

Religious Education Policy

Our Lady and St George's Catholic Primary and Nursery School



Approved by: Learning Committee

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Religious Education policy

“Caritas Christi Urget Nos”

Our expectations are underpinned by Gospel values, in keeping with our School Mission Statement:

With Jesus We Join Together to

Love

Listen

Respect

Learn and

Enjoy



Rational

When a child is baptised the parents are told that they are the first teachers of their child in the ways of Faith. The Church realises the importance of the parents' task, and has always tried to support parents in their privileged responsibility of educating their children in the Faith.

The Catholic school has a special place among the institutions of the Church in this mission. Religious Education plays a pivotal role in fostering the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, and physical growth of students at our school. Fundamentally, Religious Education empowers students to recognise the presence of God in their lives and cultivates a compassionate, Christian outlook towards their neighbour. Furthermore, Religious Education equips students with the knowledge and comprehension of a variety of World faiths, emphasising the shared commonalities and distinctive differences that unite these faiths. Religious Education also supports children in their ethical decision-making as they transition from childhood to adolescence; ultimately shaping them into responsible young people and contributing members of society.

Religious Education helps pupils to:

- Develop knowledge and comprehension of various religions, fostering the ability to make informed and reasoned judgments about diverse faiths globally.
- Cultivate an understanding of the core beliefs, values, and traditions within their community and around the world..
- Cultivate moral and social responsibility, shaping students into moral citizens.
- Instil self-value and promote respect for others.
- Encourage active participation in and contribution to their community.
- Foster an appreciation for diversity and differences.

The school aims to help pupils to:

- Understand what it means to be a Christian and to be a member of the broader Christian community.
- Foster positive attitudes towards others, gaining insights into the distinctions between different religions and cultures.
- Attain increasing knowledge and understanding of the Catholic tradition
- Develop understanding about the world they live in, different faiths held globally and an awareness of the spiritual and moral challenges some people face.
- Reflect on their personal beliefs, experiences, choices, and values, as well as those of others.
- Develop their understanding of personal relationships, supporting moral, emotional, psychological, and physical development.
- Access opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences preparing them for the broader world.
- Cultivate an inquisitive mind, fostering a propensity for exploration and questioning.
- Develop respect for diverse viewpoints and celebrate societal diversity.
- Enhance their ability to appreciate, respect, and reflect upon the areas of study.
- Understand and respect British and Gospel Values.

Religious Education plays a crucial role in assisting students:

- Cultivate an affection for God by imparting knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith, drawing from both scripture and doctrine.
- Promote the establishment of a personal connection with God.
- Foster awareness among children about various faiths, encouraging respect for and understanding of other religious traditions.
- Inspire children to engage in diligent study, investigation, and thoughtful reflection.
- Instill a profound respect for truth and an appreciation for diverse perspectives and opinions

Religious Education helps pupils to:

- To foster a love of God through knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith from scripture and doctrine
- To encourage the development of a personal relationship with God
- To help our children be aware of and respect other faiths
- To encourage children to study, investigate and reflect
- To develop respect for truth and for the views of others

The primary purpose of Catholic Religious Education

The primary purpose of Religious Education is to come to know and understand God's revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school is 'a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation.' In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human — that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation — is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church as taught by the Magisterium. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church. Hence 'the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.'

Religious Education is central to the curriculum of the Catholic school

Religious Education is central to the curriculum of the Catholic school and is at the heart of the philosophy of Catholic education. Religious Education has developed in a way that reflects the particular identity of our Catholic schools in England and Wales. It teaches about the faith in the context of a school which proclaims the Gospel, and invites the individual to respond to the message of Christ. As the individual responds to this invitation, growth in faith and knowledge helps the pupil to respond to the call to holiness and understand the fullness of what it is to be human. For some, then, Religious Education will also be received as **evangelisation** and for some, **catechesis**.

The relationship between Religious Education and Catechesis is one of distinction and complementarity. What confers on Religious Education in schools its proper evangelising character is the fact that it is called to penetrate a particular area of culture and to relate to other areas of knowledge. Religious Education in schools sows the dynamic seed of the Gospel and seeks to 'keep in touch with the other elements of the pupil's knowledge and education; thus the Gospel will impregnate the mentality of the students in the field of their learning, and the harmonisation of their culture will be achieved in the light of faith.'

It is necessary, therefore, that Religious Education in schools be regarded as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. However, it should not simply be regarded as one subject among many, but should be the key element in an interdisciplinary dialogue.

Parents are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their children, and therefore must be recognised as the primary and principal educators but in this primary task, parents need the subsidiary help of civil society and other institutions. The family is ‘the primary, but not the only and exclusive educating community’. Among those who cooperate in the task of education, the Catholic school assists in the delivery of a programme of learning in Religious Education appropriate to the age and particular learning needs of the pupil.

The Religious Educator

The Church recognises the fundamental contribution of those charged with the planning and delivery of Religious Education. In what may be called the ‘hidden curriculum’, the witness, integrity and sincerity of the teacher or staff member will influence the communication of Christian faith, especially as knowledge to be believed and lived.

As you know, the task of a teacher is not simply to impart information or to provide training in skills intended to deliver some economic benefit to society; education is not and must never be considered as purely utilitarian. It is about forming the human person, equipping him or her to live life to the full – in short it is about imparting wisdom. And true wisdom is inseparable from knowledge of the Creator, for ‘both we and our words are in his hand, as are all understanding and skill in crafts’ (Wis7:16) Benedict XVI

Those responsible for Religious Education in our schools should:

- be prepared to give living witness to what they teach
- recognise that they share in the teaching office of the Church exercised in the person of the local bishop and enshrined in the trust deed of the school
- fulfil their professional responsibilities with regard to all that develops and enhances the life of the Catholic school
- plan and teach schemes of work that are engaging and accessible so that all pupils may progress appropriately in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith
- have high expectations of all their pupils
- ensure that 10% of the curriculum is devoted to Religious Education
- ensure that Religious Education contributes positively to the broad and balanced curriculum of a Catholic school through cooperation and dialogue with other subjects
- take care continually to deepen their own knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith
- take seriously the duty of every Catholic to form his or her conscience
- be given opportunities for their own spiritual and professional development as Catholic educators

The Aims of Religious Education

1. To present engagingly a comprehensive content, which is the basis of knowledge, and an understanding of the Catholic faith
2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively
3. 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
5. To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life
6. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith
7. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum
8. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture

The outcome of excellent 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 are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life'

"The task of handing on the faith to future generations is both the privilege and responsibility of the local Church. Its primary purpose is to bring young people to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

Cardinal Basil Hume

Diocesan Religious Education Programme

- 'Come and See' is the programme recommended by the Diocese (until September 2025)
- By September 2025 the Religious Education Directory RED will be fully implemented across all year groups as instructed by the Diocese
- Curriculum Time allocation per week is 10%. This does not include Prayer & Liturgy
- Allocation of teaching time to Other Faiths is 5 hours and is included in the RED (2 weeks' R.E. time)

Process for delivery of R.E.

In **Come and See** Religious Education is taught through the process of **Explore, Reveal, Respond** (*Come and See Years 3-6*). This takes account of “what to believe entails”: the human **search** for meaning, God’s initiative in **Revelation** and the individual’s **response** in faith.

In the **RED** teaching is outlined at ‘Ways of knowing’, which set out the skills that pupils should be developing as they progress through their curriculum journey. The three ways of knowing are: **Understand, Discern, and Respond**.

Understand: Teaching enables pupils to deeply understand the meaning of sacred texts, religious beliefs, sacred rites, and the lives of individuals and communities who are shaped by these texts, beliefs, and rites.

Discern: Pupils will be equipped to judge wisely in response to different interpretations of the meaning, significance, and implications of texts, beliefs, rites, and ways of life so that they can arrive at justified conclusions about what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful.

Respond: Pupils reflect personally and with integrity on what they have learned and consider the implications for action these may have for their own lives and the world in which they live

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning strategies from across the curriculum can be appropriately adapted to inspire the learning needs of pupils.

Inclusion

All pupils have the right to have adaptive teaching in order to access Religious Education.

Assessment

Assessment of standards is carried out according to Diocesan guidelines using the criteria set out in Levels of Attainment in RE agreed by Bishops’ Conference (Age related standards) and Expected end of age- phase outcomes (RED)

R.E. IN-SERVICE

Catholic Teachers Certificate (CCRS)

All Teachers are encouraged to secure this qualification in R.E. It is expected that the R.E. Co-ordinator and all aspiring to Senior Leadership in Catholic schools will obtain this.

Annual in-service for all staff

It is recommended that **one day’s Inset** is allocated to the Catholicity of the school.

Governors are responsible for the R.E. Curriculum. This is managed by the Head Teacher on a day to day basis. An appointed link Governor will be designated and regularly liaise with the RE subject leader.

Job Description for Religious Education Coordinator

Specific Activities and Responsibilities

1. Ensure that Religious Education is given 10% of the curriculum time
2. Encourage and support colleagues to obtain the CCRS certificate
3. Ensure new initiatives from The Vatican, Diocese and Parish are fully embraced and implemented within school life
4. Work collaboratively with the Head Teacher to ensure that the RE Curriculum, Prayer & Liturgy, Liturgy and the prayer life of the school remains central to the school's mission, including appropriate Feast days and Holy Days of Obligation
5. Ensure that Religious education contributes positively to the broad and balanced curriculum of the school through cooperation and dialogue with other subject leaders
6. Work in collaboration with the Music Subject Leader and Parish musicians to ensure parity between School and Parish
7. Ensure that the R.E. Programme ***Come and See and the RED*** recommended by the Bishop of the diocese is used effectively and that the RED is fully implemented across all year groups by September 2025
8. Emphasise the importance of pupils being able to apply the skills, processes and concepts learnt
9. Review regularly methods of assessment and recording pupils' achievement in Religious Education using Expected end of age- phase outcomes from the RED
10. Undertake data analysis from termly assessment of progress in Religious Education linked to end of year published data
11. Undertake the necessary reading and Inset appropriate to the Religious Education Subject Leader
12. Maintain Religious Education Leader's file ensuring all aspects are kept up to date and all reports are copied to the Head Teacher
13. Prepare an Action Plan to ensure the focus of Religious Education is promoted
14. Prepare and lead professional development in Religious Education
 - (a) Induct ECTs and those new to Catholic education into the distinctive Catholic nature of the school through internal training and training delivered by the Diocese
 - (b) Advise and assist staff where appropriate

- (c) Inform Parents and advise Governors on progress in teaching and learning in Religious Education
15. Provide, in consultation with the Head Teacher and staff, additional appropriate resources for Religious Education
16. Carry out a Religious Education Inventory and resource lists
17. Monitor the standards and progress of teaching and learning in Religious Education across the school, reporting to the Head Teacher and Leadership team (includes reviewing assessment data, plans, lessons, resources and pupils' work)
18. To develop and implement yearly initiatives for Raising Achievement linked to School Improvement Plans. Action Plan and agree project to be prepared and finalised at the end of Summer Term for commencement in the next academic year
19. Liaise with appropriate outside Agencies both within the Diocese, Deanery, Parish and wider community to ensure the promotion of Religious Education within the school
20. The Post Holder is also required to:
- (a) Promote and support the Catholic ethos and mission statement of the school
 - (b) Undertake duties set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document
 - (c) Undertake such particular duties which the Head teacher or in her absence the Senior Leadership Team may reasonably direct

'Teaching in Religious Education should 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.'

Teaching is a noble calling and profession. It can be a source of great satisfaction, and we ask all Catholics to pray for our teachers and for vocations to the teaching life.

'Teaching has an extraordinary moral depth and is one of our most excellent and creative activities. For the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings.'

Useful Websites:

<https://www.paulineuk.org/>

www.comeandseere.co.uk

www.info@mccrimmons.com

www.vatican.va

www.stpauls.org.uk

www.cesew.org.uk

<https://www.westminstercathedral.org.uk/shop.php>

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/red-general-resources/>

“Let us all remember this: one cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the tangible witness of one's life”. (Pope Francis)

Appendix 1

Delivery of R.E. in Our Lady & St George's Catholic Primary and Nursery School



We aim:

- To foster a love of God through knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith from scripture, tradition, doctrine, prayer, rites and Christian living
- To encourage the development of a personal relationship with God
- To engage children in the questions of life, and find a Christian response to them
- To explore the relationship between faith and life
- To help our children be aware of and respect other faiths
- To develop respect for truth and for the views of others

In our classrooms children will receive a systematic presentation of the Catholic Faith. It will have achievable aims which are identified.

It will relate to the children's lives both inside and outside school. To this end, we will be aware of the diversity of backgrounds, family relationships and faith experiences of our children and be sensitive in the way we approach our themes.

We will ensure that key content is included and that resources are rich.

Our assessment will be accurate and there will be marked progression.

From the Religious Education Directory; To know You more clearly (2023):

“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 spirituality, and think ethically and theologically, and who recognise the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.”

The RE Curriculum Directory has now been revised. As a school we will introduce the new Religious Education Directory (RED) in phases, starting with EYFS in Spring 2024, continuing with KS1 in September 2024, leading to full implementation in KS2 in September 2025 (See whole school RED implementation plan for further details) As a school we will continue to use the 'Come and See' programme of study, until the RED has been implemented in each key stage.

R.E. Programme:

The teaching of R.E. is allocated 10% of the taught curriculum (on average 2 lessons a week).

One lesson every two weeks is set aside for the teaching of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) through the 'Life To The Full' scheme by TenTen resources.

We currently follow the '**Come and See**' Programme and the **RED** which are both approved by the Diocese of Brentwood.

Come and See

Three topics are studied each term, with each topic lasting approximately 4 weeks:

Community of Faith – Church

Celebration of Ritual – Sacraments

Way of Life – Christian Living

Each theme is visited three times throughout the year, developing the children's knowledge and understanding across the year.

The Church

Autumn – Domestic Church

Spring – Local Church

Summer – Universal Church

Sacrament

Autumn – Belonging

Spring – Relating

Summer – Inter-relating

Christian Living

Autumn – Loving

Spring – Giving

Summer – Serving God

Each year group follows its own topics, but these are linked between the year groups by the above themes.

Other faith topics are explored twice yearly. Judaism is explored in the Autumn Term and Islam is explored in the Summer Term.

RED

One topic or 'Branch' is studied each half term. A cyclical structure across all year topic means that each Branch is revisited again in each year group with more depth, and more detailed concepts and scripture are explored.

Autumn1 Branch 1 - **Creation to Covenant**

Autumn 2 Branch 2 - **Prophecy and Promise**

Spring 1 Branch 3 - **Galilee to Jerusalem**

Spring 2 Branch 4 - **Desert to Garden**

Summer 1 Branch 5 - **To the Ends of the Earth**

Summer 2 Branch 6 - **Dialogue and Encounter**

Teaching and Learning in R.E.

A range of teaching strategies and learning methods will be employed depending on the needs and abilities of the children and the nature of the activities being undertaken.

Work will be differentiated in terms of activity or outcome according to the needs and abilities of our children.

Approaches will include whole class teaching, group activities and individual work. Children will have opportunities to work independently as well as cooperatively and collaboratively, developing their own knowledge and skills as well as sharing their experiences and supporting the learning of others.

Work will involve thought provoking reflection and discussion, encouraging the children to develop their moral and spiritual consciences.

Teachers are encouraged to make cross-curricular links when planning R.E. including incorporating opportunities for computing, expressive arts and extended writing where appropriate.

From the RED 2023:

'Religious education is to be delivered within a broad and balanced curriculum, where it informs every aspect of the curriculum. Every other subject is to be informed by religious education and have a strong relationship with it.'

'Religious education is the core of the core curriculum and is to be the source and summit of the whole curriculum.'

Assessment and Record Keeping:

It is impossible to assess the level of a child's personal faith and it should not be attempted. However, we are able to assess a child's knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes that have been taught in R.E.

These can be demonstrated through, among other things, discussion with the child, written work, art work, role play, drama & dance, assessment tasks, artefacts & artwork, feedback from other adults, concept maps and records of responses in class.

Marking will be undertaken in accordance with the school marking policy. Written comments, in relation to learning intention, should be affirming, encouraging and challenging, above all being sensitive to the children's needs.

During the topic and at the end, teachers will complete statements, assessing AT1 (Knowledge and Understanding), AT2 (Engagement and Response) and AT3 (Analysis and Evaluation).

Children will complete 'I Can' self-assessment sheets which will be kept with their R.E. workbook (Come and See). At the end of each term, teachers will make an overall judgement of attainment levels. Attainments will be recorded for each pupil on their annual report.

Monitoring:

In order to monitor learning and teaching in R.E the Head Teacher and R.E leader will view R.E planning periodically.

They will observe R.E lessons across the school. Any common points of improvement will be shared with staff, and individual feedback will be given to observed teachers.

Work scrutiny and pupil conferencing will also be part of the monitoring process.

The monitoring process is intended to be supportive to staff, and to ensure that the best provision is in place for our children.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion:

A central message of the Catholic Faith is that God loves each one of us equally in our uniqueness and our differences. As a Catholic community we uphold the dignity and worth of every human being.

It is vital that we meet the individual needs of children, acknowledging that all children have different gifts and talents that are to be celebrated.

Learning tasks should be matched to the abilities of children to enable them to achieve success, and help them to develop their full potential by being sufficiently challenging. Our aim is always to develop a positive self-image for every child.

We aim to ensure that our teaching and resources reflect our own school community, with its vibrant multi-racial and multicultural mix and our children who have additional learning or physical challenges.

Display and Prayer Focus:

Each class has an altar/prayer area (the Sacred Space) to stimulate and facilitate reflection and prayer.

R.E. Learning walls in each classroom will relate to the current theme, providing a tool for consolidation of learning, prompt for pupils or a celebration of work undertaken in R.E. lessons.

Around the school other displays may celebrate work done across the school or in year groups or work relating to studies of other faiths.