



Religious Education Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
June 2026	June 2027	R.E. Coordinator	Headteacher

The recognition of the significance of Religious Education in the classroom is expressed in the Bishops' Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools as:

"Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.

Religious education is then, the core subject in a Catholic School."

Placing RE at the core of the curriculum in our school helps us to fulfil our mission of educating the whole person in discerning the meaning of their existence since "Religious Education is concerned not only with intellectual knowledge but also includes emotional and affective learning.

RATIONALE

In Religious Education we present children with knowledge and information to make informed choices. We believe that in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus we discover the revelation of God's love for us and the true significance of human life.

Because of our faith, we recognise and respect the uniqueness of all individuals and try to enable them to become the people God calls them to be. We wish to foster a distinctive outlook on life that is rooted in the Gospel. Our faith in God and in the dignity of human life inspires and challenges all we do in school; it forms the basis of the structures, relationships, the aims and objectives we set ourselves and the way we measure our success.

GENERAL AIMS

Our aims in Religious Education (R.E.) are to:

- Assist the children in developing a loving and fulfilling relationship with God.
- Encourage the children to recognise God's presence in their lives and His unfailing love.
- Fully meet the requirements of the Religious Education Directory 2023.
- Develop the children's knowledge and understanding of their Catholic Faith.
- To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively.
- To develop pupils' religious literacy.
- To develop the critical thinking of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to everyday life.
- To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith.
- Develop the spiritual awareness of the children e.g. a sense of wonder at creation.
- Ensure the development of children's religious experience and understanding by providing progression and continuity in our RED Curriculum.
- Enable the children to celebrate and rejoice in their religious development through prayer, Eucharistic liturgy, non-Eucharistic liturgy and collective worship. The liturgical year is reflected in the Catholic life



and activities of the school.

- Provide the children with examples of Christian care and love for each other and help them recognise how their actions affect themselves and others.
- Continue to support and extend the development of links with the surrounding parishes and the local and wider community.
- Deliver opportunities for our pupils to engage in our commitment to the Common Good.
- To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Religious Education is a core subject in our Catholic school. As a Catholic school, it is very important in the education of our children. This policy outlines our aims and intentions for teaching Religious Education at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery.

- The teaching of Religious Education is accorded with the status of a core subject at Sacred Heart School and 10% of curriculum time is given to its teaching.
- We follow the **Religious Education Directory (RED)** which refers to the national framework and curriculum model that sets out what children and young people learn in Religious Education
- Religious Education is taught through six half termly branches
- Children are taught in class groups and are involved in activities including speaking, listening, art, writing, ICT activities, reading and drama.

PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The programme of study for religious education in Catholic schools is presented the Religious Education Directory 2023 which has a framework with four structural elements: knowledge lenses, ways of knowing, expected outcomes, curriculum branches.

Knowledge lenses set out the object of study for pupils; they indicate what should be known by the end of each age-phase. They are referred to as lenses, since they are the things we are looking at and they divide the content of the programme of study into four systematic sub-sections for the study of Catholicism and two additional lenses for the study of religions and worldviews, which together comprise the six knowledge lenses of hear, believe, celebrate, and live (the study of the Catholic religion), dialogue, and encounter (the study of other religions and worldviews).

Teaching other religions

The first four lenses systematically set out what a study of Catholicism comprises. The two lenses called 'dialogue' and 'encounter' set out the requirements in relation to the teaching of other religions and worldviews. The first of these two lenses is called 'Dialogue' and is an exemplification of the Church's teaching on the relationship between Catholicism and other Christian traditions, between Catholicism and Judaism, between Catholicism and other religions, and between Catholicism and non-religious or atheistic worldviews. It is called 'dialogue' because it focuses on the importance of dialogue as the only authentic way of living faithfully in a pluralistic world. The sixth lens is called Encounter. In addition to understanding what the Church teaches about its relationship to other faiths, religions, and worldviews, pupils are also expected to engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews, modelled on the concentric circles of Ecclesiam Suam outlined above. This is partly because of the Church's own commitment to dialogue, partly also because to love our neighbour is also to respect and esteem his or her culture,¹³² and finally because to enter into dialogue is a means of learning how to live peaceably with difference.

Therefore, as they progress through school, pupils will study:



- Other Christian denominations
- Judaism
- Islam
- Dharmic religions and pathways
- Other religions and worldviews, including non-religious worldviews.

It is important for the avoidance of a comparative approach, and all the risks of relativism this brings, that the study of other religions is a study of how those who profess that religion or worldview understand it on their own terms.

Ways of knowing set out the skills that pupils should be developing as they progress through their curriculum journey. Whenever we know something, we always know it in more than one way: we remember it, we critically assimilate it, and we put it into practice. All three are ways of coming to know the things that are the object of our study. The ways of knowing are an evolution of the Age-related Standards in Religious Education, which were themselves an evolution of the Levels of Attainment in Religious Education. The three ways of knowing are: understand, discern, and respond. They are represented in the programme of study by icons: head (understand), heart (discern), and hands (respond).

Expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing. Each age-phase will have a prescribed set of outcomes that will indicate what pupils are expected to know, remember, and be able to do, using the language of the ways of knowing and applying it to the discrete knowledge within each lens.

Curriculum branches are the way this programme of study presents its model curriculum. The model curriculum presents the expected outcomes in six curriculum branches that correspond to the six half-terms of a school year. The model curriculum is rooted in the narrative of salvation history and leads pupils on a journey in each year of schooling that gives a sequence to the learning. As they revisit each branch in each year of school they come to a deeper understanding of its significance for Catholic belief and practice, which allows them to make links between the four knowledge lenses within the context of the narrative of salvation history. The six curriculum branches are: creation and covenant, prophecy and promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, desert to garden, to the ends of the Earth, and dialogue and encounter.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

The RED states the following in Article 3 – Outcome of religious education:

'The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and consciously 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 recognise the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.'

Assessing and Recording Achievement

As a Catholic school our main concern is with the development of:

- the whole child;
- the formation of the Christian character,
- the ability to take their place in society;
- the fulfilment of academic potential.

To this end the profiling of the pupil's whole person development is as important as the assessment of academic outcomes. We use assessment against the expected end of year outcomes as a guide to pupil attainment and use this in line with our Assessment for learning policy.

Reporting to parents is through written reports where RE is a discrete subject and through discussion of the reports with parents. There are also opportunities to share progress in RE through Parents' Consultation Evenings.



Overarching Principles of Assessment in Religious Education

- The RED is progressive and sequential.
- Assessment is one element of the wider endeavour of teaching and learning.
- The *Discern* and *Understand* ways of knowing must be formally assessed.
- Planning should reflect that all the outcomes are evidenced at an appropriate point and in a variety of ways appropriate to a pupil's age and capacity.
- Summative assessment should require pupils to demonstrate the expected knowledge and skills independently in an age-appropriate manner.
- To protect the integrity of each age phase (and year group) outcomes in each branch within the RED set a standard by which pupils should be assessed.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In Religious Education teaching, we keep in mind and incorporate the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy to ensure all pupils have equal access to the R.E. curriculum and opportunities for enriching and deepening their faith and spirituality. Adaptation is provided where appropriate.

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

Please see the school's Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

STAFFING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The R.E Leader is Chris Beazeley alongside Liz Crabb & Grainne Moyies

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The Role of the R.E Leader is to:

- Have a thorough understanding of standards of R.E. in the school. The Subject Leader will monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of R.E. within the school through observing lessons, and monitoring R.E. books, and reviewing and analysis of pupil assessment data
- Develop an Action Plan, which forms part of the School Development Plan
- Liaise with the Local Governing Committee
- Attend diocesan R.E subject leader meetings
- Provide guidance and support to colleagues on the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum
- Liaise with the Parish Priest to arrange School Masses, Class Masses, Reconciliation and Special Feasts.
- Be responsible for R.E. resources and the purchase of new materials
- Write the R.E. Policy

Each class teacher:

- Prepares, plans and delivers R.E to class groups
- Prepares their class for Masses, Reconciliation (Yr4 - Yr6) and Liturgical Feasts of the Church
- Is responsible for planning the R.E. display in their classrooms

ACCOMMODATION AND RESOURCES

- Each teaching member of staff has access to the RED alongside other diocese approved resources.
- Resources for the effective delivery of R.E. are stored online and in the R.E. storage unit in the main school resource link corridor, including /liturgy/assembly books, artefacts and information on saints, and resources on other faiths/religions.
- Classroom resources include prayer-books and Bibles/Bible stories, and Prayer Table resource boxes which include appropriate artefacts and statues for across the Liturgical calendar year.



- Resources to support assemblies are located in the Assembly storage unit in the school hall. Large posters and banners that reflect liturgical themes across the year are also kept in the main school hall.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE WIDER CONTEXT

- Our Parish Priest (Parish of Sacred Heart and St John Fisher, Southend on Sea) has close links with the school. He is a regular visitor to the school, and is well known and respected amongst pupils and staff.
- Mass is celebrated outdoors on our school playground on the Feast day of Sacred Heart, which the whole school community, parents/carers, and parishioners are invited to. Mass is celebrated in Sacred Heart Church on Holy Days of Obligation. There is also a special Leavers Mass for pupils in Year 6 at the end of the summer term to which parents/carers are warmly invited to, which is followed by an afternoon tea. Class Masses are celebrated throughout the school year.
- The Parish priest also offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation to Year 4 through to 6 during Advent and Lent.

Links with the wider community

Within the school, pupils are encouraged to see themselves as part of a community in which each member plays a role.

Examples of links with the local and wider community include:

- Fundraising ventures, e.g. CAFOD, SVP, local Foodbanks
- School Council, Eco Council and RE Ambassadors initiatives to support House Charities
- Work experience opportunities for secondary school pupils
- Involvement in School Sports Partnership
- Promoting Christian values within the wider community (for example, litter picking in the local area).
- A shared retreat for Year 6, led by the Chaplin from St Thomas More

PRAYER, WORSHIP AND LITURGY

Children participate in class based prayer at key times throughout the day. Each class has a prayer focus area reflecting either the current topic studied or the liturgical year. The R.E. Leader is responsible for timetabling an annual schedule of dates for assemblies, liturgies and Masses. There are whole-school masses on our Feast Day and Holy Days of Obligation are also marked by a Mass, which are celebrated in the parish church with parishioners. Non-Eucharistic liturgy (e.g. Distribution of Ashes, Reconciliation, lighting of Advent candles, etc.) are also honoured. See out Prayer & Liturgy policy for more details.

The school attends a Scripture based assembly and a celebration of pupil achievement assembly each week. The whole school also celebrates various festivals and important dates throughout the year (e.g. Remembrance Day, etc.).

Liaison between our Parish Priest and our R.E. Leader ensures the preparation of masses and services in the Liturgical Year. In each celebration, all phases of the school will be actively represented or involved by assuming a role of ministry (e.g. by serving, reading, singing, responding, dancing, acting, offertory procession, etc.).

HOME SCHOOL PARISH

Links between school, parish, and home are strong.

Parents/carers and parishioners are invited to masses with the school, celebrated by the Parish Priest of



Sacred Heart and St. John Fisher, Southend-on-Sea. As part of the work on the Sacraments, Reconciliation services are held every year during Lent and Advent.

THE COMMON GOOD

At Sacred Heart School, we wish our children to develop a concern for others. Pupils have a strong understanding of the teachings of Jesus in relation to loving and caring for others and they put this into practice in school and in the way they serve local and international communities through outreach and charity work.

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored by the Head Teacher and is evaluated and reviewed annually.