

Religious Education (RE) Policy



"We learn, love and grow with God at the centre."

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Our Vision and Values

At St. Joseph's, we believe that each person is created and loved by God. As a Passionist Catholic school, we are rooted in the love of Christ Crucified and inspired by the charism of compassion, justice, presence and hope.

Our mission statement, ***"We learn, love and grow with God at the centre"***, reflects the heart of our Passionist identity. It reminds us that every aspect of school life is grounded in faith. By placing God at the centre, we follow the example of St. Paul of the Cross, nurturing respect and love for all. In RE, this mission guides us to deepen our understanding of the Gospel, live out our Christian values and grow together as a community where each child is valued, supported and encouraged to flourish in both faith and life.

We aim to:

- Live compassionately, following Christ's example of love and mercy.
- Be present to others, especially those who suffer.
- Act justly, promoting human dignity and peace.
- Hold onto hope through all challenges guided by our faith.

Through these values, we grow together in faith, wisdom and service.

RE Policy Statement

At St. Joseph's, we strive to provide opportunities for every member of our school community to know Christ more deeply through Scripture, the Sacraments and the traditions of the Catholic Church. Our teaching of RE seeks to:

- Help children discover their identity as children of God.
 - Deepen understanding of Catholic beliefs and practices.
 - Encourage service, prayer, reflection, and the living out of faith.
 - Promote respect for other beliefs and cultures, rooted in dialogue and encounter.
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Aims and Objectives

- To enrich children's understanding of faith and their relationship with God.
 - To nurture a love of Scripture and prayer.
 - To help children value and respect the beliefs of others.
 - To support development of moral and spiritual awareness.
 - To foster an environment where children can live their faith with confidence and joy.
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Home / School / Parish Partnership

Faith begins in the home. At St. Joseph's, we work in strong partnership with our families and St. Joseph's Church, Highgate, to form a faith-filled community:

- Parents are encouraged to engage with the RE curriculum and attend liturgical celebrations.
 - Termly RE newsletters inform families of topics, liturgical events and Masses.
 - Our parish priest regularly visits the school to celebrate staff Mass and deliver individual class sessions.
 - The school joins the parish for Holy Days, feast days and community events.
 - We also support children in preparing for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.
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Programme of Study

Our curriculum is shaped by the Religious Education Directory (RED) and organised into six distinct branches. The content in each branch builds progressively, ensuring that as children move through the school their knowledge, understanding and faith continue to deepen and develop. Each branch connects to key events in the liturgical year, enabling pupils to live their learning through worship, prayer and celebration. Lessons encourage not only the development of religious knowledge but also the growth of personal spirituality, moral understanding and a sense of belonging to the Church community. This structure ensures that children are equipped to reflect on their faith, apply Gospel values in daily life and appreciate the richness of Catholic tradition.

Term	Branch Title	Focus
Autumn 1	Creation and Covenant	Pupils encounter God as Creator and explore our covenant relationship with Him through Abraham and Moses.
Autumn 2	Prophecy and Promise	Pupils study the prophets and the promise of the Messiah, preparing for Advent and Christmas.
Spring 1	Galilee to Jerusalem	Pupils explore Jesus' public ministry, the Kingdom of God and what it means to follow Him.
Spring 2	Desert to Garden	Pupils journey through Lent and Holy Week, exploring the meaning of the Passion and Resurrection.
Summer 1	To the Ends of the Earth	Pupils learn about the Apostolic Church and the work of the Holy Spirit in the early Church and today.
Summer 2	Dialogue and Encounter	Pupils learn about ecumenism, interfaith dialogue and the dignity of all people.

Catholic Social Teaching

Each half-term we focus on a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) from the *Rooted in Love* programme, to help children live out the Church's social mission in age-appropriate and practical ways:

Half-Term	CST Theme
Autumn 1	Care for Creation
Autumn 2	Preferential Option for the Poor
Spring 1	Solidarity and Peace
Spring 2	Community and Participation
Summer 1	Dignity of Workers
Summer 2	Human Dignity

These principles are explored through Scripture, Church teaching and the life of Jesus, helping pupils to see faith lived out in action. Children may reflect on Gospel themes, lead class or whole-school projects, and often take part in charitable initiatives and community action inspired by CST, such as 'Care for Creation Eco-Day'. This regular focus encourages pupils to think deeply about justice, compassion and service, and to grow as responsible, faith-filled citizens who actively contribute to the common good.

Planning

Our bespoke RE curriculum branch plans are designed in line with the Religious Education Directory (RED) model framework, ensuring consistency and progression across year levels.

Teachers work with their partner teacher to develop individual lessons, using guidance and frameworks provided by the RE Lead to ensure lessons are purposeful, engaging and age-appropriate.

The RE Lead provides support throughout the planning process and reviews lessons in collaboration with the RE Team, fostering consistency and high-quality teaching across the school.

Each lesson outline includes a clear learning objective, CST link, key vocabulary, relevant scripture references, hymns and prayers. Suggested activities are also provided, alongside greater depth (GD) questions designed to extend and challenge pupils' thinking.

Planning guarantees that all topics are covered, builds on prior learning and explicitly links lessons to CST principles and the school's ethos, reinforcing values and a coherent faith journey.

Teaching and Learning

A variety of teaching methods are used, with lessons incorporating Scripture exploration, discussion, prayer, drama, writing and artwork. These approaches help pupils think critically, express themselves creatively and reflect on their own experiences in relation to their faith.

Learning is active and collaborative, with children working individually and together to explore ideas, solve problems and share insights. All children are included and challenged, with activities designed to extend thinking and foster curiosity.

As mentioned previously, children also engage in initiatives inspired by the Passionist charism, such as 'Change for Change Day', providing opportunities to live out their faith through action, reflection and care for others and the world around them.

Assessment

- While personal faith cannot be assessed, children's knowledge, understanding and skills can be measured and supported.
 - Informal assessment is ongoing through teacher observation, discussion and marking of work, allowing staff to identify understanding, misconceptions and areas for development in real time.
 - In Key Stage 2, children in Years 3 to 6 self-assess at the start of a branch to explore and identify what they already know, and again at the end to reflect on their learning and record new insights or takeaways from that branch.
 - End-of-branch assessment tracking using Sonar provides a clear overview of pupils' knowledge, highlights gaps and informs future teaching.
 - Pupils revisit key vocabulary and concepts to self-assess their understanding and reflect on their progress.
 - Work is moderated at multiple levels, including school, deanery and diocesan moderation, ensuring consistency, accuracy and high standards across the curriculum.
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Monitoring

- Monitoring of RE teaching and learning includes book looks, lesson observations, planning scrutiny and learning walks to gain a comprehensive understanding of classroom practice and pupil engagement.
 - Feedback from monitoring is shared with staff to celebrate strengths, identify areas for development and inform strategies to improve RE teaching and provision.
 - RE is evaluated as part of the school's wider self-evaluation process and Catholic Life review, ensuring that teaching, learning and the faith life of the school are continually assessed, developed and aligned with the school's ethos and mission.
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Display and Prayer Focus

- Each class has a dedicated prayer area that is thoughtfully arranged and updated seasonally to reflect the liturgical year, helping pupils engage with key Church seasons, feast days and themes in a meaningful way.
 - Classroom displays showcase current RE learning, pupils' work, relevant Scripture, key vocabulary and questions to support ongoing reflection and deepen understanding.
 - Whole-school displays celebrate major feasts, liturgical seasons and Catholic Social Teaching initiatives, providing visual reminders of faith in action and fostering a sense of community, shared values and collective participation in the life of the school.
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Resources

- Each classroom has:
 - A Bible and child-friendly Scripture resources.
 - Prayer table materials and artefacts.
 - KS2 classes have a set of Bibles.
 - Additional RE and liturgical resources are stored centrally.
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Related Policies

- Catholic Life and Mission Policy
 - Prayer and Liturgy Policy
 - RHSE Policy
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Policy adopted: November 2024

Signed:

Review date: November 2025