St Mary's Catholic Primary School Religious Education Policy

Our Mission Statement

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds."
Matthew 5:16.
Forming our futures, growing in family, grounding in faith.

Rationale of Religious

Education Religious education's central subject matter is the mystery of God, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Church, and the relationship between faith and life. Religious education is 'the bond of the whole curriculum' (RED, 2023, p.13). Its purpose is to be 'fully religious' and 'genuinely educational'. 'Religious education is religious by virtue of its intent to serve the missionary mandate of the school... religious education, although distinct from catechesis, can be received as catechesis by those students for whom the study of the Catholic religion is a study of the faith that makes them who they are.' (RED, 2023, p.13). Religious education enables all pupils 'to be confident and secure in their religious faith and knowledgeable and respectful of other religions' (Christ at the Centre, 2012, p.9).

The planned 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.' (CSI framework: RE1.3 Religious literacy) As such it will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

General Norms: Section 1.2 of the Religious Education Directory, 2023.

Article 1 – Oversight of religious education

Formation and education provided in schools is subject to the authority of the Church (can. 397, 806). It is for the Episcopal Conference to issue general norms concerning formation and education in the Catholic religion and for the diocesan Bishop to regulate and watch over it (can. 804).

Article 2 – Aims of religious education

The aims of religious education are:

1. to engage in a systematic study of the mystery of God, of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold, the basis for them and the relationship between faith and life;

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 to provide pupils with a sure guide for living and the tools to critically engage with contemporary culture and society;

4. to give pupils an understanding of the religions and worldviews present in the world today and the skills to engage in respectful and fruitful dialogue with those whose worldviews differ from their own;

5. to develop the critical faculties of pupils so to bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture;

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.

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.

Article 4 – Religious education as the heart of the curriculum

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

Religious education is an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and rigour as other disciplines.

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.

In each year of compulsory schooling, religious education is to be taught for at least 10% curriculum time within each repeating cycle of the regular school timetable.

In each year of sixth form schooling, religious education is to be taught for at least 5% curriculum time within each repeating cycle of the regular school timetable.

Article 5 – Compliance with the Religious Education Directory

The Religious Education Directory includes the programmes of study approved by the Bishops' Conference for the various age groups. The competence for approving these programmes of study is currently exercised by the Department of Education and Formation, but the Bishops' Conference can delegate this function to another department, commission, or committee of the Conference.

Catholic schools are required to comply with the Religious Education Directory.

Article 6 – Implications of the primacy of religious education in the curriculum 9 1. Religious education is to be properly organised, coordinated, taught, and resourced.

In primary schools there is to be a Coordinator of Religious Education who is to have at least parity in status and remuneration with those of any other curriculum area.

The religious education department in secondary schools is to have at least parity of status and resourcing with any other subject department. The department is to be given the highest possible status. This is to be reflected in the status and remuneration of the person leading that department.

Article 7 – Interpretation 'School' means a Catholic school as understood in canon 803, and includes all Catholic maintained schools, independent schools (including academies), non-maintained special schools, and sixth form colleges.

Article 8 – Transitional provisions 1. This Religious Education Directory replaces all previous norms from 1 September 2025 in key stage 3 and 1 September 2026 in primary schools. 2. Until 1 September 2025, in any aspect within the scope of this Directory, schools may choose to comply with this Directory or the Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012.

These transitional provisions do not derogate from any requirements which do not derive from this Religious Education Directory or the Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012. Religious Education – Curriculum Time Allocation In recognition of the importance of religious education in Catholic schools, 10% of the teaching week is allocated to religious education. This does not include collective worship or the teaching of RSE.

The Religious Education Curriculum

The curriculum is rooted in the principles of the Religious Education Directory (RED) 'To Know You More Clearly' 2023. The RED curriculum will be fully implemented in KS3 by September 2025 and in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 by September 2026. The RED curriculum structure comprises of:

• Four knowledge lenses concerned with the study of Catholicism: Hear, Believe, Live and Celebrate. These indicate what should be known by the end of each age phase.

• Two knowledge lenses for the study of other religions and worldviews:

Dialogue and Encounter.

• Ways of Knowing: Understand, Discern and Respond are the skills through which pupils and students progress and develop their thinking during the curriculum journey.

Expected Outcomes set out for each age phase what pupils and students should be able to know, remember and do.

Curriculum Branches divide the model curriculum into half-term units of study which repeat annually, giving a spiral curriculum which allows pupils and students to build progressively on prior knowledge and develop their understanding year by year.

The curriculum branches are:

Autumn 1: Creation and Covenant **Autumn 2:** Prophecy and Promise

Spring 1: Galilee to Jerusalem **Spring 2:** Desert to Garden

Summer 1: To the Ends of the Earth **Summer 2:** Dialogue and Encounter

Staff Formation

All staff support the Catholic ethos of the school and strive to develop pupils' and students' progress and understanding in matters of faith. There are regular opportunities for all staff to engage in personal prayer and reflection which may support their professional role. All teachers involved in planning and delivering religious education lessons attend half-termly diocesan training on the RED branch resources.

Feedback, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Each age-phase has a prescribed set of expected outcomes which indicate what pupils and students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do. Schools will assess pupil progress against the expected outcomes of the RED, both formatively and summative. The diocese does not prescribe a particular approach to assessment. Teachers provide pupils with feedback which ensures that most pupils understand what they need to do to make progress in their learning. Feedback in RE aligns with the school's feedback policy. Pupil effort is celebrated leading to good levels of motivation from pupils. Termly RE data is moderated: in-school moderation for the autumn term, inter-school moderation in the spring term, diocesan moderation in the summer term. Primary RE data is submitted on INSIGHT. Pupils/students' attainment and progress in RE is reported to parents/carers annually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

RE Leaders and senior leaders monitor every aspect of religious education in line with other core curriculum subjects. Monitoring is conducted at least termly, and feedback is given to individual staff. Outcomes may inform further training at staff meetings or actions for the RE action plan. Self-evaluation of religious education is the responsibility of the Headteacher, the RE Lead, Governors and the Senior Leadership Team, with further input from all teachers of religious education, from families and from pupils/students. This process ensures a culture of continuous improvement, so that teaching and learning in religious education remains the best it can be. The RE Lead has the responsibility for leading and maintaining improvement in outcomes and provision of religious education.

Inclusion and Equality

All pupils in the school, regardless of ability, faith and background, will have appropriate differentiated access to the religious education programme. We strive to do the best for all our pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender religion or sexual orientation or those who are disadvantaged.

Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

Parents have the right of withdrawal from religious education for their children. Details are displayed on our website.

Your Right to Withdraw

As a parent, you have the legal right to withdraw your child from some or all of Religious Education (RE) lessons. This right is protected under the **Education Act 1996** and applies to all maintained schools, academies and free schools in England.

Things to consider before withdrawing

Before making a decision, you may want to consider:

The purpose of RE: RE is not about promoting a particular faith but about exploring different religious and non-religious worldviews. It helps children develop understanding, respect and critical thinking skills.

Alternative Learning: Schools are not required to provide alternative lessons if your child is withdrawn. You may be asked to supervise their learning at home or provide suitable materials.

Social and Cultural Benefits: RE can help children understand different cultures, beliefs and moral issues, promoting inclusivity and respect for others.

How to withdraw your child

Contact the school: Speak with the Headteacher or the RE Leader to discuss your concerns and understand the curriculum.

Submit a Formal Request: A written request is usually required. You do not need to give a reason.

Agree on arrangements: Schools will discuss how your child's time will be managed during RE lessons.

Final thoughts

Withdrawing your child is a personal decision. If you are unsure, consider discussing it with your child, the school or other parents to make an informed choice.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by Mrs Titheridge- Headteacher and Mrs Shailes- RE Lead.

Date: September 2026 Review date: September 2027