



# Loreto Convent School

Gibraltar

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE

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*This policy reflects the ethos of Loreto Convent School and has been compiled and reviewed with the involvement of children, staff and Governors.*

### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

“We recognise the uniqueness of each child. We undertake to nurture their intellectual, creative and physical abilities, while ensuring their emotional and spiritual growth in a caring atmosphere where Catholic values are paramount.”

### **AIM:**

To develop in the children a love for God, a respect for all created things, care for the Earth and an understanding of the principles of the Gospel in the tradition of the Catholic Faith.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To develop in the children an awareness of their individuality as children created and loved by God, that they might know and love God as Father, through his son Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.
2. To help each child to develop an awareness of how Jesus wishes them to live through the study and appreciation of the Gospel.
3. To accompany the children on their own journey of faith.
4. To teach them the doctrine of the Catholic Faith.
5. To create an awareness of and respect for other people’s beliefs, cultures and traditions.
6. To help the children to strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, liturgy and worship, both personal and corporate.
7. To build upon the experiences children have in their Parish and in their local community, and to encourage active participation in both.

### **STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT.**

**The Loreto Order.** (The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

“The person of Jesus Christ is at the heart of Loreto / I.B.V.M. school, and Gospel values permeate the entire school experience.

Mary Ward's core values – justice, freedom, sincerity, truth and joy – are the foundation of the spirituality of the school community. Discernment, involving reflection on experience leading to action, will inform and influence policies, structures, practices and pedagogy.

### **A Holistic and person-centred Education**

To enable the fullest possible personal growth, Loreto / I.B.V.M. education gives priority to the integration of the spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical and emotional development of the individual student. Relationships within Loreto / I.B.V.M. education are characterised by respect, justice, sincerity, courage and compassion.

### **Faith Development.**

Liturgy, prayer, catechetics, retreats, reflection on experience and the recognition of God's presence in all things strengthen one's relationship with Christ"

(Loreto Education Guidelines, May 2003)

### **Bishop and Priest**

Support is given by the Bishop of Gibraltar and an appointed school priest.

### **The Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to preserve the distinctive nature of our Catholic school by ensuring that the Religious Education policy is observed and implemented by all members of staff, both Catholic and non-Catholic.

### **Religious Education Team.**

The Year Group Co-ordinator will work with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, and the responsibilities of the team will be the following:

- Coordinating the subject throughout the school.
- Implementing and reviewing the RE policy and assisting and supporting colleagues in this area of the curriculum.
- Supervising the preparation for liturgical and para-liturgical services, involving staff where appropriate.
- Requisitioning for RE, preparing a budget for RE and for the care of RE materials. This includes the sacred vessels, vestments and altar linen required for worship.
- Actively supporting the Sacramental Programme within the school.

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will normally be a committed Catholic. All teachers will support the school's Catholic values and will also be responsible, with the Headteacher and team for implementing RE policy within the classroom. In the event of the class teacher being non-Catholic, appropriate support will be given.

## **All Staff**

All teaching staff are involved in the worship and liturgical celebration that is central to the life of our school. Other school personnel will always be welcome to participate.

The staff endeavour to work with all guidelines produced by the Loreto Education office.

## **RE in the Classroom**

RE in Loreto Convent School is not only confined to a specific time-tabled lesson but permeates the whole of our teaching. The spiritual and moral development of each child is addressed through all aspects of the curriculum as well as through the various day-to-day situations and opportunities that arise.

## **Non-Catholic children.**

All children are invited to take part in as much of the programme as is appropriate for them.

## **Formal RE Classes**

### **Nursery and Foundation Stage 1:**

Children in Nursery and Foundation Stage 1 are introduced gradually to the RE curriculum with stories, songs and prayers.

The first prayer they learn is said at break, and they copy the sign of the Cross:

“Thank you God for this new day,  
In all we do and think and say.  
Please be with me all day long,  
In every story, game and song.”

## **Time Allocation**

Foundation Stage 2	-	1 hour per week.
Year 1, Year 2	-	1 hour a week
Years 3-5	-	1 hour per week
Year 6	-	1.5 hours per week (Chapel, prayer at lunchtime and end of day)

## **Evaluation and Review**

Children are encouraged to evaluate each theme covered. This is done through whole- school assemblies, through class work, written work, prayers, services or discussion. Staff will be encouraged to evaluate the programme either at staff meetings or in informal discussion.

## **Worship**

Liturgical celebration, both Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic, is at the heart of life at Loreto Convent. Assemblies too are an important feature of school life.

The school’s collective worship is expressed when the school or class gathers together for:

- Assembly
- Hymn Practices
- Eucharist
- Services
- Prayer

## **Assembly**

Every week, the Lower Primary School hold class assemblies during which badges and certificates are awarded

Every week, the Upper the Upper Primary School holds morning assemblies on different themes and every two weeks Award Assemblies are held.

In this way the school acknowledges the talents, endeavours and contributions each one makes to the life of the school.

## **Hymn Practices**

Hymn and Choir practices are held in preparation for liturgical events

## **Eucharist and Prayer Services**

(See Appendix 1 – Term Calendar)

These celebrations are well prepared and involve children from each class. Staff too, and parents where appropriate, are often actively involved. Parents are invited to school when possible.

## **Sacramental Programme**

The Sacramental Programme in the school enables parents and teachers to work together to prepare children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated three times a year: during Advent, during Lent and before the end of the school year. Each teacher ensures that the class is prepared at least two days before the celebration of the Sacrament.

### **First Confession and First Holy Communion Programme**

October:

1. A form is sent home and the parents fill in details of the child's Baptism.
2. Baptisms which have taken place in Gibraltar are checked in parish churches. Date of Birth, Book Number, Page Number and Names of Godparents are entered on the form.
3. Any child not baptised in Gibraltar must send for his or her Baptism Certificate.

(Note: These forms are kept on record until Confirmation)

### **Parent's Meetings:**

1. First Meeting: in preparation for Enrolment Service, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the importance of taking child to Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday.

2. Enrolment Service held during month of November or December
3. Second Meeting: the Mass and Holy Communion and practical details about First Holy Communion Day

### Confirmation Programme

October:

1. For those children who made their First Holy Communion in Loreto Convent, the file is checked for Baptism details.
2. For those baptised in Gibraltar, all baptisms are checked in parish churches. Date of Birth, Book Number, Page Number and Names of Godparents entered on form.
3. Any child not baptised in Gibraltar must send away for his/her Baptismal Certificate.

Parent's meetings

Service of Enrolment

Day of Retreat and Reconciliation

Post Confirmation

Reflective Retreat

(Above programmes subject to review)

### **SCHOOL TRIPS**

If a school trip includes a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation, arrangements will be made for the Catholic pupils to attend Mass.

### **PRAYER**

Helping the children to a close relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer is of prime importance at Loreto Convent.

Each teacher should create an atmosphere within her class which is conducive to prayer. An area or point on which to focus should be developed. These areas can be enhanced by the use of pictures, fabrics, statues, religious objects, books, plants, flowers and natural objects. The Bible should always be central to our worship focus.

#### Prayer in Chapel

Children from Y3 – 6 pray in Chapel at 9 a.m. twice a week. Prayer in assembly once a week and prayers in class twice a week.

Children from Foundation Stage 2 to Year 2 pray in Chapel twice a week.

#### Staff

As well as praying with the children, the staff pray together as a group at staff meetings.

## Parents

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the spiritual life of the school by attending school Masses and service when possible, supporting the Sacramental Programme and taking part in initiatives that take place from time to time, e.g. the Lenten Appeal and Family Days.

## Others

In addition to the clergy who normally minister to us, other visiting priests and lay people are welcomed to celebrate Eucharist or worship with us.

## Community support

The whole school community supports the children and parents during the preparation of Year 3 for first Sacraments and for Confirmation.

Non-Catholic children are invited to take part in as much of the programme as is appropriate if it is their parents' wish.

## **COMMUNITY LINKS**

Kolkata Guidelines.

With all Loreto Schools we have a strong sense of belonging to one international family and of sharing a common identity through our foundress Mary Ward. We seek to follow these guidelines. As a practical step we will reflect on a small portion at Board of governors and Staff Meetings.

Care and concern is extended to local and national needs which are addressed whenever possible.

Awareness of the wider international community and the developing world is central to our ethos. The annual Lenten Appeal enables children, parents, governors and staff to work together for the benefit of the whole community and it is important in educating the children in justice and peace.

Charities supported regularly are:

Mission Day and Lenten Appeal  
Loreto – Sudan, Ecuador, Peru, Kenya.  
GBC Open Day and others

Any children with special needs will be given the necessary support, and care will be taken to integrate them into worship, liturgies and assemblies as far as they are able.

Their parents will be encouraged to take part in the Sacramental programme in order to share with us in the preparing the children to receive First Sacraments and Confirmation at the appropriate time.

**Seen by Governing Body:**

**CALENDAR****Autumn Term**

Week 1	-	Mass for beginning of the school year
September	-	Ceremony in honour of St. Michael
October	-	Month of the Rosary
October	-	St Francis of Assisi
Late October	-	Missions Day
Advent Sun/Sat	-	Enrolment Service FHC & Confirmation
1 <sup>st</sup> Week of Advent	-	Advent Wreath Ceremony
Advent	-	Sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas
	-	Advent Mass in preparation for Christmas*

**Spring Term**

January	-	Mary Ward Week – Mass in honour of Mary Ward* Also, school celebrates with a day of historical reflection
Ash Wednesday	-	School Mass*
Fridays in Lent	-	Weekly Mass (Inc. Y3)
During Lent	-	Lenten Sponsorship
	-	Sacrament of Reconciliation
17 <sup>th</sup> March	-	School celebrates feast of St. Patrick with 'fun day'
19 <sup>th</sup> March	-	Mass for Feast of St. Joseph (Holy Day of Obligation)
	-	First Confessions

**Summer Term**

April / May	-	Mass in preparation for Confirmation
	-	Confirmation Mass
	-	First Holy Communion Mass
During May	-	May Altars (During May children bring flowers to show their devotion to Mary. Special attention is paid to the Rosary in May)
	-	Diocesan Procession from St. Bernard's to Shrine of O.L. of Europe.
Last Week in May	-	May Procession
June	-	Corpus Christi Diocesan Procession - attended by those who have received Confirmation and First Holy Communion
June	-	Mass for Feast of St. Peter and Paul.

\*Masses are held for Years 3 -6. Whenever possible this will be followed by a service for Foundation Stage 2 – Year 2.

We will endeavour to make additional dates in the liturgical calendar for class-led assemblies.

## Appendix 2.

### Keystage 1

The organic unity of the Programme is important. The Areas of Study are closely inter-related. Every facet reflects and reinforces the wholeness of the vision of religious education. Teachers will build on the learning experiences and concepts across the Keystages to provide continuity of learning.

	<b>Teachers will offer pupils opportunities to:</b>	<b>Desired outcome is knowledge &amp; understanding:</b>
TRINITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognise relationships of love (e.g. parent/child) and love received and given (e.g. sharing)</li> <li>- recognise and become familiar with the sign of the cross</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of loving relationships and sharing</li> <li>- that the sign of the cross names Father, Son and Holy Spirit and is a sign of love and blessing</li> </ul>
CREATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- observe beauty, detail and order in creation</li> <li>- hear, read and explore in Scripture praise of God in creation and the story of creation as God's work</li> <li>- investigate and recognise their gifts and growth (e.g. gift of senses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of the wonder and beauty of creation</li> <li>- that praise and thanks are expressed in prayer (e.g. creation psalms)</li> <li>- that they have strengths and limitations and gifts from beyond themselves and that that these are signs of God's love</li> </ul>
SCRIPTURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear, read, explore and reflect upon: a variety of Scripture imagery which speaks of God</li> <li>- stories of significant people in the Old and New Testament</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that the Bible is God's book</li> <li>- that Scripture stories reveal and hand on good news about God and contain messages about life</li> <li>- that the Church uses and reverences the Bible</li> </ul>
JESUS CHRIST SON OF GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear, read and become familiar with the main events characters and places in the Life of Jesus: Nativity, Palm Sunday, Last Supper, Good Friday, Easter Sunday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus reveals the Good News of God his Father</li> <li>- that Jesus is the Son of God</li> <li>- that the cross is the sign of Jesus' love for His father and for us</li> </ul>
THE HOLY SPIRIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear, read and become familiar with the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit is fulfilled at Pentecost and that this marks the beginning of the Church.</li> </ul>
CHURCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relationships they have in the family, at school, in the parish, neighbourhood, world</li> <li>- ways of belonging to and being community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of how people belong to the Church – domestic (family), local (parish and diocese), universal (world-wide)</li> </ul>
ONE AND ONLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Church as the people of God made one by Jesus, a community which shares love and life</li> <li>- roles in the communities to which they belong (e.g. children, parents, parishioners, priests, bishop, Pope)</li> <li>- the role of Mary and her 'yes' to God's Word</li> <li>- God's call to key figures in the history of the people of God, past and present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus is the head of the Church, the one who lead God's people</li> <li>- that God calls individuals and communities to share life and show care for each other</li> <li>- that the Church remembers and honours Mary for her response to God (Hail Mary)</li> <li>- of different forms of ministry in the Church (e.g. Eucharistic minister, reader, deacon, priest etc.</li> </ul>

CATHOLIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Church' as a 'house of God where God's People gather with Jesus</li> <li>- ways in which a Christian family and parish share and celebrate life and show care for church buildings and furnishings and how people show respect and reverence in Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Our Father</li> <li>- that through Jesus, the Son of God, the Church is united in prayer, service, thanksgiving and celebration</li> <li>- that belonging and love may be expressed in many different ways in a community</li> <li>- that a church building is a holy gathering place where everyone is welcome and where the community share and celebrate life and worship together</li> </ul>
APOSTOLIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the way Jesus proclaimed the Good News in what he did and said</li> <li>- the way Jesus gathered and formed a community of disciples and the life they shared.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus' life and mission is the Gospel (Good News)</li> <li>- that Jesus called men and women to share His life and mission</li> </ul>
MISSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how people who heard the Good News of Jesus began to share a way of life</li> <li>- opportunities today to live and share life following the example of Jesus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that the Church is the community which continues Jesus' mission to proclaim the Good News to the whole world</li> <li>- that the Church is men, women and children who try to follow the example of Jesus</li> </ul>
LITURGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take part in celebrations which express thanks and praise</li> <li>- recognise the place and value of celebrations in family, school and parish</li> <li>- hear about the Church's celebration of Sunday as a special day</li> <li>- become familiar with some ways in which the Church celebrates major seasons of liturgical year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that celebrations express thanksgiving, joy, unity and love</li> <li>- that Sunday is a special day of celebration for the Church</li> <li>- of the major feasts and seasons of the liturgical year</li> </ul>
SACRAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear about and explore celebrations in the life of Jesus</li> <li>- become familiar with signs and symbols used by the Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus celebrated the blessings of God his Father</li> <li>- of the significance and variety of signs and symbols in their own lives and in the life of the Church</li> </ul>
BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION AND THE EUCCHARIST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear about and explore ways in which Jesus invited men and women to friendship and discipleship</li> <li>- hear about, explore and become familiar with the main rites and symbols of Baptism and Confirmation</li> <li>- hear the story of the Last Supper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear about and become familiar with the main aspects of the Eucharistic celebration and prayers used at Mass</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus invited men and women to share his life</li> <li>- that Baptism is a beginning and a welcome into the Church</li> <li>- that Confirmation celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit</li> <li>- that in the celebration of the Eucharist the Church is doing what Jesus did at the Last Supper</li> <li>- that in the Eucharist Jesus gives himself</li> <li>- that the Eucharist is communion with Jesus and the family of the Church</li> </ul>

<p>RECONCILIATION the AND THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognise and explore the need to say sorry and ask forgiveness</li> <li>- hear about and explore the Good News of God's love and forgiveness in Old and New Testaments and prayers of the Mass</li> <li>- hear about and explore the Gospel accounts of how Jesus gave individuals the chance to change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that Jesus brings the Good News of God Father's love and forgiveness</li> <li>- that God's love helps people to change and to choose what is good</li> <li>- that at times everyone needs to say sorry</li> <li>- simple prayers of love and sorrow</li> </ul>
<p>MATRIMONY receiving AND HOLY ORDERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear about and explore ways in which Jesus showed love and care</li> <li>- hear about and recognise the love of parents expressed in family life</li> <li>- hear about and recognise the role of a priest in the love and service of God's family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that love is expressed in giving and</li> <li>- that people love and care for each other in different ways</li> </ul>
<p>PRAYER  prayer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to hear, use and join in prayers from Scripture and tradition</li> <li>- to use their own words for prayer</li> <li>- to hear about and explore Jesus' prayer to his Father</li> <li>- to hear about and explore ways in which people pray in church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of some traditional prayers of the Church</li> <li>- of how to pray together</li> <li>- that they can speak to God in formal and in their own words</li> <li>- that in prayer God speaks</li> </ul>
<p>THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognise their human qualities and gifts and those of others</li> <li>- develop self-esteem and respect for others</li> <li>- hear about, read and explore ways in which Jesus showed love and respect for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that God loves and creates each person individually</li> <li>- that God's love is shown in the qualities and gifts every person has</li> <li>- that Jesus gives an example of love and respect for others</li> </ul>
<p>FREEDOM RESPONSIBILITY CONSCIENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hear about, recognise and explore ways in which they are free to choose</li> <li>- recognise and explore opportunities to take take responsibility for themselves and towards others</li> <li>- explore Scripture passages which illustrate freedom and responsibility in the choices people made</li> <li>- hear about the Holy Spirit as the Helper Jesus promised his Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that God gives freedom to everyone as a gift</li> <li>- that freedom brings responsibilities</li> <li>- that choices affect ourselves and others</li> <li>- that the Holy Spirit guides the Church to follow Jesus</li> </ul>
<p>LAW, GRACE, SIN  forgiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognise love shown to them and to explore opportunities to show love towards others</li> <li>- recognise responses that are not loving and and failures to show love and care</li> <li>- explore Scripture passages which reveal God's love (e.g. psalms of thanks, trust, calls for help)</li> <li>- hear about Jesus' commandment 'Love one another as I have loved you'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of opportunities to give and receive love</li> <li>- that for failure to show love and people say sorry</li> <li>- that God is faithful and loves everyone without distinction</li> <li>- that Jesus gives an invitation to follow his way of love</li> </ul>

THE HUMAN COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- observe and recognise what brings happiness or sadness</li> <li>- hear about and explore signs of God's care and blessings in creation, in Scripture and in human life</li> <li>- recognise and respond to opportunities to share activities, resources etc.</li> <li>- observe and recognise similarity, equality and difference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-that friendship and community life brings joy and challenges</li> <li>- that God's blessings in creation are many and varied.</li> <li>-that people are alike and different and to contribute to the life of a community in different ways.</li> </ul>
LOVE OF GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-hear about and explore passages in Scripture which express joy and trust in God's love.</li> <li>- become familiar with words of Jesus which speak of his Father's love</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that God's love is a source of joy and trust.</li> <li>- that Jesus told people about the love of God his Father showed them what it was like</li> </ul>
LOVE OF A NEIGHBOUR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-hear about and recognise what neighbours are</li> <li>-hear about and explore Jesus' call to 'love your neighbour as yourself'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of what it means to have a neighbour.</li> <li>- that Jesus asked his followers to love every neighbour.</li> </ul>