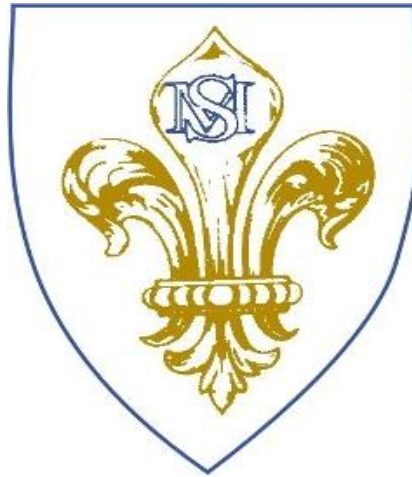


# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

*Part of The Christus Catholic Trust*



## Religious Education Policy

Respect Ourselves, Respect  
Others, Respect our World,  
Love God

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

Policy Name: <b>Religious Education Policy</b>		
Reviewer: V McBrown	Reviewed Date: September 2023	Date of next review: September 2025

# Religious Education Policy

## Our Mission Statement

Respect Ourselves, Respect Others, Respect our School, Love God

## Introduction

The message of the Gospel is central to our school: it is essential to our view of education and underlies all we do. We recognise that the children in our care may be at different stages in their faith journey and we aim to help each child discover God through their life experiences, to come to know, love, and serve Him; to develop a personal relationship with God in their daily lives.

At St. Mary's religious education (RE) is the central strand running through the life of the school. It is the core of the core curriculum. Religious education is an academic discipline that has parity with other core subjects.

## Aims and Objectives of Religious Education

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.

## Curriculum Intent for Religious Education

In religious education we develop the children's knowledge of the Catholic faith and other religions as well as their personal development through religion, in line with the school's vision for Knowledge, Concepts and Skills based curriculum.

We support children to explore their faith so that they can relate this to their everyday lives becoming independent and resilient learners. We inspire confidence our children by providing them with opportunities to ask questions and deepen their understanding of their faith.

We are passionate in instilling a love for learning and understanding whereby children respect and value their own personal beliefs, views and values as well as those from a range of cultures that may differ from their own.

## **Programme of Study**

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.

At St Mary's, religious education is delivered as part of a broad and balanced curriculum that ensures that children increase their understanding of the Catholic faith and allows all pupils to increase in their understanding of the nature of religious commitment in such a way that they are able to build their own lives on 'a credible premise'.

The Religious Education Directory includes the programmes of study approved by the Bishops' Conference for the various age groups. Following Diocesan recommendations, the new curriculum, 'to know You more clearly' has been introduced in Early Years, replacing 'Come and See' and will be rolled out to other year groups by 2026, as per requirements. 'Come and See' will continue to be used in these age groups until the new curriculum is introduced.

Both 'Come and See' and 'To know You more clearly' support us in ensuring learning is enjoyable and engaging and is adapted to suit the needs of our learners. As a result, our children understand the importance and value of their faith in our modern world.

## **Teaching and Learning**

In line with the Bishops' Conference recommendations, at least 10% of curriculum time is allocated to religious education.

Teaching and learning strategies from across the curriculum are appropriately adapted appropriately to inspire the learning needs of pupils, in line with our Teaching and Learning Framework. Teaching is forward thinking and aspirational.

## **Inclusion**

All pupils within our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriately adapted access to the religious education programme of study.

## **Other Faiths**

In addition to understanding what the Church teaches about its relationship to other faiths, religions, and worldviews, pupils engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews. 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, and finally because to enter into dialogue is a means of learning how to live peaceably with difference. Pupils will study Judaism and Islam.

## **Cross-curricular links**

As religious education is an integral part of school life, incorporates other curriculum areas. Aspects of PSHE, Relationship and sex education, spiritual development and moral education are catered for through the religious education programme (see RSE policy).

## **Assessment and monitoring**

Teachers use both formative and summative methods to assess children's progress and plan for next steps of learning. The Diocesan approved age related standards, which detail a prescribed set of expected outcomes at the end of each year, are used to support teacher assessment and leader monitoring.

Both verbal and written feedback are used to ensure children are aware of their successes and know the next steps of learning.

Progress in religious education is reported regularly to parents and governors, along with other core subjects. It forms part of the pupil progress meetings that are held regularly.

## **Collective Worship at St Mary's**

The celebration of the Word is vital to the everyday life of the school. Children, staff and parents are encouraged to take an active part in Collective Worship and in the spiritual life of the school. Please see the Collective Worship Policy for more information,

## **Prayer**

Prayer is fundamental to our relationship with God. We provide our children with opportunities to pray formally and spontaneously and to think and reflect, because it is in times of quiet reflection that we often hear that 'still small voice within'.

Each day begins and ends with classroom prayers and each classroom has a prayer area - a focal point for shared devotion and a visible symbol of God's presence throughout the school.

## **Links with the Parish**

The school has strong links with the local parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Tilbury. Children attend and read at Mass and we welcome Fr Anthony into school, working together to provide services of Reconciliation in our school chapel and other key celebrations.

## **Parents and carers**

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, the school will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home which includes but is not limited to the Wednesday Word.

## **Roles and responsibilities:**

### **Governors**

The foundation governors of Catholic schools/academies are appointed by the Bishop in order to promote and safeguard the Catholic character of the school. As such, they should also be aware of and implement the Church's teaching and any diocesan guidelines regarding religious education for the benefit of children and young people in their care.

## **Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Schools' service and the LA.

## **All Staff**

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the Catholic values and ethos of St. Mary's permeate every aspect of the school day.

All teachers are responsible for continually developing their own skills, knowledge and practices in response to the requirements of the RE Curriculum, identifying their own needs and notifying the RE Lead of any training needed. They are responsible for planning, preparing and delivering lessons matched to the curriculum which will engage and enable all children to make progress.

## **The role of the RE Leader**

The RE subject leader, with the Head Teacher, has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to religious education. Key areas of responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Leading staff in the implementation of religious education as the focal point of the school's mission statement and ensuring that life within the school reflects our living faith.
- Ensuring good practice is shared throughout the school
- Leading the development, monitoring and evaluation of the religious education programme across the school through lesson observations, drop ins, book looks, pupil perceptions, monitoring of learning environments and data analysis. Feeding back findings to staff and actioning next steps.
- Keeping abreast of current developments in the teaching of religious education, by attending in-service training which may be provided nationally, within the Diocese or within the Christus Catholic Trust and disseminating information appropriately.
- Providing support for ECTs and new members of staff in religious education.
- Reviewing current policy and updating when necessary.
- Developing liturgies which are an integral part of the religious education curriculum.
- Leading on the use of display within school and the Church community in order to reflect the Catholic character of the school.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

We support the training of staff ensuring that all feel able to lead the teaching of RE as well as be the spiritual leaders within their classrooms. In addition to whole school training, staff participate in Trust-wide training as well as Diocesan training to ensure that they are able to deliver forward thinking and aspirational learning opportunities to inspire and engage all learners.

Staff have opportunities for prayer and personal growth and development through school retreat days, liturgies, and moments for reflections. Participation in the C.C.R.S. programme is encouraged and financially supported, and all teachers are encouraged to undertake this qualification. It is expected that the R.E. Leader and all aspiring to Senior Leadership in Catholic schools will obtain this.