

‘A joyful union of Catholic Schools’

Religious Education Policy

2025 – 2026



With Jesus in our hearts,
we welcome, we learn,
we laugh, we flourish.



Together we love, care,
learn and thrive under
the umbrella of God.

Aim of the Policy

As two Catholic schools, Religious Education is integrated into the whole life of the two individual schools and it is academically respected as a core curriculum area, which informs every aspect of the curriculum.

Through Religious Education, we set out to encourage the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of the two different schools, appreciating and respecting every individual's relationship with God.

We aim to deepen knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and how these apply to our everyday lives. We encourage each individual's sense of self-worth and self-esteem, positive relationships and respect and tolerance of God's entire family both at home and across the world.

Allocation of Curriculum Time

Within the Religious Education Directory, 2023, To Know You More Clearly (page 6) it states, *'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.'*

Both our schools dedicate *at least* 10% of curriculum time to Religious education. This is 2 hours 15 minutes in the EYFS and KS1 and 2 hours 30 minutes in KS2. This does not include Collective Worship or Catholic Social Teaching.

Curriculum Intent

At St Mary's and Thorneyholme primary school we have a broad and balanced curriculum which fulfills all requirements as outlined in the Religious Education program and directory published by the Catholic Education Service: To Know You More Clearly. We aim to develop religiously literate and engaged young people with the knowledge, understanding, and skills to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically, and understand the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Our schools therefore wish to enable children to develop spiritually and to encourage them to foster personal relationships with God.

Across both schools, our Religious Education curriculum includes world religions, with particular emphasis on Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Knowledge and understanding of other faiths encourages our children to be tolerant and respectful towards those with differing beliefs or those of no faith. It reflects the commandment of Jesus 'to love one another as I have loved you' John 13:34-35.

Curriculum Implementation

Within our mixed-age classes at St Mary's and Thorneyholme schools, we have connected together as teachers and implemented a curriculum which ensures progression in knowledge, skills and understanding, and which allows every child to learn, taking into account their age, individual needs and ability.

At both schools, there is an annual cycle in EYFS and a two-year cycle in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, there is a two-year cycle within both the lower and upper junior classes. This academic year, the infant classes are being taught using the resources within: **Source to Summit: Lighting**

the Path. In our mixed age infant classes, the Reception children are taught using the EYFS resources and Year 1 & Year 2 are being taught using the Year 1 resources. The junior classes are using the planning and resources provided by the Diocese of Salford. Year 3 & Year 4 are being taught using the Year 3 materials and Year 5 & Year 6 are using the Year 5 materials. The Engagement Model is being used to enable children with SEND to access and experience a rich and ambitious Religious Education curriculum. This Engagement Model is outlined in the Religious Education Directory Guidance for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities provided by the Catholic Education Service.

For the Other Faiths units, there is a two-year cycle across the two schools. One year is dedicated to Judaism, Islam and Sikhism and the other year is dedicated to Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. This year, the children are being taught Judaism, Islam and Sikhism.

High quality teaching is planned for and delivered to:

- ♥ develop an understanding of the power of God's love through knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith
- ♥ develop a personal relationship with God through wonder, awe, reverence and self-exploration
- ♥ create a happy and caring environment which fosters the intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual development of each child
- ♥ foster open-minded and critical thinkers, inspired to build God's kingdom as global citizens and as missionary disciples
- ♥ encourage tolerance and respect towards those with differencing beliefs or those of no faith
- ♥ increase the children's experiences of the community of faith around them

The Religious Education planning and resources used across the schools are structured around six "branches," each covering a half-term, with all year groups following the same branch. These branches are: Creation and Covenant, Prophecy and Promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, Desert to Garden, Ends of the Earth, and Dialogue and Encounter. They emphasise the importance of Scripture and encourage exploration of faith through curiosity and introspection.

Children are taught in as creative a way as possible using for example: drama, art, music, writing and reflection.

Within each class across the two schools, there is a focal point where key words and work are displayed. Each class use Catholic Bibles to develop an understanding of the Word of God and its importance within our lives.

Parents are encouraged to appreciate and support the religious education of their child and at the start of each term a parent letter details the units being taught. Parents are also informed of their child's progress and next steps at parent meetings throughout the year.

Our RSE curriculum is delivered through Jigsaw and Ten:Ten, which nurture spiritual growth, personal and social development through a Catholic approach/lens. Please see the RSE Policy for further details.

Catholic Social Teaching is taught within the resources provided Religious Education (Source to Summit: Lighting the Path and Salford Diocese). It is also being taught cross-curricular, as well as using the resources and animal mascots provided by CAFOD.

The main CST principles are:

Dignity
Solidarity
The common good
The option for the poor
Peace
Creation and Environment
The dignity of work and participation



Assessment

Formative assessments inform the teacher of the child's progress and next step learning in Religious Education. Lessons often begin with a 'Tune in' task and end with a 'Wrap up' task to monitor progress and for children to be able to self-assess, by reflecting on their own knowledge and understanding and next steps.

Religious Education adopts the same assessment procedures as other subjects and the knowledge lens used in each year groups 'understand' expected outcomes as outlined in To Know You More Clearly is used to record judgements in progress. Teachers make their formative judgement based upon evidence they have seen, heard or read.

Recording of children's learning takes many forms - artwork, written, digital, displays, assemblies and more.

Curriculum Impact

The impact of Religious Education at St Mary's and Thomeyholme can be seen and heard when you talk to the children and view their actions as they live out the Catholic faith. It can be seen in the high-quality learning which is produced and which demonstrates the progress made.

Monitoring

As the planning and resources provided by Source to Summit: Lighting the Path and Salford Diocese are new to our schools, half termly meetings are being held with SLT and class teachers to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of these in the teaching and learning of Religious Education.

The Senior Leadership Team and Religious Education subject leaders across the two schools monitor the teaching and learning throughout the year. The subject leaders move Religious Education forward through regular CPD (including joint CPD of the two schools), keeping Religious Education central, and a real strength of our curriculum.