

Being different, Belonging Together in the family of God

Religious Education Policy

St Mary and St
Joseph's RC Primary
School



Review Date: Autumn 2025

Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement:



Rationale of Religious Education.

- Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church. *'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education.'*¹
- Religious Education is a core subject in the Catholic school.
- For some in the classroom, Religious Education may well be received as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith; for some it will be evangelisation, the first time they will have been presented, personally, with the truths of living faith. Nevertheless, its primary purpose is the step-by-step study of the mystery of Christ, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The criteria by which it is to be judged are educational.²
- Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

¹ Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4

² Religious Education in Catholic Schools, a statement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2000, p. 8-9

The outcome of Religious Education is 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.³

Intent

It is our aim at St. Mary and St Joseph's to provide a Religious Education (R.E.) which provides all children with opportunities to learn and achieve whilst developing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their lives.

It is through the teaching of R.E. that we aim to explicitly develop a knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic faith and practice whilst developing respect for all faiths within our school and the wider community. Our Religious Education provides opportunities to learn about and celebrate the Gospel values and virtues of the Catholic Church, which underpins everything we do.

The foundations for the Catholic life of the school are recognised and supported through all teaching and learning by:

- Presenting a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- Enabling pupils to continually deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- Being presented with an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- Raising pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- Developing the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- Stimulating pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- Enabling pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- Bringing clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.⁴

³ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

⁴ *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012, p. 6

Objectives:

In R.E. pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Develop skills within three key areas of R.E teaching: Explore (to make links to own life and experiences), Reveal (to develop a knowledge and understanding of the explicit religious teachings within each topic and to have an opportunity to explore those further) and Respond (to have the opportunity to remember, rejoice and celebrate what they have learnt and to renew – how they will use the key messages from what they have learnt in their own lives) by developing an ability to deal with religious concepts, thinking, reflection and the ability to make morally informed decisions.
- Use Religious Education as an opportunity to apply learning from lessons through discussion and activities focused on skills outlined within the national age-related standards for R.E.
- Learn vocabulary relevant to the area of study, developing a knowledge and understanding of words important to the topic and linked to skills within the age-related standards.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of God with Jesus being central to the beliefs of Christians/Catholics.
- Experience lessons which encourage learning through creative activities, stories, art, drama, people/visitors and objects/symbols.
- Explore a range of other faiths and their traditions and beliefs.
- Develop an awareness of their personal faith and a developing sense of: - self-esteem - awe and wonder - transcendence - respect for the beliefs and practices of others - personal responsibility - belonging to a community - personal and community responsibility for others

Implementation of Religious Education

Teaching and planning

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include Collective Worship. Allocated lesson time for R.E. should be approximately **2 hours 15 mins in KS1** and EYFS and **2 hours 30 mins in KS2**. The timings of these lessons can be divided as appropriate within each class usually over approx. 2 lessons per week or what a teacher feels is appropriate for their class.

Programme of Study:

To fulfil our intentions and objectives in R.E. we currently use the 'Come and See' Programme of Religious Education, following guidance from the Diocese of Salford. To begin implementation of the new Religious Education Directory, EYFS are currently planning lessons using the key objectives from this, building the foundations for the introduction of a new scheme in KS1 and EYFS in Summer 2025.

Process:

Religious Education is taught through the process of Explore, Reveal, Respond. This follows the pattern of: the human search for meaning, God's initiative in Revelation and the response in faith. This pattern is outlined both in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the Curriculum Directory.

The 'Come and See' programme provides 'suggestions' for lessons which enable pupils to progress through each topic at an age-appropriate level, however all activities can be adapted as required, making them as creative and inspiring as possible, ensuring the knowledge and standards/skills are still covered.

The 'Come and See' programme is divided into the following areas of study:

- Domestic Church – Family
- Baptism and Confirmation – Belonging
- Advent/Christmas – Loving
- Local Church – Community
- Eucharist – Relating: Gathering
- Lent/Easter – Giving: Growing
- Pentecost – Serving: Good News
- Reconciliation – Interrelating: Friends
- Universal Church – World: Our World
- Other religions.

Each area of study should will be taught throughout school at the same time, but each year groups lessons/activities will build on the previous year's work. Each unit should take approximately four weeks to complete (1 week – Explore, 2 weeks – Reveal, 1 week Respond). The dates of when a topic should start and end are provided on a 'Yearly Overview' provided for staff. Topics are matched, where possible, to fit in with the special times and seasons within the liturgical year.

The EYFS RE curriculum follows the six-branch model of the new Religious Education Directory (RED) Model Curriculum. This model is structured to align with the Liturgical Year and explores beliefs and sources through 'knowledge lenses' such as HEAR, BELIEVE, CELEBRATE, LIVE, DIALOGUE, and ENCOUNTER. Lessons are planned and assessments are incorporate the skills of the Early Learning Goals. Implementation of the new RED in EYFS has been started to provide a foundation for implementation across EYFS and KS1 starting in September 2025 in all Catholic Primary schools.

Aspects of world faith units are taught throughout the year using either the recommended units for the relevant year group from 'Come and See' or 'Cornerstones'.

Assessment

- Results for each child are to be recorded on a whole school tracker and monitored to ensure that children have the opportunity to develop and progress their skills and knowledge in each area of R.E. as they would in any other core subject.

At St Mary and St Joseph's we are committed to fostering a deep and meaningful understanding of religious education among our pupils. Every lesson provides an opportunity to assess a pupil's knowledge and understanding, informing future lesson planning. We are beginning to implement assessment of the knowledge skills (ways of knowing – previously known as the age-related standards) (in preparation for the implementation of a new scheme and RED for KS1 and EYFS in Summer 2025) outlined in the new Religious Education Directory (RED), focusing on three key areas:

1. **Understanding:** Pupils learn about religious beliefs, practices, and sources, gaining a knowledge of faith traditions.
2. **Discerning:** Pupils develop the ability to judge wisely in response to different interpretations, fostering critical thinking and informed decision-making. (
3. **Responding:** Pupils reflect personally on their learning, considering the implications for their own lives and the wider world, and demonstrating thoughtful and meaningful responses.

Our RE Lead has created specific questions to assess these skills, guided by driver words from the RED. These questions help shape our assessment of pupils' progress specifically their knowledge and understanding of each topics content. Additionally, staff can use their own questioning strategies to generate check-in and check-out tasks where appropriate to the topic or area of learning to support the informing of pupil progress.

At the conclusion of each topic, teachers make a summative judgement of pupils' performance, categorising it as Has Not Met, Expected, or Greater Depth Study. To achieve Greater Depth, pupils must meet the Expected criteria in all areas of understand (blue questions) and additionally demonstrate independent thought and personal responses through the skills of Discern (Pink) and Respond (Grey), this deeper level of understanding is assessed through further questioning or tasks provided by teachers, with support from the RE Lead where appropriate.

When the new RED and scheme are introduced, assessment will incorporate evidence of pupil skills progress against the end of age-phase to support summative assessment against expected levels.

Monitoring, Recording and Reporting:

- An in-house moderation of pupils' books is held twice a year with key stage staff. In the Autumn and Summer terms.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observation and learning walks is included in the school's annual monitoring schedule. Regular book looks by the RE Lead/SLT take place each half term to ensure high standards are maintained.
- Progress and achievements which reflect pupil's knowledge and understanding, are recorded and monitored on the school assessment tracker for R.E.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors in the annual report written by the subject lead.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

SEND

At St Mary and St Joseph's we believe in the value of each individual, as a child of God. The school therefore, welcomes pupils with Special Educational Needs. In our school, we teach R.E. to all children, whatever their ability. When teaching R.E, we ensure that we provide a range of learning opportunities matched to meet the needs of all our children. A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.

The Come and See programme provides additional SEND resources which can be used to adapt teaching if required.

Inclusion and Equality

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils. All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate access to the Religious Education programme.

Resources

The 'Come and See' programme provides example scripture quotes, stories, images and questions.

Where scripture is used during the teaching of RE, we encourage the use of age-appropriate Bibles, available in all classes, so that children understand and are familiar with the sacred text it has come from whilst developing an understanding of the context for beliefs and learning.

Within school children can access a range of resources and artefacts for a variety of religions. We encourage a hands-on approach to R.E. so that children are able to see how artefacts are used in different religions whilst developing an understanding and respect for their importance and religious value.

Our parish priest is a regular visitor in school and is always willing to work with classes, sharing his own faith and experiences with them.

Staff Formation

All staff support the Catholic ethos of our school and strive to develop children's progress and understanding in matters of faith. All teachers involved in planning and delivering Religious Education lessons have allocated planning time at least once per term to ensure time is given to providing good quality lessons with the RE lead's support. Where staff have questions about areas of RE in terms of Subject Knowledge the RE lead can provide support with this. Staff inset days and staff meetings provide additional support for staff and information and expectations in RE are shared. Diocesan training attended by the RE Lead is also disseminated so that staff are fully informed with current information. The RE Lead collaborates with other SIG group schools to share best practice.

Impact

R.E. at St Mary and St Joseph's provides children with a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith whilst providing opportunities to reflect upon their own personal faith and spirituality. Through assessment children progress and achieve within the subject at a level personal to them. The range of teaching styles used, allows opportunities for all children to access and engage with the R.E. curriculum. All children contribute to all areas of the Catholic life of our school regardless of their own faith background. Children at St Mary and St Joseph's develop respect and understanding for all religions and beliefs within our school and the wider community.

Presented to governors: Spring 2024

To be reviewed: Autumn 2025

(N.B. This policy will be updated and amended, to reflect changes in the new Religious Education Directory as they are made and implemented with the approval of Governors.)

