

# St. Mary's R.C. Primary School



**“Working, Praying, Sharing and Learning Together”**  
**“Gweithio, Gweddiwn, Rhannu a Ddysgu gyda'n Gilydd”**

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Policy Reviewed by: Full Governing Body  
Date: Oct 25

Review Date: Oct 26

Article 14 : Every child has the right to freedom of thought , conscience and religion.



## At St Mary's:

**S**trive to be the best you can be.

**T**ogether with Christ at the centre.

**M**otivate, Empower, Inspire.

**A**chieve through ambition and creativity.

**R**espect yourselves, each other and the world.

**Y**our faith, your school, your community.

**S**afe in mind, body and spirit.



## Introduction

At St. Mary's RC Primary School, Jesus Christ is at the heart of all that we do. Our mission is to nurture the spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social development of every child so that they may grow in wisdom, knowledge, and love of God, and live out the Gospel values in daily life.

Our school exists to support parents, "the first educators of their children" (cf. *Gravissimum Educationis*, 3), in forming disciples who "may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

We affirm the words of the Bishops of England and Wales:

"Religious education is the core of the core curriculum and is to be the source and summit of the whole curriculum." (*To Know You More Clearly*, Article 4, §1)

Therefore, at St. Mary's, Religious Education does not stand alongside other subjects: it is the foundation, inspiration, and unifying centre of the entire curriculum.

## The Nature and Purpose of Religious Education

The Religious Education Directory defines the purpose of Religious Education as:

- **"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."** (*RECD*, Article 2, §1)
- **"To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively."** (*RECD*, Article 2, §2)
- **"The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and consciously engaged young people who... recognise the demands of religious commitment in everyday life."** (*RECD*, Article 3)

In short, R.E. is where faith and reason meet. It is the intellectual heart of the Catholic school, shaping and informing every other subject, for:

"Every other subject is to be informed by religious education and have a strong relationship with it." (*RECD*, Article 4, §3)

Thus, Religious Education at St. Mary's is not one subject among many but the foundation of the entire educational process.

## Aims of Religious Education at St. Mary's

Following *To Know You More Clearly*, our R.E. programme aims:

1. To foster a deep knowledge of Scripture, Tradition, the Church's teaching, and Catholic life.
2. To form pupils who can reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically, and live faithfully.
3. To encourage respectful dialogue with other religions and worldviews, preparing pupils for life in a diverse society.

4. To integrate Catholic Social Teaching so that pupils become agents of justice, peace, and stewardship of creation.
5. To develop in all children a sense of vocation – a call to holiness, discipleship, and service.

## Curriculum Structure

The new RECD presents a **programme of study** that is coherent, progressive, and rooted in Catholic theology. It is built around three key elements: **Knowledge Lenses, Ways of Knowing, and Curriculum Branches**.

## Knowledge Lenses

The Directory identifies **five core knowledge lenses** through which pupils engage with the Catholic faith:

1. **Revelation** – God’s self-communication through Scripture and Tradition.
2. **Church** – The life, structure, and mission of the Church.
3. **Celebration** – The liturgy and sacraments as encounters with God.
4. **Life in Christ** – Catholic moral teaching, vocation, and Catholic Social Teaching.
5. **Dialogue and Encounter** – The relationship between Catholicism and other religions/worldviews, fostering understanding and respect.

“These knowledge lenses are the ways in which the core content of the Catholic faith is systematically explored.” (RECD, §2.2)

## Ways of Knowing

The Directory sets out **six ways of knowing**, which guide how children grow in understanding and expression of faith:

- **Hear** – Attentive listening to Scripture and Tradition.
- **Believe** – Assenting to the truths of the Catholic faith.
- **Celebrate** – Encountering God through liturgy, sacraments, and prayer.
- **Live** – Putting faith into action through moral choices and Catholic Social Teaching.
- **Dialogue** – Engaging respectfully with those of other faiths and worldviews.
- **Encounter** – Experiencing God’s presence in life, creation, and community.

These outcomes are not optional:

“The expected end of age-phase outcomes are prescribed content which all schools must deliver.”

(RECD, §2.3)

## Curriculum Branches

To ensure systematic study, content is organised into **curriculum branches** that span the age phases (EYFS to KS4). Each branch revisits and deepens key concepts over time, allowing for **spiral progression**.

For example:

- **Scripture Branch:** exploring God’s covenant in the Old Testament, Jesus’ parables, and the Paschal Mystery.
- **Liturgy Branch:** from simple participation in prayer to theological reflection on sacraments.
- **Moral Life Branch:** from simple choices to engagement with complex moral issues in society.

The **branches, lenses, and ways of knowing** interconnect so that every child develops a holistic grasp of Catholic faith – intellectually, spiritually, and practically.

## Curriculum Provision at St. Mary’s

- Religious Education is taught for **at least 10% of curriculum time** in every year group, as mandated by the Bishops’ Conference (RECD, Article 4, §4).
- The model curriculum in *To Know You More Clearly* provides the basis for planning, ensuring a **coherent and demanding sequence of study**.
- Scripture is central: pupils encounter the Bible through guided reading, theological reflection, drama, and prayer.
- The curriculum is designed to integrate with the liturgical year, so pupils experience faith as a living reality.
- Catholic Social Teaching is embedded throughout the curriculum, linking faith with action for justice, peace, and care for creation.

## Teaching and Learning

Our teaching of R.E. is characterised by:

- **Rigour and depth:** R.E. is an academic discipline taught with the same systematic demands as other core subjects (RECD, Article 4, §2).
- **Theological enquiry:** Lessons are structured around “big questions” that encourage children to think critically, ethically, and theologically.
- **Creativity and expression:** Pupils explore faith through art, drama, music, digital media, and reflective writing.
- **Prayer and spirituality:** Each lesson includes opportunities for prayer, reflection, or silence.

- **Respectful dialogue:** Pupils are encouraged to listen, question, and express themselves respectfully in discussion.

### **Assessment**

- Pupils' progress is assessed against the **end-of-phase outcomes** for Hear, Believe, Celebrate, Live, Dialogue, and Encounter
- Assessment methods include observation, questioning, written work, presentations, and creative projects.
- Pupils' progress is tracked and reported to parents, governors, and the diocese.

### **Role of the Headteacher and R.E. Co-ordinator**

The Headteacher and R.E. Co-ordinator are responsible for ensuring that R.E. remains the core of the core curriculum. Duties include:

- Leading staff in delivering the RECD with fidelity and creativity.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment.
- Providing CPD opportunities for staff.
- Supporting liturgy and Catholic Life across the school.
- Acting as a link with the parish, diocese, and governors.

### **Prayer, Liturgy, and Catholic Life**

While distinct from prayer and liturgy, R.E. supports and is enriched by them:

- Pupils participate in daily prayer, school Masses, and liturgies linked to the liturgical year.
- The curriculum is interwoven with the Church's calendar, from Advent to Easter to Pentecost.
- Catholic Social Teaching inspires school action on charity, justice, and care for creation.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- The Headteacher, R.E. Co-ordinator, and governors will monitor R.E. through lesson observations, work scrutiny, and pupil voice.
- The R.E. Co-ordinator will report annually to governors and the diocese.
- This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner in line with diocesan or national guidance.