



**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School,
Northfleet**

Religious Education Policy

Date policy reviewed: September 2026

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Philippians 4:9 'Whatever you have learnt, or received, or heard from me, or seen from me – put into practice.'

Our curriculum is driven by our school motto, 'striving for excellence in the Light of God'. It has been developed to ensure that all learners experience opportunities that meet their needs and challenge them to reach their full potential.

Our curriculum fully embraces the rich cultural diversity of the community that we serve. As such, our curriculum recognises and celebrates the different backgrounds of our pupils. This allows children to learn about their own cultural identity and also enhances the cultural capital of the whole school community.

Our aim at St Joseph's is that the children will learn and respect British Values and base their lives around the gospel values. We continually work towards a community that follows in the footsteps of Christ in all that we do living out the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

Each one of God's children at St Joseph's is praised, celebrated and made to feel important; regardless of their gender, ethnicity, social backgrounds or special needs. We welcome differences within our school community and challenge all to reach their full potential; learning in God's love.

St Joseph's Curriculum Statement

1.0 Policy Introduction

The purpose of Religious Education at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is to nurture the Catholic Faith, and its teachings, in our children. By helping them to live this faith, we hope to encourage our children to develop a better relationship with God and others around them. Central to our ethos are the opportunities for prayer and worship which lie at the heart of our faith. We will endeavour to promote and encourage these at every level, together with the skills and attitudes necessary to live out the Christian message in the modern world. Religious Education (R.E) should promote pupils' cultural, mental, emotional, spiritual and physical development and prepare children for the opportunities and responsibilities that are to come. This should be in the context of a moral and ethical Christian framework. This policy sets out our school's agenda and the way in which we will nurture our pupil's faith.

1.1 Introduction

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School our Religious Education Policy encompasses our mission statement and our School Aims. We believe that the whole of the educational provision in a Catholic Primary School is rooted in a religious understanding of life based on the Gospel. Worship and Religious Education in the classroom constitute the specific, but not exclusive, Religious Education provision. For the purposes of this

document, Religious Education is considered as the professional area of the curriculum flowing to and from the life and values that the school seeks to proclaim and celebrate. As a Catholic school we offer Religious Education as an important contribution to the faith development of pupils. It may also be received, in our classrooms, by some pupils, as catechesis, deepening and enhancing their personal faith, or for some as evangelisation, this being the first time they have been presented personally, with the truths of living faith.

1.2 Rationale

At St Joseph's we believe that Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum as we strive to proclaim and live the Gospel Values. We see our role as supporting parents in leading their children to a greater understanding of who God is and to celebrating, with deeper faith and more understanding, the liturgy of the Church. We believe that Religious Education provides children with opportunities to recognise, affirm and celebrate the gifts and talents they and others have been given and to develop the skills which will enable them to think and question more deeply and lead, ultimately to a greater understanding and appreciation of their faith. The Gospel Values are at the core of all we do as a school community, not only are they displayed throughout the classrooms but can be found in the actions, thoughts and behaviours of all members of our school family.

Our School Values

Respect
Joy
Love
Kindness
Belonging
Wisdom
Understanding

Each week during our Celebration of the Word, we take a special moment to honour one child from every year group who has beautifully demonstrated one of our core school values: Belonging, Joy, Kindness, Respect, Wisdom, Understanding, or Love.

These children are celebrated in front of their peers and awarded a special wristband that proudly displays the value they've shown in action. Their names are also shared with parents and carers on Class Dojo, allowing the whole school community to join in recognising their wonderful contribution.

This celebration is a joyful reminder of how our values come to life through the actions of our children, helping to build a caring and faith-filled school environment.

2.0 Religious Education Curriculum

2.1 Aims for the Teaching of Religious Education

Our subject specific aims for the teaching of Religious Education, complementing our general curricular aims, are to enable children to:

- gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church and the ways in which it seeks to express the significance of human life while respecting the rights of people to hold beliefs which are different from their own.
- examine their own feelings, views and responses in the light of their knowledge and understanding.

- be helped towards an awareness of who they are – a unique person endowed with the gifts of the spirit.

Towards the realisation of these aims we have regard to the guidance provided by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisors.

2.2 Content

At St Joseph's, the Religious Education curriculum is guided by the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The content and structure of our RE teaching are designed to meet the requirements set out in the RECD, ensuring a rich and meaningful faith education for all pupils.

All year groups are now using the agreed scheme *Lighting the Path* (EYFS and KS1), which aligns with the updated RECD. The recent move for KS2 to the new scheme in September 2026 means that we now have a consistent and unified approach to Religious Education throughout the school.

This transition to *Lighting the Path* marks an exciting development in our RE provision, ensuring that our curriculum continues to evolve in line with national guidance while remaining rooted in Catholic teaching and values.

2.3 Curriculum Organisation

Programmes of study must comply with the expectations of the RECD, and subsequent versions. At St Joseph's, we use the Diocesan approved scheme "*Lighting the Path*".

Teaching of Other Religions:

- The RECD contains an expectation that Catholic schools should teach about other religions in all phases from Early Years Foundation to Year 6.
- It is expected that pupils in Catholic schools learn about and from other faith traditions as this will help to prepare them for living as full members of our diverse society.

2.4 Teaching Styles

As in other curricular areas, the range of teaching styles may vary and are used as appropriate. These may include whole class teaching, co-operative group work, or individual tasks. There is no specialist teaching in RE. Each class teacher is responsible for the planning, teaching (with an emphasis on our class teachers inspiring and delivering thought provoking lessons) and assessment (with opportunities across lessons) of RE in their own class.

As a school community we aim to promote teaching styles which:

- value lines of enquiry and questioning, as much as the answers we seek;
- value pupils' thoughtful responses, imagination and reflection, through the provision of time for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns;
- enable pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning, the lives that they live and the world in which we inhabit;
- encourage pupils to reflect on their learning to a wider frame of reference – for example, asking 'why' 'how' and 'where' as well as 'what'; and
- enable children to explore feelings as well as ideas.

We encourage our teachers to plan a range of activities to help children meet their learning targets, including, but not confined to, writing, poetry, artwork, drama, photographs and lots of discussions with children's questions and responses/insights at the centre of our reflective practice. Our teaching staff have been equipped with the time, rationale and ability to move away from evidencing learning in class books for the sake of it-instead the evidence might be in the big class book or seen in our assessment. We must still ensure there are opportunities for high quality writing in each child's individual book.

Our aim is to achieve a balance between writing based lesson and thoughtful meaningful discussion, all of which shall be for the purpose of cultivating children who possess the moral courage and faith as they explore our world today.

2.6 Resources

Classroom resources are the responsibility of the classroom teacher. This includes resources from the newly adopted Lighting the Path scheme of work.

As in other curricular areas, class teachers often use their own resources dependent upon the needs of the specific topic and their own particular style of teaching.

Each Key Stage 2 class has at least 20 Bibles which they use regularly. Each of the Key Stage 1 classes and the EYFS class have their own picture Bible. Year 2 also has 16x The Lion Bible for Children.

Class teachers are encouraged to, and avail of the opportunity for, cross curricular links within their lessons so that they might inspire all of our pupils, respective of learning style or interest. This includes linking Catholic Social Teaching to other curriculum areas.

Resources and artefacts about other world faiths (Judaism, Islam, Sikhism) are also available.

A resource that is much appreciated and valued is the time and energy of the Parish Priest as well as the parishioners themselves who support and assist the school. The church is also visited regularly by all classes as part of the teaching of Religious Education as well as for Mass and other services throughout the year.

2.7 Time

As a Catholic School, in accordance with the Bishops' requirement we dedicate 10% of our curriculum time to the discrete teaching of Religious Education. Collective worship and hymn practise is timetabled separately. (See class timetables and Prayer and Liturgy Policy. This equates to 2 ½ hours per week of teaching time plus additional time allocation for Mass, Hymn Practice, Prayer and Liturgy etc.

2.8 Planning

There are six topics to be covered in each year group and each topic lasts for a half term. As in other curricular areas, Short- Term planning is also the responsibility of each class teacher who will:

- allocate time for each learning outcome, which has been taken from the New Assessment framework, to be achieved.
- select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children that reflect the different learning styles, needs and inquisitive minds of our pupils.
- indicate the focus and method of assessment, prayer life and culture of the lesson.

- Provide 'Big Questions' that challenge the understanding, knowledge and ultimately beliefs of our children so that they might grow in their faith journey.

2.8 Adaptive Teaching

As with all other areas of the curriculum, the purpose of adaptive teaching in Religious Education is:

- to enable children to succeed in the set task or activity;
- to challenge children beyond their comfort zone of knowledge, understanding and skills;
- to enable children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these.

Adaptive teaching is planned into short-term plans by the class teacher.

2.9 Pupils with Special Needs & Equal Opportunities.

The curriculum at St Joseph's is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If a child is identified as having a special need we do all we can to meet these individual needs in accordance with current school policy which follows the guidance contained in the SEN Code of Practice. As a Catholic school, in the truest fulfilment of Christ's message, we ensure that all children are able to access our lessons and grow in their faith.

Within RE, opportunities are provided for all children to gain knowledge and understanding regardless of academic ability or religious experience. Each child is valued for his/her uniqueness and is encouraged to fulfil his/her potential regardless of race, belief or sex. At St Joseph's we provide an atmosphere of mutual respect enabling all our members to share their experience willingly.

3.0 Assessment

3.1 Assessment

Assessment provides pupils and teachers with a clear understanding of pupils' attainment - that is their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do improve. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith.

Assessment of RE is both formal and informal. Assessment is ongoing throughout a topic, with a record of children's understanding. Assessment of RE may take the form of:

- general observation of children engaged in classroom tasks and activities;
- observation of contributions made to classroom displays;
- review of end of task, activity or lesson;
- conversations with individuals or groups;
- marking of more formal written work.

A record is kept by the class teacher of those children who are achieving above or below expectations. These are reviewed by the Subject Leader who engages with conversation with class teachers about what has informed their judgements and the next steps children need to take.

At St Joseph's, we have decided to use the language of assessment in other core subjects (working towards, expected and greater depth) to record children's progress against the Bishops Conference Levels in order to engage in the assessment/planning cycle.

Each Lighting the Path lesson contains a Lesson assessment focus. The assessment focus describes the main assessment point for the lesson and relates to the main RED linked outcome for that lesson. The independent task in each lesson provides evidence for the assessment focus. Lighting the Path also supports assessment through the Review of Branch lesson. This lesson focuses mainly on the mandatory outcomes from the Understand way of knowing from the RED. As well as helping to assess individual outcomes, the Review of branch lesson helps to ensure that children are making connections between branches and developing the progressive and cumulative knowledge required across the year.

3.2 Levels of Attainment

The Attainment Target levels correspond to those provided for in other subjects of the school curriculum. Each child's progress and attainment is recorded at the end of each term and the terms topics are evaluated to inform future planning. This summative information is entered onto the school's records and judgements are based upon teacher's ongoing formative assessments.

The purpose of the attainment levels is to support children's learning by offering an account of educational progression. They will help teachers to make accurate judgements on pupil's achievement, to sum up what pupils have learned so far and to identify how pupils can make the next step in learning. They will also contribute to the quality of Religious Education provision within the school.

4.0 Expectations

In line with national expectations, the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 are anticipated to work at least an Expected level of attainment. Discussions shall be undertaken to explore children who are working below this level (Working Towards) and what can be done to address this. Furthermore, those identified at Greater Depth shall be challenged and supported in order that they are suitably educated as they deepen their spirituality and understating.

5.0 Recording

Recording provides evidence of achievement. This may take many forms:

- notes from observations;
- written comments on children's work;
- visual evidence – photographs, displays, videos or recording of drama or celebrations;
- class/school portfolios;
- pupils' self-assessment.

The class 'Big Books' provide an ongoing form of assessment that help to inform the Subject leader, SLT and class members of where learning has taken place, the response of children and the direction of future planning.

6.0 Reporting

There are four dimensions to reporting in Religious Education. Reporting:

- provides feedback to pupils on their achievement and progress;
- informs colleagues of the achievement of individual pupils and the areas studied by a class and year group;
- informs parents of the progress and achievement of their children;

- informs parents, governors, parish and external agencies of the content and quality of Religious Education being provided and the achievements of the pupils.

7.0 Role of the Subject Leader

Each half-term, as for other core curricular subjects, the subject leader will collect evaluations of each topic from class teachers. These will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the planning and the teaching and learning strategies used in RE, throughout the school. The subject leader records any common issues and passes on information about these to the Headteacher. The subject leader also observes the teaching of RE in each class. This is followed by a discussion between the teacher and the subject leader, noting the strengths and areas for development.

8.0 The right of withdrawal from Religious Education and/or Collective Worship

Parents are permitted, by law, to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or collective worship. This request should be made in writing to the Headteacher.