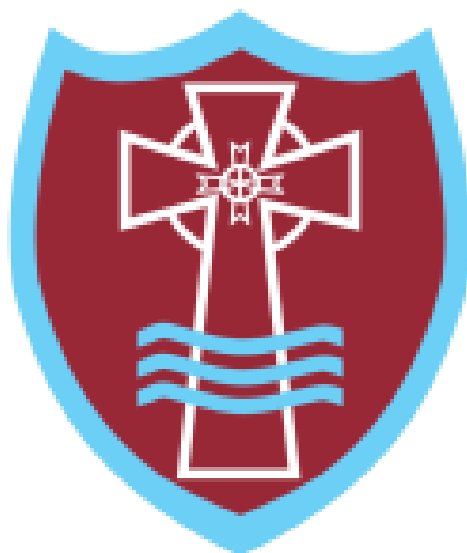


# **St Aidan's Catholic Primary Academy**



## **Religious education Policy**

**Amended: September 2023**

**Review date: September 2025**



## **Mission Statement**

“Together we all enjoy learning, achieving, sharing and praying. Let Jesus’ love shine through in everything we do”

## **Our school vision statement**

Here at St Aidan’s we are passionate about our children being happy, safe and healthy.

We aim for children to learn in an inclusive, engaging environment; enabling them to be lifelong learners who know more, remember more and can do more in the wider world.

## **Introduction**

The primary purpose of Religious Education is to come to know and understand God’s revelation which is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. St Aidan’s as a Catholic school, is ‘a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation.’ *In the person of Christ, the deepest meaning of what it is to be human — that we are created by God and through the Holy Spirit united with Christ in his Incarnation — is discovered. This revelation is known through the scriptures and the tradition of the Church. Religious Education helps the pupil to know and experience the meaning of this revelation in his or her own life and the life of the community which is the Church. Hence ‘the promotion of the human person is our goal’.* RECD,2012

*Religious Education teaches about the faith in the context of a school which proclaims the Gospel, and invites the individual to respond to the message of Christ. As the individual responds to this invitation, growth in faith and knowledge helps the pupil to respond to the call to holiness and understand the fullness of what it is to be human.* RECD,2012

At St Aidan’s we believe that Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum as we strive to proclaim the Gospel Values. We see our role as supporting parents in leading their children to a greater understanding of who God is, to reflect spiritually and to celebrate 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 faith.

We aim to make prayer worship and liturgy a real growth experience and to help develop the faith of each individual and their relationship with God.

## **Those responsible for Religious Education in our schools should:**

- Be prepared to give living witness to what they teach.
- Recognise that they share in the teaching office of the Church exercised in the person of the local bishop and enshrined in the trust deed of the school.

- Fulfil their professional responsibilities with regard to all that develops and enhances the life of the Catholic school.
- Plan and teach schemes of work that are engaging and accessible so that all pupils may progress appropriately in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- Have high expectations of all their pupils.
- Ensure that 10% of the curriculum is devoted to Religious Education.
- Ensure that Religious Education contributes positively to the broad and balanced curriculum of a Catholic school through cooperation and dialogue with other subjects.
- Take care continually to deepen their own knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- Take seriously the duty of every Catholic to form his or her conscience.
- Be given opportunities for their own spiritual and professional development as Catholic educators.

### **Aims**

#### **The Aims of Religious Education as stated in the RE Curriculum Directory are:**

- 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.

#### **More specifically our aims are:**

- To foster in our children a reverence for God, His word and a true understanding of the Catholic faith.
- To give the children the opportunity to experience the love of God and Jesus Christ in their lives.
- To develop an awareness of their uniqueness and value as individuals.
- To encourage an appreciation of the wonders of creation.

- To provide the children with occasions and opportunities to experience love, care, concern, co-operation, respect, trust, honesty, forgiveness, peace and truthfulness.
- To provide, as a school community, an example of Christian witness and, through this, reverence for God and respect for each other.
- To develop opportunities for contemplation, reflection and the growth of a personal prayer life.
- To help the children to explore the beliefs, values, way of life of the Catholic tradition - the origins of the Faith, most specifically Jesus Christ, the Bible, the Liturgical Year, the Mass, Sacraments, traditional prayers, the lives of the saints and other people who have made a difference in the world because of their faith.
- To foster relationships between home, school and the parish to encourage commitment to the Catholic faith.

### **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.*  
RECD,2012

***“The task of handing on the faith to future generations is both the privilege and responsibility of the local Church. Its primary purpose is to bring young people to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.”*** Cardinal Basil Hume

### **The Religious Education Programme**

To fulfil the above aims, the ‘Come and See’ programme is followed as recommended by the Diocese of Brentwood. Religious Education is taught through the process of *Explore, Reveal, Respond*. This takes account of “what to believe entails”: the human **search** for meaning, God’s initiative in **Revelation** and the individual’s **response** in faith. This pattern is outlined in both the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the Curriculum Directory.

Curriculum time allocation per week is 10%. This does not include Collective Worship. Allocation of teaching time to Other Faiths is 5 hours (2 weeks’ R.E. time).

### **Teaching and Learning**

Religious Education is taught through interactive learning using the ‘Come and See’ Religious Education programme, which is approved by the Diocese of Brentwood. ‘Come and See’ integrates the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Levels of Attainment and the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. (RED)

The newly revised RED will be rolled out throughout the school from September 2023 to September 2025 embedding the new curriculum. We begin with implementing the RED in the Early Years Foundation stage.

## **Curriculum plan (RED):**

September 2023 – EYFS

September 2024 – KS1

September 2025 – KS2

Children explore the mystery of Faith through Scripture and Tradition. There are three topics taught each term and two 'other faith' units; Judaism and Hinduism/Sikhism/Islam (These are studied on a three year cycle).

Each topic follows a process of three key areas, which enable all pupils to: explore, reveal and respond to their understanding and experiences of religion. Each lesson begins in a reflective way for example by; lighting a candle, saying a prayer or singing a hymn.

### **Religious Education teaching will include:**

- Input from the Teacher Lead lessons (given by the teacher to the whole class or groups within the class, through which the teacher introduces or develops knowledge, concepts, skills or attitudes) are fundamental and can initiate dialogue between teacher and pupils.
- Discussion between teacher and pupils and pupils themselves Opportunities will be provided for the pupils to relate to one another's experiences, reflection, recalling their understanding, reviewing and celebrating their experiences. Pupils are encouraged to link the learning to their own lives and comment on their mission going forward as a result of their learning.
- Appropriate practical work All pupils will engage in practical activities which allow them to respond actively through, for example, creative play, movement, drama, painting, drawing, storytelling, reflecting, listening, prayer, worshipping and serving. The amount of time spent and the type of activities provided will vary according to the needs and attainments of the pupils.
- Appropriate written work Pupils will have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of their topics of study through written methods as well as practical activities. Pupils will complete a variety of written activities such as; writing individual prayers, retelling biblical events, creating mind-maps, diary entries, newspaper articles, stories and comprehensions.

### **Reflection Areas**

Each classroom has a Prayer Focus/Prayer Table. These are changed to reflect each topic of study and display the topic title and key vocabulary. Children are encouraged to make use of the area throughout the day.

Items included may be:

- Fabrics to reflect the liturgical calendar,
- Artefacts,
- Pictures,
- Crucifix,
- Cross,
- Statues,
- Photographs,
- Candles,

- Bibles,
- Morning Prayer, Prayer Before Meals, and Evening Prayer,
- Our Father and Hail Mary prayers,
- Mission Statement,
- Spiritual Journaling books

### **Planning**

Planning is produced on the Come and See programme's medium-term planning template. R.E. is timetabled for 2.5 hours per week and each topic is studied for about four weeks. Parents are given a termly newsletter which outlines the topics to be covered that term and ways in which they can support pupils in their learning. The suggested dates for each topic are made available at the start of each academic year.

- Explore – one week to complete
- Reveal – two weeks to complete
- Respond – one week to complete

The Big Question for each topic is displayed in each class for children to deliberate on. Opportunities are planned within the topic to reflect on this question.

### **Scripture**

At St Aidan's we understand that Christ is revealed to pupils' through scripture and it is only by having a deep understanding of scripture that they can truly come and to know and love him. We therefore put a great focus on deepening children's understanding of scripture.

### **Marking**

Two to three written pieces of R.E. work per topic, from the Reveal section and, is quality marked including a next step and the children are given time to respond to these questions to deepen their understanding and move them on in their learning. Teachers are encouraged to use next step stickers and use the driver words for more in depth marking.

### **Assessment**

Each teacher has the responsibility for maintaining records on the children in their class. Teachers will undertake the Diocesan recommended assessment procedures using the criteria listed in AT1: Learning about religion, AT2: Learning from religion and AT3: Analysis & Evaluation.

Teachers can use written evidence from pupils to assess how well they have understood a topic. However, teachers may also look for a change in the behaviour or attitude of some pupils and use class participation as a way of assessing pupil progress.

As they progress through each topic, teachers will mark the children's work and assess them against the R.E. Attainment Targets. Pupils will have an overview of the topic Learning Objectives which is stuck into their books at the beginning of each topic and both Teachers and Pupils can use this as an assessment tool. Teacher's also use the 'Big Question' for each topic to assess what the children know at the beginning of the topic and then at the end. They complete post it notes which are put on display to demonstrate their prior knowledge of the topic and can update their responses throughout the topic as they progress.

All of the children's targets are on Target Tracker and teachers update this each half term.

### **Monitoring**

There will be opportunities for the R.E subject leader to monitor the teaching and learning which takes place in the classroom through a variety of ways including lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutiny and pupil interviews. Discussions will take place between the subject leader and the class teacher whenever necessary to provide feedback and offer support. Feedback will always be passed onto the senior leadership team.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In R.E, all pupils, whatever their ability, are able to make progress as the 'Come and See' syllabus provides a broad and balanced education for all. The school has already established links with the wider community and regularly encourages the pupils to investigate and understand the feast days and festivals celebrated by other religions.

Pupils are encouraged to attain their full potential regardless of race, gender or class. Materials used reflect a multi-cultural society of women and men. Teachers ensure that no particular group or gender dominates the use of equipment or other aspects of teaching and learning situations.

### **Reporting**

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

### **Resources**

A wide range of material resources are used in the school to supplement 'Come and See'. Each classroom is equipped with the 'Come and See' RE Programme teacher's book (appropriate to year/group), as well as on-line access to the 'Come and See' website resources which we ensured to download prior to the closure of the website in September 2023.

All teachers also have access to Ten Ten resources. Ten Ten is used for weekly collective worship and daily class prayers where the children also participate in spiritual journaling.

### **Music**

We use a range of music resources from Project and Play, Come and See CD's and Ten Ten resources.

### **Inclusion**

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme. An inclusive curriculum which aims to meet the needs of all pupils is provided, where the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of every learner matters. It is recognised that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities, and so suitable learning opportunities for all children are provided by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

### **Other Religions**

All pupils learn about two world faiths per year, Judaism and then either Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism are studied on a rolling programme. Pupils will experience other religions every 3 years so resources and content will be varied.

Other faiths are celebrated at the back of the children's R.E books.

### **Home, School and Parish Links**

We recognise the importance of parents as the child's first teacher and their role in faith development. Parents and staff do everything possible to work in close partnership. There are many opportunities for parents to engage in school life.

We seek to develop and nurture the Catholic faith of our children. We strive to bring pupils to a fuller understanding and knowledge of the Roman Catholic tradition.

Parents are:

- Given a warm welcome when they visit our school.
- Given termly curriculum overviews which inform them of the topics covered in class, as well as ways they can support their child's learning.
- Given a verbal report on their child's R.E. development during Parents Evenings.
- Given a written report on their child's R.E. development at the end of the year.
- Given opportunities to support their child during First Holy Communion preparation by attending meetings and working at home on aspects of the programme.
- Given opportunities to be involved in all charity activities during the year for school, the wider community or for charities.
- Given a monthly newsletter with school updates and points for reflection.



It is hoped that through these and other charitable activities, some of which are chosen by the children, they will become aware of the needs of others, locally, nationally and globally, developing sensitivity, generosity and a sense of responsibility towards their neighbours in Christ.

### **Catholic Social Teaching**

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is rooted in Scripture, formed by the wisdom of Church leaders, and influenced by grassroots movements. It is our moral compass, guiding us on how to live out our faith in the world. Our faith calls us to love God and to love our neighbours in every situation, especially our sisters and brothers living in poverty. Following in the footsteps of Christ, we hope to make present in our unjust and broken world, the justice, love and peace of God.

A monthly CST newsletter is shared with parents to highlight the areas of focus each month and how to share that in prayer at home with families. Each week we celebrate in award assembly a CST award where a child is chosen who has been demonstrating a CST principle.

There is no fixed or official list of principles. Different organisations and writers include different ones. However, they will include the same ideas and beliefs. At St Aidan's we are guided by the following 9 principles: Human Dignity, The Common Good, Participation, Subsidiarity, Stewardship, Solidarity, Preferential Option for the Poor, Distributive Justice and Promoting Peace. Catholic social teaching is used where possible across the curriculum.

We teach our children to be thoughtful about and challenging of the world's organisations and communities, we must work together to build a better world for the future. "Love and charity, are service, helping others, serving others. There are many people who spend their lives in this way, in the service of others. ... When you forget yourself and think of others, this is love! And with the washing of the feet the Lord teaches us to be servants, and above all, servants as He was a servant to us, for every one of us." **Pope Francis - Jubilee audience, March 12, 2016**

### **Role of the RE Leader**

- To ensure that Religious Education is given 10% of the curriculum time.
- To encourage and support colleagues to obtain the CCRS certificate.
- To ensure new initiatives from The Vatican, Diocese and Parish are fully embraced and implemented within school life.
- To work collaboratively with the Head Teacher to ensure that Collective Worship, Liturgy and the prayer life of the school remains central to the school's mission, including appropriate Feast days and Holy Days of Obligation.
- To ensure that Religious education contributes positively to the broad and balanced curriculum of the school through co-operation and dialogue with other subject leaders.
- To ensure that the R.E. Programme ***Come and See*** recommended by the Bishop of the diocese is used effectively.
- To emphasise the importance of pupils being able to apply the AT1 and AT2 skills, processes and concepts learnt.

- To review regularly methods of assessment and recording pupils' achievement in Religious Education.
- To undertake the necessary reading and Inset appropriate to the Religious Education Subject Leader.
- To maintain Religious Education Leader's file ensuring all aspects are kept up to date and all reports are copied to the Head Teacher.
- To prepare an Action Plan to ensure the focus of Religious Education is promoted.
- To prepare and lead professional development in Religious Education.
- To induct NQT's and those new to Catholic education into the distinctive Catholic nature of the school.
- To advise and assist staff where appropriate.
- To inform Parents and advise Governors on progress in teaching and learning in Religious Education.
- To provide, in consultation with the Head Teacher and staff, additional appropriate resources for Religious Education.
- To carry out a Religious Education Inventory and resource lists.
- To monitor the standards and progress of teaching and learning in Religious Education across the school, reporting to the Head Teacher and Leadership team (includes reviewing plans, lessons, resources and pupils' work).
- To develop and implement yearly, initiatives for Raising Achievement linked to School Improvement Plans. Action Plan and agree project to be prepared and finalised at the end of Summer Term for commencement in the next academic year.
- To liaise with appropriate outside Agencies both within the Diocese, Deanery, Parish and wider community to ensure the promotion of Religious Education within the school.
- The Post Holder is also required to:
  - Promote and support the Catholic ethos and mission statement of the school.
  - Undertake duties set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
  - Undertake such particular duties which the head teacher.

**This policy has been agreed by:**

Signed:.....  
 Headteacher



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Signed:..... *T. Holden* ..... Chair of Governors

To be reviewed in September 2025