



St. Mary's RC Primary School
Religious Education Policy
2023-2025

Mission Statement – What we want to achieve

As the family of St. Mary's, learning and growing in God's love, joyfully, we pray, play and respect all, changing our world forever.

Vision Statement – How we want to achieve our Mission Statement

Nurturing growth, igniting dreams, building futures, guided by God.

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.

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

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

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

The Aims of Religious Education

- ④ To present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- ④ To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- ④ To present 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;
- ④ To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- ④ To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
- ④ To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- ④ To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- ④ To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.⁴

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Prayer and Liturgy sessions such as class-based worship, singing worship or phase / whole school liturgies. Please see the separate Prayer and Liturgy Policy for details.

In St Mary's, curriculum time for RE equates to the following: EYFS, KS1 & KS2 – 2 hrs 45 mins weekly (10%). Within EYFS and Year One, part of this time is used within continuous provision, with activities based around learning in RE. In Nursery, as we have part time children, the 10% equates to 1 hour and 20 minutes weekly.

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

Programme of Study: Come and See – Transition period

To fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, 2012 – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ - the ‘Come and See’ programme is used as recommended by the Diocese.

Whilst we are using the overviews, scripture and objectives laid out in Come and See, we have moved away from their activities in order to make RE more creative, engaging and relevant to the children in our care. We give our children a much deeper understanding of scripture in terms of linking Old and New Testament, authorial intent in Upper Key Stage Two and historical context of scripture texts. Whilst we await a new scheme to be produced, we will continue to develop our own activities with the support of the Diocese, whilst staying within the framework of Come and See.

Process:

As we move further away from Come and See’s activities, St Mary’s are implementing the use of lenses to accompany the new RECD. Whilst we still use the “Reveal” sections from Come and See to map out our curriculum, we do not use Explore and Respond sessions, except for in EYFS where we feel it is appropriate to contextualise learning lower down the school prior to using scripture to form opinion by using “Explore” activities from Come and See. Work completed is based around the structure of Come and See units, although staff are advised to use different, more meaningful tasks than ones provided in Come and See.

This helps us to follow 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.

As the Directory states:

‘Teaching in Religious Educationshould help people be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible.’⁵

Methodology:

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- ⊕ Drama, Music, Poetry
- ⊕ Map work
- ⊕ Writing tasks
- ⊕ How to use Bibles correctly in UKS2
- ⊕ Work around the liturgical calendar
- ⊕ The seven Sacraments
- ⊕ Discussion and debate
- ⊕ Use of word banks
- ⊕ Hermeneutics
- ⊕ Work done in phases, year groups and classes as appropriate
- ⊕ Allowing choice of activity where appropriate
- ⊕ Small world
- ⊕ Looking at scripture as a believer
- ⊕ Looking at scripture as a reader
- ⊕ Looking at the wider times of the authors of the Bible to discover the reasons behind the scripture they wrote
- ⊕ Art, both of famous artists and the children's work
- ⊕ Videos, video blogs, use of technology
- ⊕ Use of "Sticky Knowledge" to retain and recap prior learning in main lessons each week;
- ⊕ Knowledge organisers containing vocabulary, art work, scripture references and key information for each topic are stuck in books at the start of a topic.
- ⊕ Scripture-based study lessons in UKS2 in addition to the Come and See topic taught

⁵ Religious Education Curriculum Directory, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2012, p.7

As well as Come and See, we regularly make use of the following to enhance our curriculum where appropriate to do so. This is not an exhaustive list and is constantly changing as we develop our curriculum offer further:

- ✚ Ten Ten Resources
- ✚ Mark 10 Liturgies (Little Liturgies)
- ✚ God Who Speaks
- ✚ ACTRE
- ✚ RE Today
- ✚ Work on hermeneutics as advised by the Diocese
- ✚ Margaret Carswell
- ✚ Mary Farmer Retreat Days
- ✚ We also make as much use of the local parish priest, Cannon Tadhg Mullins, as we can.
- ✚ Visits to the Synagogue, Gurdwara and Mosque as appropriate
- ✚ Visitors in to school from other faith tradition.
- ✚ We will be making links with the new order of sisters who have moved in to the convent on Wood St – The Daughters of Divine Charity.

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, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme.

Other Religions:

Each year, children study three other religions for a week, following the programme laid out in “Come and See”. Judaism and Islam are taught every year, with Sikhism and Hinduism taught on a two-yearly cycle; terms change depending upon the amount of weeks in a term and when Easter falls:

2022-23:	2023-24:	2024-25:
Autumn 1: Judaism	Autumn 1: Sikhism	Autumn 1: Hinduism
Autumn 2: Hinduism	Autumn 2: Judaism	Autumn 2: Judaism
Summer 1: Islam	Summer 1: Islam	Summer 1: Islam

Our children have a deep respect and love for learning beyond their own community. In order to engage with this further, we use creative methods for children to express their learning and where possible, we link it back to previous study. We also arrange visits to the Jewish Museum and Synagogue in Manchester the Neeli Mosque in Rochdale. We use artefacts from the four religions studied and speakers/visitors to school where appropriate to do so to enhance the children's learning. In addition, we have made links to the local communities by making Eid and Hanukah cards and celebrate other faith key feast days where possible, such as Passover and Rosh Hashanah. Children in our school who are of a different faith are encouraged, at an age appropriate level, to share their belief system with others. This allows our children to develop rounded understanding of what it means to have a belief and allows children to understand and act out the Gospel Values of Justice and Compassion as well as the British Values of Tolerance and Mutual Respect.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting:

- ④ Assessment of standards is carried out using the Age-Related Standards in Religious Education (3-19) interim document agreed by Bishops' Conference.
- ④ Each teacher keeps a class record of assessed work and records of pupils' progress using a digital version of the standards above, with one tab per child. This is updated at the end of every half term or following the end of a unit of work.
- ④ A best-fit model of assessment is undertaken. Staff collate dates when children have met a particular piece of assessment. They are able to return to this data later in the year and change any dates based on work done further in the year. Staff then create a "best fit" during the year to state where their children are on their learning journey.
- ④ Assessment can be taken from a range of sources: children's answers to Big Questions at the start of topics; "Give me 3/4/5 Brain Dump" answers at the end of topics; answers to next step questions at the end of lessons (answered in red pen); answers to Sticky Knowledge questions done at the start of lessons as well as actual responses to activities within a lesson. Whole class discussions, Prayer and Liturgy / Collective Worship discussions can also be used to track specific standards. As this is harder to evidence, staff do discuss assessment in these areas at regular intervals in staff meetings and moderations as well as through use of questioning in pupil interviews by the RE team.
- ④ Progress and achievement is recorded and tracked using age-related standard sheets, which have been digitised. Assessments are ongoing through the topics rather than a stand-alone assessment piece.

- ⊕ An in-house moderation of pupils' books is held every term. We meet regularly through the year in local clusters to cross-moderate to ensure expectations are in-line with other schools.
- ⊕ Monitoring of teaching and learning – observations are carried out in forms of lesson observations and drop-in sessions. Children's understanding of the work is also monitored through pupil interviews. Learning and environment walks take place termly. In line with our wellbeing policy, planning is not directly monitored, but it is expected to be available either as a Medium Term Plan or as Power Point Presentations, dependent upon how teachers work best.
- ⊕ Because Religious Education is subjective, discussions are held with staff about evidencing expected standards in staff meetings on a regular basis.
- ⊕ Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors at end of each academic year through the head's report.
- ⊕ Developments in Religious Education after pupil interviews are also reported to Governors each term.
- ⊕ The Link Governors for RE regularly meet with the RE leads and are invited to and participate in pupil interviews, CPD for staff, lesson observations, book monitoring and scrutiny, assemblies, class-based worships, morning Rosary, liturgies as a school and Mass.
- ⊕ Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- ⊕ Parents are asked their opinions about RE in school annually.
- ⊕ Pupils are asked their opinions about RE, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life and Mission of the school in pupil interviews at regular points throughout the year.
- ⊕ Staff and governors are also asked their opinions and give regular feedback on RE, CW and CLM.

Management of the subject:

We have an RE team at St Mary's, led by Mr McGrail (Deputy Headteacher) and Miss Thomas (Year Five teacher, former RE lead at a previous school and Collective Worship Lead at St Mary's). They both share equal responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education. Please see Appendix 1. The

decision was taken to bring Miss Thomas in in order to drive forward standards in the use of scripture, being creative and assessment in RE. At present, Miss Thomas is the sole lead for RE with the support of the Senior Leadership Team, RE Link Governor and other staff as appropriate due to long term staff absence.

Policy Review:

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Headteacher, Subject Lead and the Governing Body and updated every two years. It is our intention to review this current policy in September to move in line with any curriculum changes / new schemes to be implemented with the RECD in 2025/2026.

Appendix 1

The Role of the RE Lead

- To be responsible to the Headteacher and colleagues for the monitoring of teaching, assessment and planning of Religious Education based on the development of the children at each stage. Monitoring occurs in order to support staff and should include classroom observation, learning walks, book scrutiny, planning and discussion with pupils.
- To manage resources and facilities for Religious Education.
- To liaise with the Diocesan Department for Education particularly through attendance at RE Leaders meetings, and inform the Headteacher and colleagues of current standards and developments within Religious Education.
- To attend appropriate training for Religious Education, keep up-to-date with current developments and feed these developments back to staff.
- To advise individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the Religious Education process and teaching methods.
- To implement the change to the interim Age-Related Standards in Religious Education (3-19) and support staff during the transition period.
- To collect and keep pupil books showing pupils working at expected from *at least* Years 2, 4 and 6 at the end of each academic year.
- To facilitate in-house moderation of pupils' books
- To attend Diocesan moderation meetings with the required pupil books.
- In consultation with the Headteacher to communicate with parents, governors and the parish community regarding issues relating to Religious Education.
- Working with the Headteacher and colleagues, to undertake a regular audit / review of Religious Education in line with the school development plan.
- To be familiar with the current inspection framework and to consult with the SLT to complete the DSEF document.
- To keep up to date with changes to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.

Revised and adopted by the Governing Body

Date 17th January 2024

Review Date 1 September 2024