



Sacred Heart School

RE Policy

At Sacred Heart School we all aspire to provide a happy, safe and secure environment in which every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential.

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in EYFS.

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Approved by:	The Senior Leadership Team and by Julie Gabriel on behalf of the Governing Body.
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1. Introduction

At Sacred Heart School, Religious Education is at the heart of our educational mission. As a Catholic school, we seek to provide an education inspired by the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, in which every child is known, valued and encouraged to fulfil their God-given potential.

Religious Education is not simply one subject amongst many. It is the 'core of the core curriculum' in a Catholic school and lies at the heart of Sacred Heart's educational mission. It is a core curriculum subject which enables pupils to develop religious literacy, knowledge and understanding, to engage with questions of meaning and purpose and to reflect upon how faith informs life.

This policy has been informed by the advice and guidance of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton Education Service, the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education, together with the principles contained in *Christ at the Centre* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This reflects the sources identified in the diocesan model policy.

Our Religious Education provision follows the Religious Education Directory (RED), *To Know You More Clearly*. In accordance with the Bishop's mandate, the School uses the diocesan Day by Day resources to support the delivery of the curriculum.

Religious Education is distinct from, but closely connected with, the wider Catholic Life and Mission of the School and with Prayer and Liturgy. Together, these contribute to the spiritual and moral formation of our pupils and to the distinctive Catholic character of Sacred Heart.

2. Aims

Through Religious Education, we aim to:

- enable pupils to develop secure knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, Scripture, teaching and tradition;
- enable pupils to encounter Jesus Christ and understand the significance of the Gospel in the lives of Christians;
- develop pupils' ability to think spiritually, ethically and theologically;
- encourage pupils to ask questions, reflect deeply and make connections between faith, learning and their own experience;
- enable pupils to understand how Catholic teaching is lived and expressed through prayer, worship, service and action;
- develop an understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and the responsibility to care for others and for God's creation;
- provide meaningful opportunities for dialogue with and learning about other religions and worldviews;
- develop respect for those of other faiths and none;
- inspire moments of awe, wonder, stillness and reflection; and
- nurture pupils who are religiously literate, thoughtful and able to articulate their understanding with confidence and respect.

3. Parents, School and Parish

Sacred Heart recognises parents as the first educators of their children in faith and values the essential partnership between home, school and parish.

We seek to communicate clearly with parents about the Religious Education curriculum and the wider spiritual life of the School and encourage families to participate in appropriate opportunities for prayer, liturgy, Mass and other aspects of Catholic life.

The School values its relationship with the parish and seeks opportunities for pupils to encounter and participate in the wider life of the Church.

We recognise that children come to Sacred Heart from a range of religious and non-religious backgrounds. All families are welcomed as valued members of our school community, and the beliefs and experiences of pupils and their families are treated with dignity and respect.

4. The Religious Education Curriculum

Sacred Heart School follows the Religious Education Directory (RED), *To Know You More Clearly*.

A minimum of 10% of curriculum teaching time is devoted to Religious Education, excluding Prayer and Liturgy. This reflects both Sacred Heart's existing provision and the expectation within the diocesan model policy.

The RED curriculum is organised through six curriculum Branches:

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

These Branches provide a spiral curriculum through which pupils revisit and deepen their knowledge and understanding as they progress through the School.

Learning is structured through the four Knowledge Lenses:

- Hear – what pupils encounter through Scripture;
- Believe – what Catholics believe;
- Celebrate – how the Church celebrates its faith; and
- Live – how faith is lived in everyday life.

Pupils develop their learning through the three Ways of Knowing:

- Understand
- Discern
- Respond

Expected Outcomes identify what pupils should know, remember and be able to do at each stage of their learning. These elements reflect the framework set out in the diocesan model policy.

In EYFS, Religious Education is appropriately adapted to the age and developmental stage of the children and is supported through stories, discussion, prayer, reflection, creative activity, play and continuous provision.

5. Teaching and Learning

Religious Education should be engaging, challenging and appropriately ambitious for all pupils.

Teachers use a range of approaches according to the learning intention and needs of pupils.

These may include:

- direct teaching and whole-class discussion;
- questioning and theological discussion;
- individual and collaborative learning;
- Scripture;
- drama and role play;
- music and art;
- reflection and prayer;
- research and independent enquiry;
- practical and creative activities; and
- visits, visitors and opportunities to encounter faith in practice.

Oral work is an important element of Religious Education. Pupils are encouraged to question, discuss, explain, justify and reflect upon their learning.

Written work should provide appropriate challenge and enable pupils to demonstrate their religious knowledge and understanding. High standards of presentation are expected in accordance with pupils' age and ability.

Learning in Religious Education is not confined to what can be recorded in books. Pupil discussion, reflection, response, participation and application of learning can all provide important evidence of understanding.

Learning may also extend beyond the classroom through charitable activity, interaction with clergy and parishioners, visits, prayer and liturgy and opportunities to make connections between Religious Education and pupils' daily lives.

6. Dialogue and Encounter

Sacred Heart seeks to form pupils who are secure in their understanding of the Catholic faith while being respectful, knowledgeable and open in their encounters with others.

The Dialogue and Encounter Branch of the RED provides specific opportunities to learn about other religions and worldviews and to recognise areas of connection and difference.

Opportunities for dialogue and encounter are also sought throughout the year. These may include:

- learning from pupils and families within our own community;
- meeting visitors and faith leaders;
- visiting places of worship;
- exploring religious artefacts, texts and traditions;
- discussion and independent research; and
- opportunities to engage respectfully with the experiences and perspectives of people of other faiths and none.

Such learning promotes genuine understanding and dialogue rather than simply acquiring facts about other religions. It supports pupils in recognising the dignity of every person and reflects the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

Where external speakers contribute to Religious Education, Dialogue and Encounter or the wider Catholic life of the School, appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks will be undertaken. External speakers will be checked in accordance with the Catholic Education Service (CES) External Speaker Checklist, as identified in the diocesan model policy.

7. Equality, Inclusion and Additional Needs

At the heart of Catholic teaching is the belief that every person is created and loved by God and possesses equal dignity.

All pupils are therefore entitled to access high-quality Religious Education regardless of ability, additional need, background, race, sex or faith.

Teachers make appropriate adaptations to remove barriers to learning and enable pupils with SEND or other additional needs to participate meaningfully and demonstrate their understanding.

Pupils who are not Catholic are fully welcomed into the Religious Education curriculum. Their own experiences and perspectives are respected while the School remains clear about its responsibility to teach Religious Education from the perspective of the Catholic Church.

8. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in Religious Education.

In accordance with the RED, teachers assess pupils' knowledge, understanding and ability to apply their learning against the Expected Outcomes for each Branch.

Assessment includes both formative and summative approaches and may draw upon:

- written work;
- discussion and questioning;
- pupil voice;
- observation;
- creative responses; and
- other appropriate evidence of learning.

Pupil attainment is recorded half-termly using the School's RE assessment system, and progress is tracked regularly by the RE Co-ordinator and Senior Leadership Team. Developmental feedback is provided in Religious Education to support pupils' progress and challenge their thinking; this may include verbal feedback.

Moderation takes place within the School and, where appropriate, with other schools through deanery and diocesan opportunities to support consistency of expectations and judgements.

Parents are informed about their child's progress and attainment in Religious Education through parent consultations and written reports in accordance with the School's reporting arrangements.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Religious Education is monitored and evaluated with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

The RE Co-ordinator, Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team monitor provision at least termly, in accordance with diocesan expectations. Monitoring may include:

- scrutiny of planning and pupils' work;
- lesson visits and learning walks;
- pupil voice;
- assessment information;
- scrutiny and moderation of outcomes;
- classroom and whole-school environments; and
- discussion with teachers.

Feedback arising from monitoring is shared appropriately with staff. Findings inform professional development, curriculum planning, the RE subject action plan and the School's ongoing self-evaluation and improvement priorities.

Self-evaluation of Religious Education is a shared responsibility involving the Headteacher, RE Co-ordinator, Senior Leadership Team and Governors, informed where appropriate by the views of teachers, pupils and families.

Governors maintain oversight of the quality and effectiveness of Religious Education and the Catholic educational mission of the School. The School also works with diocesan advisers and responds to diocesan guidance and recommendations.

10. Role of the RE Co-ordinator

The RE Co-ordinator provides strategic and professional leadership for Religious Education throughout the School.

The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- ensuring that the RE curriculum reflects the RED and diocesan expectations;
- supporting teachers with curriculum planning, subject knowledge and pedagogy;
- monitoring teaching, learning, assessment and pupil outcomes;
- coordinating moderation and assessment;
- ensuring appropriate progression and challenge across the School;
- monitoring provision for pupils with additional needs;
- maintaining and developing appropriate resources;
- supporting the development of high-quality learning environments;
- keeping staff informed of developments in Religious Education;
- attending relevant diocesan training and disseminating learning to colleagues;
- contributing to School self-evaluation and improvement planning; and
- working with the Headteacher, SLT, Governors, parish and diocesan advisers to maintain and develop the quality of Religious Education.

11. Staff Formation and Professional Development

Sacred Heart recognises that high-quality Religious Education depends upon teachers having appropriate subject knowledge, confidence and understanding of the Catholic educational mission.

Staff involved in planning and teaching Religious Education are supported through appropriate professional development, including diocesan training relating to the RED and Day by Day resources.

The RE Co-ordinator supports colleagues with planning, subject knowledge, assessment and curriculum development and shares relevant diocesan guidance and training. The RE Co-

ordinator also works collaboratively with other Catholic schools, including through deanery and diocesan opportunities, to share good practice and support consistency.

The School recognises the importance of the spiritual formation of staff. Opportunities for prayer, reflection and participation in the Catholic life of the School support staff in understanding and contributing to its distinctive mission.

12. Learning Environment and Resources

Classrooms and communal areas should reflect the Catholic character of Sacred Heart and support pupils' Religious Education.

Displays may include Scripture, key vocabulary, prayers, pupil work, religious imagery and material reflecting the liturgical year. Displays should support learning as well as celebrate pupils' achievements and encourage reflection.

Resources include:

- RED Day by Day materials;
- Bibles and Scripture resources;
- prayer books;
- religious statues, icons, pictures and other imagery;
- Godly Play and small-world resources;
- books, music and audiovisual resources;
- pupil books and class/floor books; and
- appropriate artefacts and resources relating to other religions and worldviews.

Resources are reviewed and developed to ensure that they are appropriate, accurate, respectful and supportive of high-quality teaching and learning.

13. Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the RE Co-ordinator and Headteacher, with appropriate oversight from the Governing Body.

The policy will also be reviewed in response to significant changes to the Religious Education Directory, diocesan guidance or other relevant requirements.