

St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Date Written	September 2024
Approved	November 2024
Reviewed or amended	September 2025

Mission Statement

'Achieving excellence together, with God's love.'

At St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

we strive to live out the Gospel in the way Jesus teaches us to

We celebrate the diversity of our school community and value each person as unique;
made in God's image and likeness

We work together, through God's love, to enable our pupils to achieve excellence in all
aspects of their education

Person responsible: Mr Hoyes (RE Leader & Head of School)

Linked Policies: Prayer and Liturgy Policy, RSE Policy

Aims of Religious Education:

Catholic schools, with RE at their core, exist in order to "help parents, priests and teachers to hand on the Deposit of Faith in its fullness to a new generation of young people so that they may come to understand the richness of the Catholic faith, and thereby be drawn into a deeper communion with Christ in his Church." The aims of Religious Education are rooted in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD):

- To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
- To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
- To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;

- To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
- To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

Intent

The outcome of excellent Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

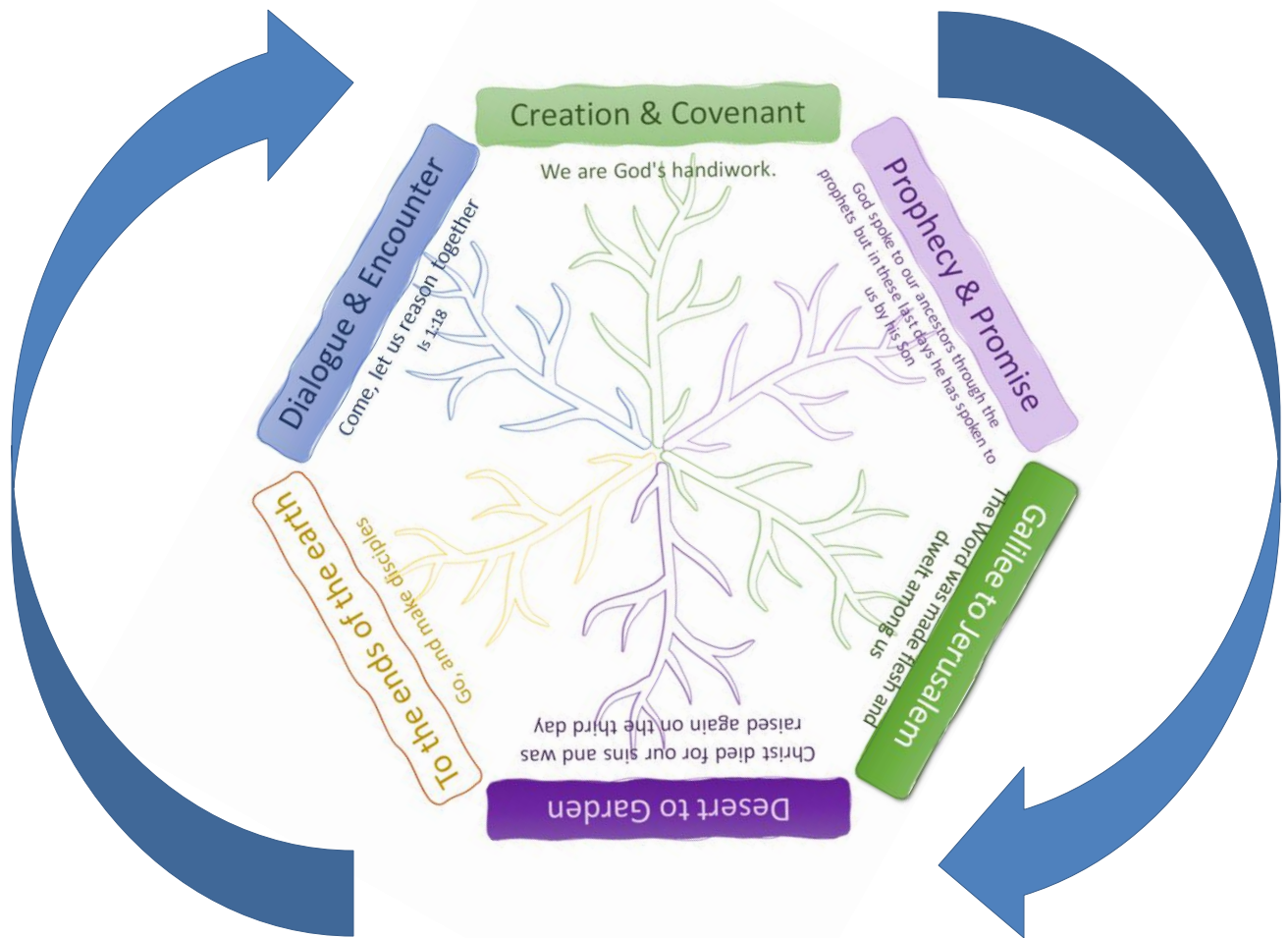
Curriculum time allocation

RE is a core subject. In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does not include daily acts of prayer and liturgy (See prayer and liturgy policy).

Programme of Study

The programme of study for religious education is that which is stipulated in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2023). This directory has a framework with four structural elements: knowledge lenses, ways of knowing, expected outcomes, curriculum branches.

- Knowledge lenses set out the object of study for pupils; they indicate what should be known: hear, believe, celebrate, live, dialogue and encounter.
- Ways of knowing set out the skills that pupils should be developing as they progress through their curriculum journey: understands, discern & respond.
- Expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing.
- Curriculum branches are the way this programme of study presents its model curriculum. The model curriculum presents the expected outcomes in six curriculum branches that correspond to the six half-terms of a school year.



Implementation

Religious education is an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and rigour as other disciplines. In line with other core subjects, the RE curriculum is taught through the application of high quality pedagogy to enable pupils to know and remember more in the long term.

In addition, we ensure that high quality Religious Education is taught not only effectively but that can be distinguished from other core subjects due the unique RE specific pedagogy which is applied.

Other Faiths

An entire unit, 'Dialogue and Encounter' is allocated to teaching pupils about other faiths beyond Catholicism and Christianity. Curiosity, respect and tolerance for those of different faiths of no faith is promoted throughout our curriculum.

Gather

The start of an RE lesson should feel special and be unique compared with that of another curriculum subject. Each RE lesson should begin with a 'Gather activity' akin to that used in a Celebration of the Word – see prayer and liturgy policy.

- Wherever possible, children to be seated around a focal point and use this time for stillness and reflection (5-10 minutes)
- For older pupils, children may start with their prayer journals as quiet music is played.

Examples of 'Gather' activities:

- The sign of the cross
- A powerful image that provokes deeper thinking.
- A powerful question linked to a piece of news/image (i.e., What would Jesus do?).
- A starter song with actions.
- Prayer journaling; (perhaps with the lights off and a tea light on each table)
- Quiet meditation...Imagine they are walking with Jesus... Imagine if Jesus comes to you and asks you to follow him
- Contemplation of scripture
- Reciting a prayer of the Church

Think and Link

In RE lessons, pupils should be provided with the opportunity to link what they are learning in their current lesson to their wider understanding of the teachings of the Church and the Gospels. Pupils should be encouraged to draw upon their wider knowledge of church teachings, the words of significant figures of faith, scripture, prayers of the Church, acts of worship, hymns and prayers to inform their work and to make sense of what they have learned. There should be resources available in the classroom to support pupils to do so.

Assessment

Each teacher keeps a class record of pupils' progress on the RE assessment tracker spreadsheet. They track progress against the diocesan attainment descriptors for each year group. These assessments are submitted to the diocese termly.

For each unit of work the knowledge organiser is stuck in each child's book. This specifies the key knowledge that is to be learned that topic under each of the four knowledge lenses and the key vocabulary the pupils are to learn. Teachers use knowledge organisers as a

tool to assess pupil progress by highlighting when key knowledge has been demonstrated and key vocabulary applied, these are referred to each lesson to enable children to understand and reflect on their learning journey.

In the EYFS, evidence is recorded in the class RE 'Floor Book'. Photographic evidence is not the main form of recording in EYFS. Examples include, mark making, children's work, answers to questions posed by the teacher, children writing themselves/teacher scribing if necessary.

All year groups to have a 'reflection' challenge for pupils, at the end of each lesson. These take different forms age and reflection dependent. Younger children may discuss answers with the class teacher whereas older pupils are encouraged to access scripture, Church teachings, the writing of significant figures of faith, hymns and the words of prayers to enable them to understand, interpret, discern and respond effectively.

Feedback/Marking is rigorous and in line with the marking policy and all pupils should have the opportunity to edit their work and respond to feedback. Feedback reflects the learning objective for the lesson, knowledge lenses, ways of knowing and the attainment descriptors.

In Upper KS2, **prayer journals** also support teaching and learning as a time for stillness.

Quantity and expectations are in line with core subjects and progression across the school is evident.

Assessments are in line with core subject expectations and linked to Attainment Targets. Teachers update the RE assessment tracker based upon the children's work termly in order to provide a clear picture of pupil progress.

Internal and external RE moderation meetings are held throughout the year with schools from across our local RE network.

Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year in line with other core subjects.

Virtues and Character Education

We follow guidance from Leeds Diocese. Through the teaching of Catholic character education, a shared vision of life based on Christ Centered virtues is reinforced to further support the flourishing of pupils, young people and all members of the school community. St Francis Xavier is proud to be teaching the children to be virtuous and responsible citizens.

Policy review.

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the RE leader, governors and staff and updated September 2025.

This Policy links to our RE Good Practice Guide