



St John Fisher RC Primary School

RE POLICY

**Love Jesus, love learning,
Inspiring each other to be the best that we can be.**

This policy outlines the aims, principles, organisation and implementation of Religious Education at St John Fisher RC Primary School. It reflects the requirements of the Religious Education Directory (RED, 2023), Canon Law, diocesan guidance and the school's mission as a Catholic community.

Purpose and Rationale for Religious Education: fully religious and genuinely educational

At St John Fisher RC Primary School, Religious Education lies at the heart of the curriculum and the life of the school. As a community of faith in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, we believe that Religious Education is where faith seeks understanding. Through the systematic study of Scripture, the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Church, and the relationship between faith and everyday life, pupils develop religious literacy and a deeper understanding of the Christian message.

In accordance with the RED (2023), Religious Education is a rigorous academic discipline taught with the same high expectations, ambition and integrity as every other curriculum subject. While Religious Education nurtures the spiritual development of many pupils, it is primarily an educational discipline that enables all pupils to think theologically, reflect spiritually, engage ethically and participate respectfully in dialogue within a diverse society.

Religious Education is the core of the core curriculum and informs every aspect of school life. It contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and supports the school's mission to form disciples who live out Gospel values in their daily lives. It is carefully planned, well resourced, effectively led and given the prominence required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. In accordance with the RED (2023), a minimum of 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education in every year of compulsory schooling.

The intended outcome of Religious Education is that pupils become religiously literate and consciously engaged young people who possess the knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age and stage of development. They are equipped to understand the Catholic faith, think critically and theologically, reflect spiritually, engage respectfully with people of different faiths and worldviews, and recognise how religious belief influences personal choices and everyday life. Through Religious Education, pupils are encouraged to become compassionate, responsible citizens who contribute positively to both the Church and the wider community.

Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to the Catholic Life and Mission of the school. Through high-quality teaching, prayer, reflection and engagement with Scripture and Tradition, pupils are supported in developing as compassionate, articulate and discerning individuals who understand the dignity of every person and are inspired to serve the common good.

Dialogue and Encounter

Religious Education classrooms are communities of respectful dialogue in which pupils are encouraged to ask questions, think critically and engage thoughtfully with religious belief and practice. Religious Education plays a vital role in fostering this dialogue through a curriculum that includes the 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 that the Church 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



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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)

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

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 the Christian faith through their life and example, 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. We believe that every teacher of Religious Education requires a genuine expertise in the subject. Therefore, developing the skill set of all teachers is a critical part of professional development to facilitate appropriate levels of theological literacy. Religious Education teachers are competent in subject knowledge and agile conductors of classroom debate, resilient custodians of religious wisdom, and sensitive mentors to enquiring pupils. (RED, 2023)

Curriculum Provision

At St John Fisher RC Primary School, to fulfil the aims of Religious Education and ensure compliance with the norms set out in the RED (2023), our Religious Education curriculum follows the Model Curriculum contained within the Religious Education Directory (RED, 2023). As recommended by the Diocese of Salford, at St John Fisher RC Primary School, *Lighting the Path* is used as the principal curriculum resource to support delivery of the Religious Education Directory Model Curriculum in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (Delivered in EYFS and Key Stage 1 from September 2025 and Key Stage 2 from September 2026).

The scheme follows the structure of the Model Curriculum as follows:

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 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, Autumn One
2. Prophecy and Promise, Autumn Two
3. Galilee to Jerusalem, Spring One
4. Desert to Garden, Spring Two
5. To the ends of the Earth, Summer One
6. Dialogue and Encounter, Summer Two



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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. 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 (There are no prescribed outcomes in EYFS).



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Adaptive Teaching

Teachers provide adaptive teaching through carefully planned scaffolds, explicit vocabulary instruction, pre-teaching where appropriate, modelling, visual supports, structured discussion and high-quality questioning to enable all pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and disadvantaged pupils, to access an ambitious Religious Education curriculum and achieve well.

Teaching of other religious traditions and worldviews

At St John Fisher RC Primary School, teaching about other religions and worldviews is principally delivered through Branch 6: Dialogue and Encounter, whilst opportunities for interreligious dialogue are developed throughout the curriculum and enriched further during Inter Faith Week.

Inclusion and Equality

The governing board have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate adaptive teaching where necessary to enable them to access the Religious Education curriculum.

Marking and Feedback

The marking of children's work is approached positively and constructively so that it affirms and celebrates success and encourages future learning. We give consistent, frequent, helpful and encouraging feedback to our pupils about aspects of their progress.

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

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment information is used to identify pupils requiring additional support or challenge and to inform future curriculum planning.
- Teacher assessment will be carried out each half term by scrutinising children's work against the expected outcomes outlined in the RED (2023).
- The assessment opportunities provided within each curriculum branch of *Lighting the Path* support teachers in making accurate judgements against the expected outcomes identified in the RED (2023).
- A standards booklet provides a summary of half-termly attainment and progress of all children, including those in key groups (EAL, PP and SEND).
- An in - house moderation meeting is held every term when examples of assessed work are available for inspection.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning takes place each term through book scrutiny, learning walks, or pupil meetings.
- The Headteacher and Subject Leader carry out lesson observations/learning walks – one per year.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.



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- A termly report to governors provides details about the teaching and learning in Religious Education, including pupil voice.

Additional Learning Opportunities to Support Religious Education

Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching is woven throughout the Religious Education curriculum and wider life of the school, enabling pupils to understand how faith is expressed through action for justice, peace, human dignity, solidarity and care for God's creation.

Sacramental Programme

The programme is organised by the Year Three teacher and actively supported by The RE Subject Leader, Headteacher, staff and catechists.

SMSC Education (Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)

At St John Fisher RC Primary School, SMSC education is taught through RE and throughout the wider curriculum. *(Please refer to the separate SMSC policy.)*

RSE

'Life to the Full' scheme of work is delivered in all classes throughout the year. This is a primary school relationship and sex education programme which supports teachers and parents in Catholic schools to enable the holistic growth of children. *(Please refer to the separate RSE policy.)*

TEN TEN Assemblies: Supporting the RE Curriculum

Each Monday the children listen to/take part in engaging (Ten Ten) assemblies that are designed to bring the Sunday Gospel readings alive for children. The assemblies include short films, music tracks, activities, differentiated questions, teaching input, re-enactments of the Gospels, pupil-involvement and a wide range of reflection and prayer resources. The assemblies have differentiated content and a clear journey leading to prayer and reflection. At the end of the assembly, each class is provided with a 'Statement of Belief' linked to the theme of the assembly and linking to scripture. The 'Statement' is displayed in each classroom to reflect upon throughout the week.

Liturgical Calendar

Major liturgical feasts and other celebrations (Easter, Christmas, and Harvest) are marked with events such as assemblies, drama and liturgical presentation to maximise the learning potential. *(Please refer to the Prayer and Liturgy policy.)*

Staff Training

All staff receive ongoing professional development through diocesan training, staff meetings, professional reading and collaborative planning. New staff receive induction into the RED (2023) curriculum and *Lighting the Path* resources. The Religious Education Subject Leader also attends diocesan network meetings to ensure the curriculum remains fully aligned with diocesan expectations and national developments.

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



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- 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.
- To ensure sufficient curriculum time (10%) is allocated to Religious Education in accordance with the Religious Education Directory (2023).

Headteacher

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

Religious Education Subject Leader

In line with diocesan protocols 14.6, in primary schools, the Religious Education Lead is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Management of the subject

The RE Subject Leader, working in partnership with the Headteacher, will:

- Lead the strategic development of Religious Education;
- Monitor teaching, learning and assessment;
- Support staff through coaching and professional development;
- Monitor pupil progress;
- Report to governors;
- Ensure compliance with the RED (2023) and diocesan guidance;
- Review the policy annually.

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). We therefore believe it is essential that there is a close partnership between parents and the school to support pupils' religious formation and growth in religious literacy. To support this, teachers create knowledge organisers to outline the subject coverage each half term. These are posted on the school website to inform parents of their child's learning. They are also displayed in every classroom and in the children's books for their reference. Each class presents their Religious Education curriculum learning once a year in a Share and Shine assembly. RE books are shared with parents at parents' evenings twice a year.

Right to Withdraw

In accordance with current legislation, parents retain the legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of Religious Education, although this should not be regarded as a general opt-out from the subject. 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 sensitively with parents to ensure they understand the nature and aims of Religious Education, and if appropriate with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood before a final decision is made. The school must ensure a record is kept of requests to withdraw from Religious Education.



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Virtual Learning

Where remote education is required, Religious Education will continue through the school's designated online learning platform. Learning will reflect the planned curriculum sequence and include opportunities for prayer, reflection, discussion and assessment.

Consultation process

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and governors and is reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation, diocesan guidance or school practice.

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Prayer and Liturgy
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- SMSC
- SEND
- Equality
- PSHE
- Promoting Fundamental British Values

Date	Amendments
September 2026	Original documents New Policy written in line with Salford Diocese Model Policy

This policy has been developed with reference to the following documents:

- Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (2023). RED (2023).
- Code of Canon Law (1983).
- Christ at the Centre (Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales).
- Catholic Schools Inspectorate. Inspection Framework (2024).
- Equality Act 2010.
- Lighting the Path (Oxford University Press)



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Appendix One

Appendix 1 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.