, staff and pupils and members of the local parishes. Fr John McArdle and Deacon James from St Joseph's Parish visit the school on a regular basis to meet with staff and pupils. Fr. John, Deacon James, Mgr Kevin, Fr. Andy and other local clergy celebrate school masses, lead assemblies, Advent and Lent services. Members of the Chaplaincy Team lead weekly staff liturgies during Advent and Lent. The Chaplaincy Team plan and liaise with all of the parishes that serve the school community regarding Sacramental preparation and the celebration of main Liturgical Feasts where children are invited to take part e.g. Christmas Nativity, Good Friday, Easter Triduum and children's masses.

Responsibilities and Organisation

The RE subject leader oversees the chaplaincy provision within school and plans the school worship programme as outlined in our Prayer and Liturgy Policy. Staff and pupil Faith Ambassadors plan and prepare school liturgies and liaise with the officiating clergy, providing a copy of the service in advance, so that they can be prepared appropriately. The Chaplaincy Team will meet termly to discuss Prayer, Worship and Liturgy within the school community and will have an action plan clearly linked to the School Plan Priorities:

- The Chaplaincy Coordinator is the RE subject leader and they work with the school leadership team (SLT) to co-ordinate and support areas of spiritual and pastoral development within the school.
- As the lead for Chaplaincy in the school they attend professional development training courses for the role of chaplaincy, in order to improve the effectiveness of the Chaplaincy Team. They also meets with colleagues of other Chaplaincy Teams from the Catholic Schools' Partnership.

- The RE Governor is also committed to supporting and challenging the team in their role of chaplaincy.

Rainbows

The school is currently a centre for “Rainbows for all God’s Children”. At present there are two trained co-ordinators and eight trained facilitators. The programme operates after school and offers support and help to those children who have suffered or are suffering as a result of a significant loss in their lives.

Wider Church

Chaplaincy extends into the community to develop a greater understanding of the wider church through:

- Spiritual retreat days and joint INSET for staff within the Catholic Schools’ Partnership
- Retreat days for the Faith Ambassadors through the Catholic Schools’ Partnership
- Fundraising during Advent and Lent for a variety of charities.
- Raising awareness of disability through assemblies and workshops led by guest speakers e.g. Paralympians.
- Developing the ‘Fairtrade’ group and raising awareness and support a fairer way of buying goods.
- Multi-Cultural curriculum days to celebrate the diverse culture of the school, including achieving the International Primary School Award
- Participating in the Luton Annual Peace Walk
- Other Faith topics to raise awareness of world religions.

Planning

Members of the Chaplaincy Team will meet every term to:

- plan celebrations and liturgy;
- discuss the pastoral role;
- evaluate and review progress of the Chaplaincy Team within the school;
- look at the needs of the school and how the Chaplaincy Team can support them;
- keep updated on the role of Chaplaincy by attending Chaplaincy courses.

Future Developments

- To continue to develop the role of the Chaplaincy Team;
- To further develop links with the local parish through the Fairtrade group;
- To further involve parents in reflective prayer or spiritual activities;
- To further involve Faith Ambassadors in leading school reflective prayer or spiritual activities;
- Faith Ambassadors to continue to develop the use of the prayer room for worship and reflection;
- To continue to make use of the school prayer garden and outdoor classroom for class reflection and celebrations.

Resources

Provision is made for the school hall to be available for all liturgies. Year and 1st Friday masses are celebrated with local parishioners as part of the daily mass in St Joseph’s Catholic Church. This has helped to strengthen the community link with the school. Advent services and Penitential services in Lent are held in school; Pupils, staff, governors and parents are invited to attend the weekly reflections during Advent and Lent. Termly Prayer and Reflection sessions also take place in the Family Room at lunchtimes.

Monitoring: The Head teacher and RE Subject Leader(s) will report termly to the Governors on priorities relating to this policy.