



St Francis RC Primary School

We believe that with God, everything is in our reach

Religious Education Policy

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Shared with Governors	

We put our Mission Statement into practice by providing a school where our faith in God and love for one another is at the heart of everything we do:

As a Catholic school, we come together to celebrate our love of God and each other.

Through prayer we follow Jesus' example of love, forgiveness and truth.

We are a safe and happy community where every individual is supported and encouraged to achieve their targets.

We believe that with God, everything is in our reach!

We achieve this by:

- Fostering and strengthening bonds with parents, parish and the wider community by providing a living, worshipping environment inspired by all of the gospel values.
- Providing an environment within which each member of the school community is valued and respected and encouraged to treat others in the same way.
- Promoting an atmosphere of reconciliation within which differences are resolved with patience and understanding so that each new day brings a fresh start.
- Developing each child to his/her full potential through a broad, balanced curriculum and through extra-curricular activities.
- Teaching the children the truths and practices of our Catholic faith and recognising that it is these principles that permeate all areas of the life of our school.

We achieve these aims through the following ways:

- Providing a living, worshipping community through regular school masses, weekly class masses, supporting the sacramental programme, Prayer and Liturgy (please see Prayer and Liturgy Policy).
- We invite members of the community into school and to accompany children in our school activities.
- We continue our tradition of supporting charities both locally and nationally. Our school's Chaplains assist staff and children with our charitable and community work.
- All members of staff are aware of the school's Mission Statement and the school's aims. We lead by example in our relationships with each other.
- We continue to promote an environment of reconciliation whereby children will seek to resolve their issues in a positive way.

- We give each child the opportunity to become literate and numerate. Further, we recognise that each child has particular and unique talents and we provide a whole variety of strategies and activities to enable each child to reach their potential.
- We encourage participation in extra-curricular activities both in and out of school. We fully implement the Salford Diocese R.E. Guidelines and review our R.E. Policy, the resources we use and the courses we attend.
- Prayer is central to life at St Francis. Appropriate to their age and capacity, we strive to give pupils a strong understanding of the wide variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition, both traditional and spontaneous. This includes the use of scripture, symbol, silence, meditation, reflection and liturgical music.

Religious Education in the Classroom

We recognise two aspects of Religious Education at St Francis:

(a) Implicit or unstructured Religious Education: This deals with the opportunities which occur in the school day which leads pupils through curriculum content or through relationships to a “religious understanding.” It is our policy to utilise all of these opportunities as they arise.

(b) Explicit or curriculum Religious Education –those planned or timetabled periods of time given to a systematic studying of Religious Education in the classroom. It requires 10% of the length of the taught week for each key stage of Education. (This translates to 2 and ½ hours in Key Stage 1 and 2 and two carpet times in Early Years or a mixture of carpet time and continuous provision).

(c)). This time does not include time for Prayer and Liturgy and assemblies. The teaching of Religious Education is clearly indicated on each class timetable.

Programme of Study

To fulfil our aims and objectives, from September 2025 to support the delivery of the new RED, we are using a programme of work called “Lighting the Path”, as recommended by the Diocese. This new curriculum follows a pattern where children hear, believe, celebrate and live out the Gospel.

September 2025: EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 will be teaching the new curriculum from the 'Lighting the Path' resource. Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 will be trialing the new curriculum resources produced by the Diocese of Salford.

Lighting the Path schemes have not been written for KS 2. Year 3 and Year 4 will use the Year 3 scheme produced by the diocese and Year 5 and Year 6 will use the Year 5 scheme.

September 2026: Key Stage 2 will start teaching the new curriculum from the 'Lighting the Path' scheme.

Work is planned according to 3 Attainment Targets:

- AT1 – Knowledge and understanding
- AT2- Living out what we know in our lives, relationships and behaviour
- AT3 – Further thought, wondrous moments, questions which we find difficult to answer

When planning, staff focus on the recommended driver words linked to the attainment targets.

Year Group	AT1	AT2	AT3
EYFS	Listen Talk Represent Own ideas Develop Share Read Understand Role Play Show	Answer Show Talk Confidently speak Give their attention Respond	
KS1	Recognise Retell Describe Ask Talk Ask and Respond	Ask Respond Talk	
Year 3 and 4	Retell Describe Make links	Ask and respond Express Make links	
Year 5 and 6	Show knowledge and understanding	Comparing and Contrasting Show	Arrive at judgements
	Show understanding of, by making links	understanding	

Other Faiths are taught in line with the thinking of the church, the aim being to encourage in the children a greater understanding and tolerance through a greater knowledge. Branch 6: Dialogue and Encounter" is the unit that teaches children about respectful dialogue with people of different faiths and worldviews, focusing on Catholic Social Teaching, the common good, and exploring Christianity, Judaism, Islam and other religions. Key elements include studying figures like St. Paul, understanding the global nature of Christianity through art and stories, learning about Islam's five pillars, and exploring Dharmic religions to promote understanding and collaboration for the common good.

The Curriculum Structure

The model curriculum has six components that will be known as branches which map onto the six half-terms of the school year. Each one has a core theme and invites pupils to learn about an aspect of Revelation, Scripture, life in Christ, and life in the Church, and to discern what their learning means academically and experientially enabling them to see, judge, and act through a deeper knowledge of the Christian faith.

1. Creation and covenant:

'The heavens are telling the glory of God' (Ps 19:1). In this branch, pupils will encounter the God who creates and calls a people. They will explore revelation of the Christian belief that all that is comes from God, the Creation accounts in Genesis, and scientific explanations of the process of Creation.

They will explore the call of God and his covenantal relationship with his people first through Abraham and Moses, then through the narrative of the Old Testament.

2. Prophecy and promise:

'In many and various ways, God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets' (Heb 1:1). The prophets speak of God reaching to his people, calling them back into a relationship with him. In this branch, pupils will explore the Christian understanding of the teaching of the prophets as they point to the fulfilment of God's promise in a messiah, Jesus Christ. They will explore the expectant waiting for the Messiah through the Advent season and how this speaks to Christians today as they wait for Christ. Pupils will encounter the story of the nativity of Jesus and the mystery of the incarnation.

3. Galilee to Jerusalem:

'God's only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known' (Jn 1:18). In this branch, pupils will experience the ministry of Jesus, the Word of God. They will learn about the life of Jesus and his revelation of the Kingdom of God through parables, encounters, miracles, and teachings. They will learn about the call of the disciples and the nature of being a follower of Jesus.

4. Desert to garden:

'Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day' (1 Cor 15:3). In this branch, pupils will study the season of Lent and its culmination in the events of Holy Week. They will learn about the Paschal Triduum at the heart of the Catholic Church's Liturgy and life. The title of this branch points both to the liturgical journey from the desert of Lent to the garden of Resurrection, but also to the Paschal journey from darkness to light, barrenness to fruitfulness, death to life.

5. To the ends of the Earth:

'Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt 28:19). In this branch, pupils will study the events that flowed from the Resurrection and Ascension in the coming of the Holy Spirit and the work of the apostles and early Church. They will also learn about the Catholic Church today as the apostolic Church and how its liturgy and structures flow from the early Church.

6. Dialogue and encounter:

'For "In him we live and move and have our being"' (Acts 17:28). In this branch, pupils will learn how Christians work together with people of different religious convictions and all people of goodwill towards the common good, respecting the dignity of all humanity. They will also encounter other pathways of belief drawing on the teaching of the Church about intercultural dialogue

Children with Special Educational Needs

Children with special needs have a full entitlement to the National Curriculum. Special Needs also includes the very able child. Provision is made, as far as possible, within the school, for all children with special needs. Continuous assessment is undertaken so that appropriate provision can be made.

Assessment and Recording

At St. Francis we believe that assessment must contain the philosophy that it is ultimately for the good of each child and enable them to strive for a feeling of confidence and success in their understanding of the Catholic faith. Assessment contributes to the focus of the school's aims. Progress is monitored through discussion, questioning, posing problems and giving opportunities to present their knowledge to others in a variety of ways, e.g. class assemblies.

Assessment recognises the unique contribution of every child. Assessment is based on religious matters and ensures children make progress within the unit of study. A child's positive self-worth enhances their ability in all areas of the curriculum. For each unit, there is a lesson dedicated from *Lighting the Path* and Salford Diocese that formally assesses each child. This is used alongside monitoring a child's social and moral development, lesson engagement and responses by the child throughout the unit. Teachers will also assess children's work by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. The children will also be involved in peer and self-assessment. On completion of a piece of work the teacher will mark appropriately and make comments to guide progress. The data is logged onto our assessment system, This information is used to assess the progress of each child, for setting new goals and for passing information on to the next teacher.

Marking

Marking follows the marking policy of St Francis, marking of children's religious work should always be positive and supportive to encourage the child in his/her faith journey. Marking will focus upon religious content and comments, feedback and next steps given, will look to enhance religious skills, knowledge and understanding, rather than Literacy skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, inaccurate spelling of important religious key words will be corrected within the children's books.

Vocabulary

Key words and vocabulary will be displayed on all Religious Education displays and children recall each word and the meaning – focusing on learning throughout the unit. This allows children to refer back to the vocabulary easily to ensure they are used and understood. These words are displayed to encourage children to use these effectively and purposefully throughout each lesson, particularly in their written work. They also form part of the title page at the start of each unit in exercise books, for the child to refer back to.

Display

In order to highlight the importance of Religious Education and Catholic ethos of the school displays follow the liturgical year. An RE and prayer focus area is in a prominent position in each classroom. The area has a cloth appropriate to the liturgical colour, a crucifix, a candle, and a piece of scripture relevant to the topic. Statues, artefacts and posters are prominently displayed whenever possible and changed on a regular basis. Religious Education curriculum work, and art work created by the children is displayed throughout the school, placing Christ at the center of all that we do.

Management and Co-ordination

Each teacher can access both Lighting The Path and Salford Diocese planning and resources for their year group electronically. The areas to be covered are split over 6 topics and are to be completed by the end of the year.

Planning is linked to the overall curriculum context and design.

Religious Education is part of our everyday life.

Teachers' individual styles enable them to select from and devise, appropriate learning experiences which can affirm children's value and worth and lead to their increased responsibility for their own learning.

This enables children to make more informed responses to God, faith and their attitude towards others and the wider world.

Resources

We have resources in our school to be able to teach the different units which we continually update and add to these resources. Each class has a box of resources e.g. liturgical cloths, crosses etc. There are further religious artefacts available to enrich collective worship and the teaching of RE.

The School's Prayer Garden, is available to all children and provides a spiritual learning environment. It provides a solidly educational space that promotes faith, morals and personal spiritual growth. Further, the prayer garden supports those children who experience trauma in their home lives as well as providing a comforting place for children with SEND.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The head teacher, SLT and subject lead are responsible for monitoring the standards of children's work and the quality of the teaching in religious education. Planning is reviewed by the subject lead for every topic. Book looks take place termly, feedback is then given to all staff. Lesson visits are carried out by SLT including the RE subject lead throughout the course of the year. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for RE in the school.

RE Curriculum Development Plan

Planning RE is part of our overall school curriculum planning. Feedback from the teachers will provide future direction of teaching RE within the guidelines. RE staff meetings, are an on-going process for the purpose of review and evaluation. Finances are made available from the CPD budget enabling staff to attend any relevant courses.

Resources for RE are reviewed yearly and also throughout the year when necessary and Inset days and twilights are provided for the future development of the RE Curriculum. The implementation of the completed Salford Diocese guidelines in Religious Education has been a key focus of RE within the School Development Plan. An update in RE resources will continue each year as necessary.

All teachers at St. Francis are mostly baptized Roman Catholic or are sympathetic to the teaching of the Catholic faith which permeates all aspects of our school life. Through example, commitment and teaching, the children are encouraged to develop a loving and trusting relationship with God, an experience which it is hoped will influence their attitudes to life and their relationship with other people. All teaching staff have the responsibility of teaching Religious Education to the children in their class. All staff are encouraged to attend relevant CPD opportunities. As a school we are aware that we have some staff who are not Catholic and these teacher's receive tailored support where needed.

Religious Dimension of the Whole School

As a Catholic school, St. Francis fulfils the legal requirements for the education with an 'overall religious perspective' as a faith community. The faith community is made up of the family, the parish and the school, which is instrumental in making Catholic Schools distinctive by attempting to generate a climate in the school that is permeated by the gospel spirit of freedom and love.

The Sacramental Programme, Religious Assemblies held and led by classes, liturgical services, Prayer and Liturgy, thanksgiving services and charity work contribute greatly to the school as a Catholic community.

Relationship with whole school documents, policies and statements

RE is related to all the school policies and documents in all areas of the curriculum. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each child is catered for through their own individual needs. Equal opportunities is the concern of all those involved within the school and we promote the development of caring attitudes to people of all communities.

Discipline within the school is firmly based upon the quality of relationships sought with children, parents and staff reflecting the Gospel values of love, respect and reconciliation. Our behaviour policy is based upon these values. We constantly strive to develop positive relationships with our parish priest, Fr Kevin.

We celebrate a 'Mission Award' during assemblies each week when one or two children are nominated by peers or staff for living in the footprint of St Francis. Sporting achievements are recognised and celebrated with certificates. We also celebrate a Star of the Week Award, chosen by the class teacher and awarded a certificate. The Caritas award is awarded at some assemblies, when a child has gone 'above and beyond' recognized by anyone in our school community. Each week the Chaplains present a 'Statement to Live By' during our Celebration of the Word assembly each Monday

We participate in charitable work within the local community and for global causes. Charities we annually raise money for include: CAFOD, Macmillan, Mary's Meals, Great Minds, Bright Futures, Cornerstone and Caritas.

Prayer

An essential part of the Catholic ethos of the school is the prayer life. The most important aspect of prayer for children is that they realise it is their way of communicating with God. Children are encouraged to pray in different ways according to their age and personal development. Children are introduced to a variety of different ways of praying:

- quiet reflection
- praying together
- spontaneous prayer
- writing own prayers
- prayers through music

- learning traditional Christian / Catholic prayers

Staff pray daily with the children. Through prayer, we endeavour to develop our relationship with God. All classes have a prayer area which may have displays of children's work, depending on the size of the area. This area changes with the liturgical year. Class prayers are established throughout the school and each teacher uses prayers appropriate to age and ability of the class, (see Prayer Progression document). Candles, pictures and objects are also used as a focus for prayer. Children take part in whole school assemblies where children and staff join together to pray. Children are encouraged to pray their own prayers. We have 'Prayer Leaders' in each class, each week, who will lead the prayers for the class. From Nursery upwards, these children will take part in the weekly Celebration of The Word. As the children progress up the school, they take more responsibility for the planning and delivery of the Celebration of The Word.

Home Links

During the year, parents and friends are invited to join us at many celebrations. Parents are always invited and welcomed to all our school and class celebrations which include school masses, celebrations and assemblies. During Advent each class has a travelling crib prayer bag that is sent home. This encourages families to pray together at home. During Lent, a purple prayer bag is sent home to encourage families to reflect and pray together, on their Lenten journey. A weekly newsletter includes a prayer, and highlights the Catholic Life of school, pertinent to the particular time of year.