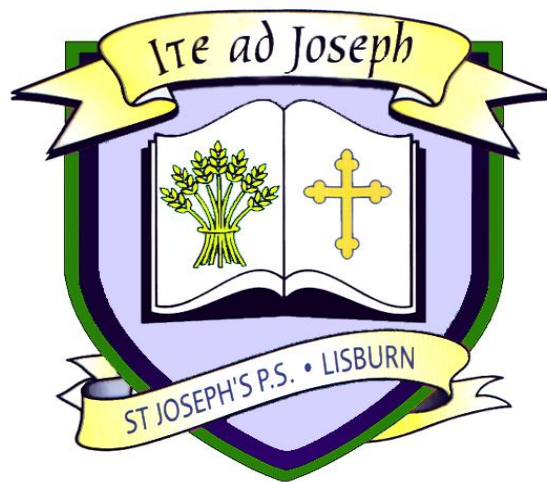


St Joseph's Primary School Lisburn



A Religious Education Policy

*Handing on the Faith to
Children*

Updated June 2017



- Handing on the faith is our privilege as Catholic teachers. We take on this role in St. Joseph's with pride and with a deep sense of commitment to handing on the faith which has been given to us by our parents, grandparents and through our Catholic schools.
- Within this context, we do not perceive religion as subject based.
- In our school we aim to 'live out' our faith as well as developing each child's faith through the curriculum.
- The Catholic ethos is important to us as a staff. We create this ethos through our relationships with others in our school.
- We lead by example, showing the children how we show care and respect for each other, and how they should follow this example.
- We have symbols of our faith in our classrooms and in the main areas of our school. Every classroom has a Sacred Space. Crucifixes, statues, May Altars and The Crib will be visual evidence of our Catholic ethos.
- Our school day will be enveloped by prayer. Pupils will learn to pray in both a formal, and informal way.
- Pupils will learn from a very early age, the importance of prayer in their lives.
- We aim to teach pupils the power of prayer in their lives.



- The Catholic faith is so important that we have appointed a teacher to lead and co-ordinate the teaching of the faith in our school.
- The R.E. co-ordinator leads both staff and pupils by the example of their own faith.
- The co-ordinator has a job description which includes organising resources for all staff, co-ordinating liturgical services and masses throughout the year and assisting teachers who are preparing children for the sacraments.
- Handing on the faith is made easy through the Grow in Love and Alive O programmes.
- Work begins immediately, as soon as children enter our school.
- Children come to school with different religious experiences and it is our role as Catholic teachers to build on these experiences and in some cases lay the foundations which are not evident.
- Teachers will follow the Grow in Love programme in Primary 1 – Primary 6. Primary 7 children continue to follow the Alive O programme.
- Prayers, songs, poems and drama will be selected from each theme to ensure that all children can fully understand the learning outcomes which teachers hope to achieve.

- R.E. will be planned in learning outcomes based on the Grow in Love and Alive O programmes
- Weekly assembly will be based on the Grow in Love and Alive O programmes, with each class presenting to the rest of the Key Stage the theme they are currently studying in their classroom.
- Parents will be invited to Assemblies for P1, P2, P5 and P6 children. P3, P4 and P7 parents will be invited to sacramental preparation services.
- Masses will be organised throughout the school year, with pupils attending 10am mass in the local church at least twice in each term.
- Pupils will participate fully in these masses, organising the readings, the prayers of the faithful, the offertory procession and the music to make each mass a celebration of our faith.
- Special masses will occur at the beginning of each school year, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, The feast of St Patrick and St Joseph, Holy Week and the end of the year.
- Pupils will visit the church as part of the R.E. programme, to learn about what takes place in God's house.
- Children in P3, P4 and P7 will be prepared for the Sacraments by the staff in these classes.



- This role will be seen as a privilege – a gift, an honour, by these teachers.
- It will be acknowledged that all other teachers have contributed to the preparation of the sacraments in the preceding years.
- Each sacrament will be made special through the positive preparation of the children.
- Parents will be brought on board, through organised meetings for the year group.
- These meetings will consist of:
 - An overview of the Catholic School and what it means to have your child educated in St Joseph's, by the Principal.
 - An input by the School Chaplin on the role of parents in Handing on the Faith.
 - The class teachers outlining what preparations are going on, in his/her classroom.
 - An outline of the ceremony for the sacrament.
- Children will take an active role in their own faith development through taking part in each mass, we prepare for.
- By P7, pupils will be encouraged to take an active role in their parish community, with organised activities to develop this area.



- The school priest Fr McCaughan and Chaplin Sr Mary, will play an active role in supporting the development of the faith in our school.
- Sr Mary will work in a volunteer capacity to provide some spiritual development classes for all year groups and will support teachers in preparation for the Sacraments.
- Liturgical Music will be taught to all classes through the Grow in Love and Alive O programme and through organised singing practices.
- The school choir will build up a bank of hymns for the various masses through out the year.
- Our school motto, 'We care, so we share' will be developed through our fund raising activities:
 - Advent – The people of our community of Lisburn
 - Lent – The people in the world who do not have basic human rights.
- Our aim is that all pupils will leave St Joseph's with a sound grounding in the faith and feel confident to spread this faith as 'Workers for the Kingdom'



**'Christ be with me. Christ be before me,
Christ be behind me, Christ be beneath me.
Christ be on my right, Christ be on my left'**

***Let Jesus be revealed to all our children here in St.
Joseph's Primary School, Lisburn.***