Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Date reviewed	Next review
November 2025	November 2026
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Margaret McAleese	

Mission Statement

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is founded on faith in Jesus Christ and the life of the school community is centred in His presence.

This is our mission.

Our faith and love for God is cherished and developed by opening our hearts to God's love through worship, prayer and forgiveness.

Understand how to guide others to have a more active relationship with Jesus, celebrating us as Mission Makers and Servant Leaders, so that we can love God.

Respect and involve our parents showing them how we learn, how we use our Multiple Intelligences and how we become Learning Champions.

Live, learn and love one another by, creating a caring, safe and friendly environment where all are welcome.

Always represent the school by being a great role model.

Develop our community by working in partnership with everyone to become active global citizens. (School, Home, Church and surrounding Community)

Yearn to show others empathy and compassion by listening to others and by understanding their feelings.

Strive to be the best that we can be by being independent and resilient and by encouraging others to do the same.

Introduction

The ultimate aim of Religious Education, at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, is to situate Christ at the centre of all that we do. Jesus Christ is the absolute revelation of God. Through the Holy Spirit, each of us, in the Communion of Christ's Church, has the means to know and to love God, our Father, by knowing and loving his Son, Jesus Christ.

"This is why religious education in our schools must be as rigorous as any other academic discipline: but it cannot, as it were, stop at the point of academic rigour. It is the working of the Holy Spirit that transforms knowledge into love; that moment of 'conversion' when the person encounters the risen Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. And this process, of course, has no limits in terms of the intellectual ability (or otherwise) of the individual student. One of the most beautiful aspects of personal faith is its capacity to bring together persons of all abilities." (From a homily given by Monsignor Matthew Dickens NBRIA Conference, April 2019)

Within the curriculum, classroom Religious Education's main purpose is to engage pupils in a systematic study of the mystery of Christ which we believe holds the fullness of the truth that God has revealed. It will also provide the basis for an openness to the 'seeds of the Word' that are to be found in other religions (cf Redemptionist Missio 56, Nostra Aetate 2).

Aims

The school aims to:

- engage pupils in a systematic study of the mystery of Christ which we believe holds the fullness of the truth that God has revealed;
- recognise the real, though as yet imperfect, communion that exists between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations;
- provide the basis for an openness to the 'seeds of the Word' that are to be found in other religions;
- enhance the pupils' sense of awe and wonder;
- help the pupils to develop a personal relationship with Jesus and experience the Good News of the Gospel;

- offer a committed presentation of the Catholic Faith;
- enable pupils to grow in their awareness of what it means to be a member of the Church;
- invite the pupils to respond freely to the grace of the revealing God;
- encourage our pupils to reflect on their lives and on society in the light of the Gospel;
- support the parents in creating a Christian Community built on the experience of prayer and liturgy;
- develop in our pupils, knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church and empathetic appreciation of the faiths of others;
- enable our pupils to move from an inherited faith (or non-faith), to a personal faith (living faith);
- develop a sense of social justice within our pupils;
- consider moral issues, so helping pupils to form their conscience in the light of the Church's teaching;
- help to give the children a basic understanding of the Sacraments and the Mass;
- provide a religious programme that ensures progression;
- enable the children to become familiar with religious language, symbols, signs and gestures of worship and prayer;
- develop an awareness that living in God's way will always demand a commitment and involve a sense of community.

Conference of Catholic Bishops of England and Wales (CCBEW) Requirements
RE is a core subject at Our Lady's and therefore 10% of curriculum time is devoted to its delivery in accordance with the requirements stated by The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. These time allocations do not include collective worship or hymn practice.

Legal Requirements
The law, School Standards and Framework Act 1998, requires all maintained schools:

- provide Religious Education for all pupils including those in the sixth form;
- recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship.

In addition:

- Foundation governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools.

Leadership of Religious Education
The governors and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that Religious Education has a high profile, and is taught as a core subject, within the curriculum of the Catholic school.

At Our Lady's:

- the named persons responsible for leading curriculum Religious Education are Mrs Georgina Lang and Miss Isabel Quinn, both of whom are practising Catholics;
- the named governor responsible for Religious Education is Fr Stephen Boyle;
- the curriculum Religious Education is well resourced, both in regard to content and the continuing professional development of those teaching the subject;
- there is regular and comprehensive monitoring of curriculum Religious Education which clearly demonstrates the impact the subject has on the school.

Each year, the staff team devote INSET and staff meetings to the development of RE. INSET will focus on the key priorities identified in the School Development Plan which is in line with the key areas found on the CSED. The Subject Leader also attends Diocesan training events which forms regular high quality school based training for all staff. The Headteacher and governors ensure that the school's self-evaluation processes monitor and evaluate the identity of the school as a Catholic community; the CSED Self-Evaluation Form is regularly reviewed and this feeds in to the development of the School Development Plan and RE Subject Leaders plan. All teaching staff are involved in the self-evaluation of RE provision within the school. Staff confidence in RE is developed through book monitoring, the use of peer observations and feedback from formal observations.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

The foundation governors of Catholic schools are appointed by the Bishop in order to promote and safeguard the Catholic character of the school. As such, they should also be aware of and implement the Church's teaching and any diocesan guidelines regarding religious education for the benefit of children and young people in their care.

Headteacher

The headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Board, parents, the Diocesan Schools' service and the LA.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the Catholic values and ethos of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School permeate every aspect of the school day. All teachers are responsible for continually developing their own skills, knowledge and practices in response to the requirements of the RE Curriculum, identifying their own needs and notifying the RE Lead of any training needed. They are responsible for planning, preparing and delivering lessons matched to the curriculum, which will engage and enable all children to make progress.

The Role of the RE Subject Leader

The RE subject leader, with the Head Teacher, has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to religious education. Key areas of responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- leading staff in the implementation of religious education as the focal point of the school's mission statement and ensuring that life within the school reflects our living faith;
- ensuring good practice is shared throughout the school;
- leading the development, monitoring and evaluation of the religious education programme across the school through lesson observations, drop-ins, book looks, pupil perceptions, monitoring of learning environments and data analysis. Feeding back findings to staff and discussing next steps;
- keeping abreast of current developments in the teaching of religious education, by attending training which may be provided nationally, within the Diocese and disseminating information appropriately;
- providing support for ECTs and new members of staff in religious education;
- reviewing current policy and updating when necessary;
- developing liturgies which are an integral part of the religious education curriculum;
- leading on the use of display within school and the Church community in order to reflect the Catholic character of the school.

Curriculum Intent for Religious Education
In Religious Education, the staff of Our Lady's develop the children's knowledge of the Catholic faith and other religions as well as their personal development through religion, in line with the school's vision. Our Lady's, support children to explore their faith so that they can relate this to their everyday lives becoming independent and resilient learners. Our Lady's inspire confidence our children by providing them with opportunities to ask questions and deepen their understanding of their faith. Staff are passionate in instilling a love for learning and understanding whereby children respect and value their own personal beliefs, views and values as well as those from a range of cultures that may differ from their own.

Curriculum Religious Education
At Our Lady's, The 'Come and See' scheme is used as a basis for teaching and learning. The scheme is supplemented with religious music, dance, drama, and contemporary scriptural art to invigorate the RE learning. Story is an essential feature of the delivery of the RE curriculum. The power of the story is used to help children on their faith journey. Each lesson is given a planned opening and closing reflection, in line with the learning in the lesson. All Programmes of study comply with the expectations of the RED (Religious Education Directory), and subsequent versions.

At Our Lady's, governors and leaders ensure that the curriculum content of taught Religious Education meets the requirements of the RED as well as any additional requirements of the Local Ordinary. As the RED is updated, planning will be adapted as necessary, within the required timeframe.

Inclusion
All pupils within our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriately adapted access to the religious education programme of study.

Cross-Curricular Links
As religious education is an integral part of school life, incorporates other curriculum areas. Aspects of PSHE, Relationship and sex education, spiritual development and moral education are catered for through the religious education programme (see RHSE policy).

Teaching of Other Religions
At Our Lady's, children learn about other religions in all phases from Early Years Foundation through to Year 6. Pupils learn about and from other faith traditions as this will help to prepare them for living as full members of our diverse society. Other religions are taught in each academic year for the equivalent of 3 weeks of Religious Education lessons. They are Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. This is planned by using the Come and See Scheme of Work. The learning is enhanced through the use of video clips, stories, artwork and artefacts. Where possible, we invite believers of other faiths into school to share their religion and beliefs.

Planning, Assessment and Recording of Religious Education
At Our Lady's, learning is assessed using the age-related standard for Religious Education published by the Catholic Education Service (CES) and the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA). Supporting documents produced by the Education Commission are also used. Rather than assessing individual pieces of work, learning is assessed throughout the unit including both spoken and written evidence. Teachers then input this assessment into the school's tracking system.

Children are encouraged to reflect on their learning and will use self and peer assessments at regular points along their faith journey

Teaching and Learning in Religious Education is monitored with the same rigour as that for the other core subjects.

Continuing Professional Development
We support the training of staff ensuring that all feel able to lead the teaching of RE as well as be the spiritual leaders within their classrooms. In addition to whole school training, staff participate in Diocesan training to ensure that they are able to deliver forward thinking and aspirational learning opportunities to inspire and engage all learners. Staff have opportunities for prayer and personal growth and development through school retreat days, liturgies, and moments for reflections. Participation in the CCRS programme is encouraged and financially supported, and all teachers are encouraged to undertake this qualification. It is expected that the R.E. Leader and all aspiring to Senior Leadership in Catholic schools will obtain this.

Sacramental Preparation and the Catholic School
Sacramental preparation takes place in the parish of St Anselm's, Dartford. The school liaises closely with the parish in order to ensure appropriate support and connections between parish sacramental preparation and school Religious Education programmes. The RE learning in the Year 3 class makes reference to the children's spiritual development, towards them making their First Holy Communion and receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Home Links
At Our Lady's, we recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children. Religious Education in our school, taught through the planned curriculum and across other areas, endeavours to support the parents in this important mission. Parents are informed of what their children are learning in Religious Education through termly overviews which are on the school's website.

There are two parents' consultations during the year when parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's development in RE as well as other subjects. Annual reports comment on the children's progress, attainment and attitudes in RE.

Equality Statement
We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The curriculum is inclusive and facilitates the needs of all children regardless of their age, size, mobility, gender, ethnicity and ability. Our planning aims to foster an appreciation of each other's cultures and beliefs along with the promotion of a healthy and positive self-mage. This is linked to the school's role as a Christian community, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Inclusion.