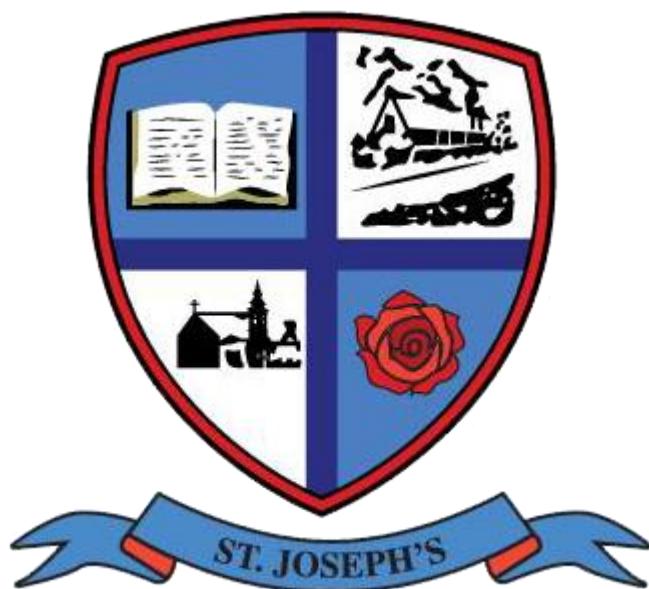


ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed: October 2025

To be reviewed: October 2026

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wrightington
Religious Education Policy

Policy Statement

'Catholic schools are guided in all they do by an important and coherent vision of education.

This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who is our Way, Truth and Life.'

(Bishops' Conference, September 2007)

The Governors and Staff of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School recognise that they work to educate the children in their care in a range of ways; at the centre of this is the spiritual and moral development of the children, particularly in the Catholic faith.

In fulfilment of our Mission Statement, *Living life to the Full*, the aim of Religious Education at St Joseph's school is to provide a Religious Education programme which will take into account the religious and educational needs of our children. It will enrich the faith of those supportive Catholic homes, but it will also support those for whom the school may be their first and perhaps only experience of church.

In accordance with its importance in the curriculum, 10% of teaching time is devoted exclusively to Religious Education; although Prayer and Worship are directly related and should grow out of work in Religious Education, they are not included in the 10% allocation of time.

Intent:

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we aim to give children a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. We give the religious, spiritual and moral education of our children the highest priority. We regard Religious Education as more than a curriculum subject. It is something that guides every area of our school. As a Catholic school we aim to educate the whole child, and our ethos is inseparable from the curriculum.

The Religious Education within the school promotes awe, wonder, reverence and spirituality within every child. As children are taught about God's love they discover their Christian responsibilities and how they should pray and care for others.

The children in EYFS – KS2 have been introduced to the new RED. Each year, children cover topics linked to the liturgical year: Creation, Prayer, Saints and feasts, Advent, Christmas, Revelation, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Sacraments. We teach tolerance and respect for other faiths, races and cultures within each of these topics.

Our Catholic faith is central to day to day life of our school and all aspects of the curriculum, and pupils are encouraged to recognise the importance of their faith and they respond to all forms of liturgy and collective worship with respect and reverence.

We have a rich liturgical life in that the experiences we provide are wide ranging and take place in school, out of school, in Church and the wider community, and engage and involve pupils, parents, staff, governors and the parish.

Objectives:

- To help our children to know and understand the beliefs, values and way of life of our Catholic tradition, leading to a deeper personal faith;
- To foster and develop within our school, a committed and caring Christian community which complements the catechesis taking place in home, parish and the wider community;
- To present the Christian event, message and way of life in ways appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child;
- To encourage investigation and reflection leading to an increased *literacy* in religious stories, symbols, places, people and rituals;
- To develop appropriate skills and attitudes which allows for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life;
- To develop the use of skills in other areas of the curriculum.

The Religious Education Programme:

Our school presently uses the RED religious education directory. The following strategies and aims underpin the effective delivery of Religious Education:

- Religious Education will be taught discretely and developmentally;
- It will include the deepening of knowledge, and understanding of the key theological ideas and their application to life;
- Ample opportunities will be offered for children to apply and use knowledge and skills in cross-curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively;
- Engagement with their own and others' beliefs and values will help to develop good attitudes and dispositions so that children are instilled with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning.

Engagement with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face will:

- Enable them to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose;
- Offer the children a sense of self worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Where parents request it, pupils may be withdrawn from RE lessons and alternative arrangements will be made for them.

Long Term Planning:

At St Joseph's we follow the themes and topics in the new RED. We have mixed age classes and therefore topics are delivered on a two year rolling programme to ensure differentiation and to avoid duplication. Within all classes, teachers will need to have

regard for the attainment levels when developing activities for children of different age groups and abilities.

The Process:

- **Search – Explore**

This is the introduction to the topic where the children's life experience is explored, the questions it raises are wondered at, shared, investigated and their significance reflected upon. Explore will take one week to complete.

- **Revelation – Reveal**

This is the heart of the programme where knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is revealed through the Word, in Scripture, Tradition, doctrine, prayers, rites and Christian living. Reveal will take two weeks to complete.

- **Response – Respond**

This is where the learning is assimilated, celebrated and responded to in daily life. Respond will take one week to complete.

Differentiation:

The purpose of differentiation in Religious Education is:

- To enable children to succeed in the set task or activity and to challenge them to take the next step;
- To challenge children to be self-motivated and to take responsibility for their own learning;
- To enable children to recognise and celebrate their achievement;

At St Joseph's we are aware that children learn in different ways, so as with other subjects, it is necessary to provide a range of learning activities using a variety of media.

Additional Learning Needs and/or Disabilities:

It is essential to take into account all children with a variety of additional learning needs and plan accordingly. When planning, attention should be given to providing:

A range of motivating and enjoyable experiences to engage all children;

- Scope and provision to enable children to move through and demonstrate success;
- Strategies, approaches and resources to enable every child to achieve their full potential.

Inclusion – Community Cohesion:

The RED supports and enables the faith experience of all children because it starts with their real life experience and leads them to reflect upon and consider the Christian message in all its richness in that experience.

'Where pupils of other faiths are present, the task must be to promote their human growth in such a way that they can integrate their particular faith with every aspect of their lives.'

(Bishop's Conference, September 2007)

Judaism and Other Religions:

The Church teaches that, whilst living out our Christian faith, we are called to listen in dialogue and be ready to learn from those of other faiths, many of whom may be our neighbours.

The Bishops of England and Wales in Catholic Schools and Other Faiths (1997) suggest that school needs to:

'Find ways in which pupils can learn to engage in dialogue and to develop an attitude of respect for religious diversity. This will necessitate the inclusion of a broader study of both Christianity and of other world faiths in the Religious Education syllabus... At the very least this will entail learning about such communities – their beliefs, traditions, religious practices, etc. But it may also mean learning from them, through encounter and dialogue at various levels. In a multi-faith society it is becoming increasingly important for Christians of all ages to reflect positively on the inter-faith relationships.'

For two weeks of each school year, pupils will study other faiths. The whole school will focus on one particular faith for one week during the Autumn term. The other faith topic will take place later in the school year.

Some principles:

Each religion is taught separately in order to avoid confusion. Comparison can lead to inaccurate teaching and does not do justice to the integrity of each religion. Comparisons may be noted by the pupils, but that will not be the starting point. Teaching of Judaism needs special attention because of the intrinsic relationship between Judaism and Christianity – our very roots lie in Judaism. However, while it is important to teach about Jesus' Jewish background this should be taught separately from modern Judaism as a world faith.

When we handle ritual objects, which are important to people of other religions, we do so with reverence and respect.

Learn from a member of the religion or make a visit to a place of Worship. If you do go to a place of worship find out what is expected of you in terms of dress and behaviour, prepare the children well.

As with Christianity there are various expressions of any one religion. What is being taught here is a "middle of the road view". It is too complex and confusing to go into too much detail about variations within religions.

Display and Prayer Focus:

Classroom Religious Education displays will relate to the topic being studied to stimulate further work or celebrate the work that has been undertaken. Each class should have a prayer area to stimulate and facilitate reflection and prayer, linked with the topic and the liturgical season. RE displays will be changed regularly reflecting the theme currently being taught from '*Come and See.*'

Assessment:

Assessment in Religious Education is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through learning about and learning from religion. Assessment establishes what the children know, understand, can do and how to get there. It offers support and motivation to the learner. It does not assess spirituality or the practice of faith.

At the beginning of *Explore and Reveal* there is an indication of the areas of learning and the attainment levels. At the end there is a summary of the levels for that topic. Regular assessment, individual pupil tracking and record keeping should be carried out according to the direction given by the Archdiocese, in order to ensure pupil progress.

Progress will be measured by both formal and informal assessments and be recorded electronically on the school tracking sheet.

Home/School/Parish Partnership:

The school works in partnership with Parents and Parish to enrich the lives of our children. Each term we publish:

- A detailed timetable of Class Masses, Worships, Stay and Prays and Sacramental Programme meetings.

Our school works closely with the Parish by:

- Supporting Parish events such as the Summer and Christmas Fairs;
- *The Wednesday Word* is shared with children and Parents weekly sharing Sunday's Gospel and this informs our weekly whole school and class Worships;
- Two members of staff are catechists and helps prepare the children for the Sacraments;

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The school has a nominated Governor for Religious Education. The Governors' Curriculum Committee meet once per term and are responsible for evaluating the Religious Life of the School and its impact. The Subject Leader for Religious Education is Mrs Swarbrick.

The role of the Subject Leader is to take responsibility for the development and co-ordination of Religious Education by:

- Monitoring and evaluating curriculum provision, the quality of teaching and standards of achievement in line with the policy for curriculum monitoring;
- Updating the Self-Evaluation Document on an annual basis in consultation with the head teacher;
- Produce an annual Subject Improvement Plan and evaluate it termly;
- Revise and update policy documents and schemes of work;
- Keep informed of all current initiatives and practices by regularly attending subject leader meetings and cluster meetings;
- Lead staff meetings and support colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education;
- Audit and order resources.