

Children's Views: We enjoy saying a range of prayers as a class and community. We especially like singing our lunchtime prayer. We love reciting our mission statement using the actions all together.

Why is RE important?

Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" (Pope St John Paul 11)

Placing RE at the core of the curriculum in Catholic schools helps the school to fulfill its mission to educate the whole person." In a Catholic School, Religious Education is concerned not only with intellectual knowledge but also includes emotional and affective learning. Without religious education, pupils would be deprived of an essential element of their formation and personal development, which helps them attain a vital harmony between faith and culture. (Religious Education curriculum Directory p4).



RE at St Helen's:

We encourage the children of St. Helen's School to grow in the knowledge of God Our Father and develop a spiritual and prayerful attitude. We want to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole child. We aim to help our children recognise, explore and appreciate the religious dimension of questions about the mystery of life, its dignity and its purpose, within the Catholic tradition. We try to stimulate our children to explore their own and universal experiences and to view the world in a religious context. We aim to capture our children's innate capacity for wonder, awe, reverence, spirituality and imagination by providing opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection in implicit and explicit ways and through varied lessons tailored for all our learners. We intend to provide our children with the language of religious experience and 'literacy' in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals and people and artefacts. We challenge the children to examine their own religious attitudes, values and practices and to lead them to a deeper personal faith. We endeavour to increase all our pupil's awareness of the Catholic faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them. Through our curriculum and whole school ethos we seek to depict the Gospel values of tolerance, forgiveness, mercy, compassion, trust, peace, be saintly, justice and respect. The children follow the Brentwood Diocese RE programme 'Come and See' for their RE lessons which equates to 2 ½ hours a week teaching time. The 'Come and See' programme supports and enables the faith experience of all children as it starts with their real life experiences and leads them on to reflect and consider the Christian message in all its richness. All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have the appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

Opportunities: The school year always begins with a mass to celebrate the Feast day of our patron Saint, St Helen, which allows the whole school to come together as a community. At the beginning of each week, we have a whole school assembly based on the Sunday Gospel and we have a celebration assembly at the end of the week to celebrate pupil's achievements. We also have weekly Key Stage assemblies and hymn practice. During Advent and Lent, KS1 children take part in a Sorry Service led by the Parish Priest and KS2 children take part in a Reconciliation service at our local parish church. Throughout the school year, the children have the opportunity to participate in class assemblies, class masses, Easter performances, Christmas nativities and carol concerts. Children are encouraged and supported to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Communion from Year 3. The First Holy Communion children and their families are invited to take part in a whole school mass to celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi, allowing them to share their experience. Children are given opportunities to support their local and global communities through event days, charity days and collections for a number of charities chosen by the school council.