



Primary Religious Education Model Policy.

Effective from September 2026.



Mission Statement

Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be.

Purpose of and rationale for Religious Education: fully religious and genuinely educational

Religious Education

The Catholic school is a community of faith in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, and Religious Education is where that faith seeks understanding. The primary aim of Religious Education in a Catholic school is to engage in a comprehensive and 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.

The curriculum subject of Religious Education presents the same demand for rigour and for being systematic as any other subject. While for some Religious Education may well deepen and enhance personal faith, and others may discover answers to the deepest questions of life, nevertheless, the primary criteria by which it is judged are educational.

Dialogue and encounter

The Religious Education classroom must be a place of respectful dialogue. Religious Education has an important part to play in this dialogue, by presenting a curriculum that includes a study of other religious traditions and worldviews. There are good reasons why a Catholic Religious Education curriculum must include the study of other religions and worldviews. The first reason is because the Church itself teaches that by virtue of their baptism, Catholics are called to engage in dialogue with others. The Church teaches that a shared commitment to the promotion of peaceful societies requires educational institutions to allow various cultural expressions to coexist and, in that context, to promote respectful dialogue. In Catholic schools, where the presence of partners in dialogue occurs naturally due to their diverse nature, Religious Education becomes ideally placed to facilitate this dialogue. The dialogical attitude is nurtured by the Catholic school through its provision of a pluralistic Religious Education curriculum and its modelling of respectful dialogue in classroom practice. The second reason is that it prepares Catholic pupils for the world they will encounter outside of the Catholic atmospheres of the home, parish, and school. In addition, the provision of a pluralistic curriculum that opens for pupils the opportunity to engage in meaningful interreligious and intercultural dialogue gives a rationale for the subject that explains its relevance to all pupils, not just to those who are Catholic. (RED, 2023)

The primacy of Religious Education in the school curriculum

1. Religious Education is the core of the core curriculum and is to be the source and summit of the whole curriculum.
2. Religious Education is an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and rigour as other disciplines. It must be organised, led, coordinated, taught, resourced and quality assured as a core subject.

3. 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.
 4. In primary schools there is to be a Religious Education Lead who is to have at least parity in status and remuneration with those of any other curriculum area.
- (RED, 2023)

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. (RED, 2023)

Compliance with the Religious Education Directory (2023) and Catholic School Inspection

1. Catholic schools are required to comply with the Religious Education Directory Primary schools should ensure full curriculum compliance by September 2026.
2. Catholic primary schools in the Diocese of Salford are recommended to teach Religious Education using Lighting the Path scheme as the principal resource from September 2026 in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
3. 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.

The importance of the Religious Educator

In our Catholic context, it remains desirable, as far as possible, that teachers of Religious Education should be committed Catholics. Where Religious Education is taught by a person who bears witness to their belief, they can bring the lived dimension of a life in Christ into their classroom community. However, we are full of gratitude for the commitment of every teacher whether Catholic or not who is part of the noble endeavour to teach Religious Education in a spirit of dialogue to the next generation. Every teacher of Religious Education requires a genuine expertise in the subject. Therefore, developing the skill set of all teachers must form a critical part of professional development to facilitate appropriate levels of theological literacy. Religious Education teachers also need to become guardians of dialogue. As well as being competent in subject knowledge, they must be agile conductors of classroom debate, resilient custodians of religious wisdom, and sensitive mentors to enquiring pupils and students. (RED, 2023)

Curriculum provision: EYFS-KS2

To fulfil the aims of Religious Education and to ensure compliance with the norms set out in the Religious Education Directory (RED, 2023) our curriculum provision for Religious Education follows the model curriculum from the RED and is structured in the following way:

Curriculum branches

The curriculum is structured in six curriculum branches – a branch each half term. The branches are rooted in the story of salvation history and lead pupils/students on a journey each year that gives sequence and progression to their 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, as well as other Christian denominations and other religious traditions. The six curriculum branches are:

1. Creation and Covenant,
2. Prophecy and Promise,
3. Galilee to Jerusalem,
4. Desert to Garden,
5. To the ends of the Earth,
6. Dialogue and Encounter.

Knowledge lenses

The first five curriculum branches are divided into four sub-sections called knowledge lenses that set out the object of study for pupils/students. These four sections are:

Hear: focuses on the Word of God which we hear: the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, a person in whom God is fully revealed, whom we know by faith and who is revealed to us through the Sacred Scriptures and the living tradition of the Church.

Believe: focuses on the content of the Church's own profession of faith, what she believes, professes, defines, and teaches. In this lens we look at those doctrines that constitute the Catholic faith: trinity, incarnation, the Holy Spirit, the communion of saints, the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and salvation and eternal life.

Celebrate: deals with the liturgy in which the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery of Christ which accomplished the work of salvation. In this lens we look at prayer, liturgy, and sacrament, sacraments of initiation, the Eucharist, sacraments of healing, sacraments at the service of communion, and other liturgies and sacramentals.

Live: focuses on the impact of faith on how Christians live. In this lens we look at the dignity of the human person; freedom, conscience, and virtue; law, grace, and sin; Catholic Social Teaching; and the relationship between faith and life as expressed in art, in culture, and in the lives of those who are exemplars of Christian living: the saints.

Two other knowledge lenses constitute the sixth and final curriculum branch: Dialogue and Encounter.

Dialogue: 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.

Encounter: pupils are expected to engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews. As they progress, pupils will study:

- Other Christian denominations
- Judaism
- Islam
- Dharmic religions and pathways

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

There are three ways of knowing: ***Understand, Discern and Respond***, that set out the skills that pupils should develop as they progress through the Religious Education curriculum. They are called ways of knowing since they describe the holistic ways human beings experience education: as a growth in understanding, as a creative and critical assimilation, and as a recognition of the application of learning to one's own life. Each age phase has its own exemplification of the ways of knowing.

Expected outcomes

The 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 has a set of outcomes that 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 knowledge within each lens (In EYFS there are no prescribed outcomes).

Curriculum Provision

The Religious Education curriculum for EYFS through to Key Stage 2 is taught through The Oxford University Press scheme – *Lighting the Path* which is approved by the Diocese of Salford. The programme follows the model curriculum from the Religious Education Directory.

Teaching of other religious traditions and worldviews

The aim of this programme is to explore the religious dimension of questions about life, dignity and purpose within the Catholic tradition. Links are made with the pupil's own experiences and with universal experience. Links are also made with the experience of other faith traditions. Enrichment opportunities are sought to enhance learning, including the learning of other faiths. The programme is therefore both 'objective' and 'subjective'.

Inclusion and Equality

At our school, we offer the children an exciting and faith filled Religious Education curriculum which is absorbed throughout every aspect of school life. Through the outstanding provision we make, we ensure that children leave our school religiously literate and engaged in the world and people around them, filled with knowledge, understanding and skills so that they can reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of 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 person
- the formation of character
- the ability to take their place in society
- the fulfilment of academic potential

In this broad context, we use assessment against the expected end phase outcomes stated in the RED. In EYFS through to Key Stage 2 the assessments offered through each of the branches in Lighting the Path forms the assessment practice.

‘Check in’ and ‘Check out’ questions have been developed and match the Lighting the Path scheme of work and Salford Diocese materials. These are used at the start and end of each branch to monitor progress in learning. Children are assessed on End of Year Expectations, which are linked to the Lighting the Path scheme and Salford Diocese resources and to specific ‘Driver Words’ for each attainment target and year group. These expectations and driver words are set out by Salford Diocese and are used regularly to inform our planning and delivery of lessons. The End of Year Expectations are split into three strands: Attainment Target 1, 2 and 3.

Recording and assessment of learning takes many forms including art, writing, displays, assemblies and liturgy participation. The high standards and quality of Religious Education learning can be seen in children’s work in books and on display, and can be heard when you talk to our children about their faith and in their actions: the way that they treat and care for others, including our common home and brothers and sisters. Each term, a Parent letter details the overview for the term’s Ten:Ten worship coverage. This enables parents to support their child at home, when their child is asking searching questions and so that they can complement the academic and spiritual journey the child is engaging with at home. Through the parish priest, the children and their families are encouraged to appreciate, understand and participate in the liturgical cycle and the sacramental life of the church. We have regular assemblies and liturgies in school too, which develop children’s understanding of the liturgical cycle further (See the Prayer and Liturgy Policy). The SLT (Headteacher and school Governors, including the Subject Link Governor) with the R.E. subject leader monitors and evaluates the teaching and learning of R.E. work termly. This evaluation will help the Religious Education subject leader to focus staff in their means of evaluating and reflecting upon the delivery of Religious Education and how to move forward in order to enhance and facilitate children in their spiritual growth and development.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

- To draw up the Religious Education policy, in consultation with relevant staff
- To ensure the policy provides adequate coverage of the RED (2023)
- To ensure the policy is available to parents
- To ensure the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g. Catholic ethos / spiritual and moral policy, SEND policy and in accordance with Equalities Act 2010.
- To ensure parents know of their right to withdraw their children
- To establish a link governor or a group of governors to share in the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education.

Headteacher

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy but can delegate the operational responsibility to a subject lead for Religious Education. The headteacher has overall responsibility for liaison with the governing board, the Diocese of Salford and Catholic Academy Trust.

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 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.

Parents and carers

Catholic schools exist to assist parents, who are the primary educators of their children, in the education and religious formation of their children (Christ at the Centre, A1.2). It is essential therefore, that there is a close relationship and a dialogue between parents and the school to support pupils' religious formation and growth in religious literacy. Children's RE attainment is communicated to parents at parents evenings as in reported in the children's autumn, spring and summer reports.

Right to Withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of Religious Education. The law provides parents with a conscience clause; this should not be understood as a general opt out of Religious Education. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher in writing following the school's policy. However, before granting such a request it is good practice for the headteacher to discuss this request with parents and if appropriate with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of Religious Education. The school must ensure a record is kept of requests to withdraw from Religious Education.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects

This policy supports and complements the following policies:

SEND policy

Worship policy

Consultation process

This policy was drawn up by governors in consultation with Mrs Z Mabbott and Mrs O Whyman and will be reviewed on an annual basis.