

St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

'Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. Let your light shine, so that when people see the good you do, they will say, "This is because they are children of their Father in Heaven."

(Matthew 5:14-16)

Approved at:	FGB
Review:	Two yearly
Review date:	Spring 2025

Mission & Vision Statements

The Mission of St Thomas More's School is *Our mission is to inspire every child by ensuring SUCCESS, providing OPPORTUNITY and fostering STEWARDSHIP within a loving, Catholic community.*

Our vision is that everyone will leave our school feeling they have achieved more than they ever thought possible, and they will make a difference to the world by serving God by helping others.

As such, we plan and resource pupils' learning, in line with the school curriculum policy.

The School's Vision and Mission Statements underpin all aspects of our planning, our chosen pedagogy and our delivery to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in Religious Education (RE). We believe that all have the ability to achieve their best and our curriculum and varied choice of pedagogy enables all children to do this, including those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Rationale

We aim to prepare our children for the world of today, tomorrow and future years, within the context of our faith as expressed in our Mission Statement. Our commitment is based on the Gospel values of dedication, empathy, forgiveness and generosity, as well as respect for others.

The religious growth and development of pupils is recognised to be embedded within the whole school experience, as well as the discrete RE curriculum. We encourage all involved in the school to live out the school values in a practical and meaningful way so that we all grow in our relationships with each other and with God. The discrete RE curriculum has a unique contribution to this development.

Throughout their school lives, the children will be given regular opportunities for worship and liturgy – Eucharist and Word, but RE provides further opportunities to reflect upon and deepen the understanding of faith.

Aims

- To promote children's innate capacity for the spiritual – a sense of awe
- To develop the children's understanding of and involvement in the Catholic faith
- To increase children's knowledge of the Catholic faith and their ability to reflect on how this impacts on their own lives
- To introduce children to aspects of other faiths and encourage respect for the dignity of all people

Objectives

- To familiarise the children with the life of Jesus and his teachings
- To enable the children to understand that these teachings are the basis of Christian values
- To enable the children to explore and recognise God as Creator and Loving Father
- To enable the children to understand the nature, importance and significance of the Bible
- To provide opportunities to reflect upon scripture and world events
- To teach about liturgical celebration, prayer and reflection
- To teach the children about our Catholic traditions and way of life, including the Sacraments and the liturgical year
- To provide the children with the necessary language to discuss and explain symbols and rituals, people and places, religious activities and objects, religious and non-religious stories
- To learn about other faiths
- To foster stewardship and understand how Catholic Social Teaching helps to put faith into action

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Leader will review and evaluate provision, progression and children's participation through work sampling, questionnaires, pupil interviews and observation as appropriate. This information will be used to identify areas for development / INSET / Staff CPD. This will be included in the school Monitoring Evaluation & Review cycle.

Curriculum

10% of the weekly teaching timetable is dedicated to RE. It is taught throughout the school and we will aim to use a variety of styles to deliver it.

The Portsmouth Diocese scheme of work, "God Matters", is followed and teachers use the supplementary guidance and RE progressions and skills documents to support planning in line with the pen portraits, whilst adapting planning to meet the needs of their class.

Planning will account for progression through the Standards;

- Knowledge and Understanding (learning about)
- Engagement response (learning from)
- Analysis and Evaluation

Units covered are:

Creation - Prayer, Saints & Feasts – Advent – Christmas – Revelation – Lent – Easter - Pentecost & Mission – Sacraments

Addendum for 2022-2023: Due to transition into new REDC, *Prayer, Saints and Feasts* will be replaced with a Catholic Social Teaching unit and *Sacraments* will be replaced with a Dialogue and encounter unit.

Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

All planning will start and end with a Big Question focus, and each lesson will build the children's understanding of scripture and events that will equip them to go back to this big question at the end of the unit with new-found knowledge and understanding, while also being able to say how it will impact their and others lives and faith.

As well as through typical Assessment for Learning techniques, children's learning is assessed according to our school Assessment policy and using the diocesan Attainment Targets document. Children's attainment

will be recorded as A Level 1,2,3 for each unit. It is each class teacher's responsibility to record assessments carried out and these will be used to inform planning and to produce necessary reports.

Teachers will also utilise Focus attainment progress trackers in selected units to see how they can adapt and change next planning and teaching to address the needs of the class.

Feedback marking will be done in line with the School's marking policy. The school recognise the research into the value of verbal feedback and so this is actively encouraged over written feedback. However, just as for other subjects, there is the expectation that there is the need for specific feedback to be recorded and responded to in books. Feedback should reflect success against both knowledge-based objectives as well as pupils' spiritual development.

Pupils must have opportunities to evaluate their own spiritual development and knowledge of their faith and other religions. This may take the format of written work at an appropriate point, often at the end of a unit to demonstrate their progress in learning, or through discussions. Records of significant comments which demonstrate a pupil's knowledge or spiritual development are recorded on a post-it note and stuck to the pupil's book or the class Spiritual Learning Journey Book.

Whilst we value the effectiveness of verbal feedback, marking should pick up any misconceptions as well as ensure capitals and correct grammar are used to show respect to the sacredness of what is being learnt, e.g. Capital G for God, correct spelling of subject-specific vocabulary such as Jesus.

All feedback, whether verbal or written, will ensure clarity in learning and the message taken from each lesson and allow that deepening of knowledge for each child, providing them further opportunity to think about and question how we can put our faith into action, develop or understanding or faith and spirituality, and ultimately, help them to deepen their relationship with God.

RE and faith development are the priority of what we do at St Thomas More's, and to illustrate this, it is the first area of learning reported on in pupils' annual report.

Special Educational Needs

For those children with learning difficulties, tasks, outcomes, or text are differentiated to allow access to the learning objective. We recognise that those children who have needs in other curriculum areas may have good knowledge and understanding of our faith and/or demonstrate deep spirituality, and so must be given the support in order to share and further develop this. Cognitive load must be considered for all pupils and scaffolding should be utilised to enable all pupils to access and be successful in the same learning.

We also recognise that those children who attain highly in other curriculum areas may need support in RE, and so the provision for their needs must also be considered and actioned.

We also ensure RE is prioritised as a morning lesson at least once a fortnight to highlight the subject's importance and also to ensure those children who may need additional learning support through intervention sessions in the afternoon do not miss their RE lesson.

Resources

Each class has access to the standards and God Matters (to use as a guide and for support in their own knowledge) for their Year groups. In year 2022-2023- where transition has begun to REDC, new units of Catholic Social Teaching and Dialogue and encounter will be provided for staff.

Resources and support will change from 2023-2025 when in transition for the new REDC.

Each class has a set of Bibles.

Additional resources of RE are kept in the Resources store at the back of the hall. These resources include religious artefacts for the different world faiths which are studied. Staff may also wish to utilise the Rights and Diversity centre (contact Minnie Moore: minnie.moore@hants.gov.uk) as well as visitors and trips. The RE lead and Headteacher can advise on access to these.

Collective Worship & Liturgical Prayer

Our faith is celebrated in a variety of ways, but especially through liturgy and sacrament, ritual, symbol and prayer.

Our acts of worship provide opportunities to share our Catholic practices and beliefs, to consider and affirm our Christian values, to pray, meditate and reflect, to think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community and belonging.

See the Policy for Liturgical Prayer

Home, Pastoral Area and Community Links

Our school is committed to developing a partnership with the families of our pupils and the Pastoral area within which most of them live.

When a child enters our school, he/she and his/her family will receive a warm welcome, irrespective of religious, social, economic, cultural or racial background. We offer parents opportunities to work together for the benefit of their children.

We recognise and value the commitment of our school governors and priests, and aim to involve them in different aspects of RE. We foster links with our Church communities and value opportunities to worship together e.g. visits to churches, visits from parishioners to pray with us. We utilise and embrace our school priests and their openness to enrich our curriculum. Staff may choose to 'team teach' with priests on deeper theological lessons, or ones based on priesthood / vocations and the sacraments. Staff who wish to utilise the support of the priests should go through the RE leader in order to co-ordinate this.

We work closely with Diocesan Advisers and actively maintain liaison links with Oaklands Secondary and other local Catholic schools. Our school chaplain is available to support development of pupils and staff.

With the local community, we foster links in a variety of ways. The school community is encouraged to show interest and practical support for local, national and international issues. Our school specifically supports CAFOD as well as other charities. We achieved Fairtrade school status and these links are still encouraged.

Right to Withdraw

Parents of pupils are permitted to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or collective worship given at the school and any such request shall stand until such time that the parent's request is withdrawn. Please contact the school if you wish to discuss this.