St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

September 2026

Review: September 2028

Learning and growing together in God's love.

Mission, Vision and Aims

The family of St. Francis of Assisi is a school community following in the footsteps of Christ and built on the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.

Mission - ***'Learning & Growing Together in God's Love'***

Inspired by the life of Christ we seek to provide an exceptional education which enables our children:

- to fully embrace all possibilities
- to flourish
- to develop their faith

and therefore to choose a path that enables them to be a positive influence upon our world.

Vision

Our values will enable every child and young person at St Francis of Assisi to receive the very best education, so that they are empowered to grow, learn and achieve in order to reach their full potential. We will develop high quality teaching, learning and support within our school and in doing so ensure that every child flourishes.

Our values which guide all of us as adults and children:

- **Loving together** - forgiveness, empathy, inclusion, kindness
- **Learning together**–growing, leading, aspiring, enabling
- **Growing in faith together –** Christ at the centre, service, stewardship

Aims - Spirituality Aspiration Innovation Diversity

- **Spirituality**: We aim to teach Christian values to our children, inviting them to build their own lives upon them. We aim to be an inclusive family, inspired by gospel values through service to others and through coming to know Jesus better through their learning, through worship and through the daily life of the school.

- **Aspiration:** We aim to develop aspirational, creative and curious learners who embrace challenge and recognise this as essential to their growth. We aim to help children develop high self-esteem, confidence and a strong sense of identity

- **Innovation**: We aim to provide an environment in which children can confidently explore, build on and share new ideas so that they can become the innovators of the future. We aim to inspire learning with a wide and innovative curriculum.

- **Diversity:** We aim to teach every child to embrace and value diversity in themselves and others. We aim to be a happy, welcoming and caring school where we recognise, affirm and develop the unique gifts and talents of each individual.

Structure and Management of Catholic Life and Religious Education

Responsibility:

Governors and St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

Religious Education is the core of the core of the curriculum and lesson content is in line with guidance as set out by the Religious Education Directory.

The Headteacher and RE Co-Ordinator lead the subject effectively, as evidenced through Governor and Trust monitoring.

There is a budget for RE, Catholic Life and Mission and Prayer and Liturgy that reflects their centrality to the life of a Catholic school

The Headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures that:

All decisions made are underpinned by the school Mission, Vision and Values.

The RE Co-Ordinator is provided with sufficient training and opportunities to fulfill her role.

That national and Diocesan training and developments are made available to relevant staff.

Staff are provided with appropriate training and formation to ensure that all guidance is followed and adhered to.

That all pupils are provided with excellent RE teaching throughout their time at St Francis.

There are suitable resources for RE in the school

Religious Education is regularly monitored and evaluated.

RE Co-Ordinator ensures that:

She is a visible witness to the Catholic faith

The Religious Education Curriculum is fully compliant to the requirements set by the Bishops.

That the spiritual development of individuals is given clear focus and assistance through the prayer life and liturgy of the school. (see: The Prayer and Liturgy Policy).

The prime responsibility of parents to be the religious educators of their children allows parents to be involved as much as possible in the life of the school.

There are close working relationships between parish, home and school.

There is clear leadership and support in the implementation and organisation of the RE curriculum

The Role of the Class Teacher:

To plan, teach, adapt and evaluate lessons in accordance with the Religious Education Directory (RED), in a manner appropriate to the age ability of pupils in the class.

To provide a stimulating environment within the classroom

To lead the children in prayer and reflection; encouraging children to develop their faith, as well as spiritual and moral awareness of other religion.

Staff Induction

All new members of staff take part in an Induction process. This includes introducing them to the Ethos and Mission Statement at St Francis.

The Trust also provides induction sessions for new staff, including what it means to work in a Catholic school.

When new staff are appointed, they are provided with training and support to ensure that they feel confident to deliver RE lessons. Staff plan with an experienced member of staff who, along with the RE

Coordinator, Head teacher, and Adult Chaplaincy Team, is willing to help and answer any questions they may have.

Staff Development

We are committed to keeping Religious Education central to future developments within our school, as we continue to develop our whole school mission and ethos, based on the values Jesus taught us.

- Staff are encouraged to attend any Diocesan or Trust training that is made available, as well as regular in-school RE Staff meetings and/or INSETs.
- We support staff in studying for the Diocesan Certificate Catholic Studies, as we see this as enhancing our provision for our pupils.
- Staff have bi-annual appraisal meetings with the Head teacher, during which they are able to discuss any training and development needs they have. Requests for professional development are considered with reference to individual need and to the school's priorities, as identified within the school's development plan. They may be by attending a formal training course (in person or virtually), or it may be that the individual observes other teachers or has an opportunity to look at other children's work. This may be with staff from our own school or staff from a school within the Catholic cluster group.
- Before staff begin a topic, they are requested to read the RED 'Before You Begin' material.

The school's Adult Chaplaincy Team is available to provide more targeted support and advice to teachers.

Teaching and Learning

As a Christ-centred school, we recognise that parents are the first educators of faith and we seek to develop a partnership between home, school and parish in fostering Gospel Values and helping to bring each person to a deeper understanding of their relationship with God.

Religious Education is at the heart of our school curriculum and embedded throughout, stimulating spiritual growth and development along with academic, physical and social progress.

Our religious programme reflects the Catholic faith. It provides a systematic presentation of the Christian way of life in ways which are appropriate to the stage of development of each child.

Our religious teaching is based on the religious, social and educational experiences of each child. Some children will already be engaged in the process of catechesis. For others it will be their first opportunity to hear the Good News of the Gospel.

We aim to provide all children, irrespective of diversity of religious background and commitment, with opportunities to recognise, reflect, value and test their experiences against Christian revelation and the experiences of others, so that their experiences take on a deeper meaning and grow.

Religious Education is a rigorous academic discipline and as such it is taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as other subjects. Ten per cent of curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of RE at Key Stage 1 and 2. Planning allows for continuity, progression and assessment opportunities.

Timetabled RE lessons give to an explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom.

At St Francis of Assisi, we plan lessons from objectives detailed in the Religious Education Directory's Model Curriculum, following the Liturgical Year through the branches of Creation and Covenant, Prophecy and Promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, Desert to Garden, To the Ends of the Earth and Dialogue and Encounter. This last branch also enables children to respectfully understand different world religions and to be able to confidently share their own informed beliefs with others.

All branches explore the lenses of Hear, Believe, Celebration and Live

The curriculum is rooted within scripture

Methodology

We aim to use a variety of teaching and learning styles which are appropriate to the age and stage of development of the pupils within each class.

These provide the use of discussion and debate, reading and development of reference skills, ICT, writing in forms such as stories, prayers and personal accounts, music, art work, drama, prayer and meditation.

As with all other areas of the curriculum, teachers provide this process for pupils in a variety of groupings such as whole class, pairs, small groups of similar ability levels, and mixed abilities.

We strive to ensure that, where appropriate, links are made between religious education and other areas of the curriculum. In particular we draw on techniques from areas of philosophy and PHSE.

We use of a range of resources produced by CAFOD, and other charities and organisations to enhance RE and help to develop the global dimension of our curriculum.

By offering these kinds of teaching and learning opportunities we encourage children to develop an understanding of the relevance of the following Gospel values in their lives:

- Love of God
- Love of themselves and others
- Care for themselves and others
- Forgiveness of themselves and others
- Respect for themselves and others
- Giving of themselves to and for others

We encourage children to

- Develop a spiritual understanding – a sense of awe, wonder and mystery, and a sense of God in the world
- Develop a sense of uniqueness and worth
- Have respect and tolerance for others who hold different religious views
- Develop an understanding of the obligations, responsibilities and joys of belonging to the Catholic community.

We foster in children the ability to:

- Listen, think critically, spiritually, ethically and spiritually
- Make informed judgements
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Recognise the consequences of their own actions
- Examine, and evaluate their own feelings and motivations
- Choose, change and forgive,
- Reflect on their actions and experiences
- Develop skills of interpersonal relationships
- Respond in faith, gratitude and love of God

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The purpose of assessing, recording and reporting is to monitor effective learning, to celebrate growth and achievement, to identify gaps and to enable further progress and development.

Assessment, recording and reporting are related to overall RE aims, and the specific learning objectives of themes and topics. Using the NBRIA/CES Assessment Toolkit to guide our assessment, teachers ensure that formative assessment is a continual part of the teaching and learning cycle.
Attainment is recorded at the end of each Branch, with children being assessed as 'Expected' or 'Working Towards'. In line with national guidance, there is no 'Greater Depth' descriptor.
In order to illustrate progress, each child has an RE Assessment Book which travels through the school with and contains six examples of assessed work each year.
Teachers' end of Branch assessments are collated and analysed by the RE Leader, with outcomes informing future training opportunities.
The assessment of the progress made by individuals and groups informs daily and weekly planning. Children are given opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their own academic progress and spiritual development, e.g. during RE sessions, circle time. Peer and self-assessment are important and effective parts of the assessment process.

Recording of RE may take many forms and can include:

- Written work in books – accounts, poems, prayers etc.
- Work completed for display
- Art work and taped music recordings
- Photographs and recordings of drama work in progress

A formal reporting to parents takes place at the end of each school year.

Assessment information is passed on the next teacher at the end of each academic year and to Notre Dame High School and other secondary schools on transfer.

Children's progress is tracked by the RE leader and reported to the Headteacher and School Governors.

The RE leader has a job description and is responsible for the monitoring, evaluating and development all areas of RE, Catholic Life and Mission and Prayer and Liturgy. The RE leader and Headteacher monitor the different areas on a rolling programme. These areas include:

- teaching and learning
- content and quality of prayer and worship
- Catholic Life and Mission, including Catholic Social Teaching
- display and prayer corners
- the percentage of curriculum time dedicated to RE

Most monitoring is done through direct observation and Pupil Voice, but also includes a scrutiny of planning and assessment, recorded RE work and the school environment

Resources are audited and spending needs identified on an annual basis.

Special Educational Needs

Children with Special Educational Needs are catered for within the framework of the RED Programme. The whole school approach to the teaching of Religious Education is inclusive, rather than exclusive. It caters for every child and emphasis is on discussion, pictures and drama.

A pictorial record of every child's understanding is acceptable. Every child is made to feel that they have achieved.

All pupils are allowed to work to their different abilities.

As a Catholic school, we are aware that all children are a unique gift from God, each with their own individual talents and needs.

Equal Opportunities in RE

Religious Education is taught on a class basis and all children are treated with equal respect. Each child is expected to listen to the views of other people, and respect that sometimes there will be a difference of opinion.

In the delivery of the syllabus and other curriculum areas, the children are introduced to the views, beliefs and cultures of other faiths.

Additional time is given to other faiths and we acknowledge their celebrations when they occur.

Each child should develop a positive attitude to their fellow human beings and show empathy and understanding towards them.

Prayer and Liturgy

See our separate Prayer & Liturgy Policy and Annual Plan of provision.

The sacraments are explored each year through the appropriate topics within the RE Curriculum. Children are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion in the parish in which they live.

Requests for withdrawal of any aspect of Catholic Life of the School

Any requests for withdrawals from the Catholic Life of the School must be requested in writing to the headteacher and will only be agreed following a face-to-face meeting with parent with legal guidelines outlined and written agreement signed.

This policy will be reviewed every two years

Next review date: September 2024