



ST CLARE

Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership

Religious Education Policy



St Wilfrid's Primary – A Catholic Voluntary Academy

'Everybody Matters'

Review Date: July 2026

Date Shared with Staff: July 2025

Mission Statement:

‘Everybody Matters’

1. The context of this Religious Education policy

Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum. As a Catholic school, our aim is that every child achieves their full potential as an individual made in the image and likeness of God. This encompasses every dimension of the child: spiritual, moral, social, academic, physical and artistic. Our vision is that children will learn to be good citizens of the world, enriching society through a positive contribution to their community and beyond. Our curriculum is the vehicle through which we support and nurture children to achieve this potential. We believe that knowledge empowers and enables children to feel and be successful, and that this is the entitlement of every child.

‘Everyone Matters’ at St. Wilfrid’s Catholic Primary School and we show this, by aiming to be like Jesus. We work together to make our school and community a welcoming and happy place to learn. As children of God, we care for each other and always try to do our best. In partnership with our parents and Parishes, we hope to lead children to a greater understanding of who God is and to celebrating with deeper faith and understanding, the liturgy of the Church.

We understand that all children have their own unique relationship with God, for some this has been nurtured and developed within the home, whilst others receive their first awareness of the Church community at school. We want our children to know that they are loved by God and to love God, themselves and each other.

Rationale of Religious Education

‘In the life of faith of the Catholic school, religious education plays a central and vital part. At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education. Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school. We are committed to classroom RE, then, because all pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them (1 Peter 3.15). Religious education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.’

(Statement from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales 2000)

Aims of religious education

- Promote a knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life;
- Promote a knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose;
- Promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious beliefs and practice.
- Ensure a curriculum which takes account of the spiritual and moral development of every individual.
- Ensure that each child begins to understand that the knowledge and concepts he/she acquires will help in the stewardship of God's kingdom.
- Foster loving relationships between children and all members of the school community.
- Support home and parish in their work to develop faith in each child.
- Foster respect, understanding and tolerance between all the cultures and traditions represented not only in the school or its immediate environment but in the world as a whole.
- Relate other areas of the curriculum and all aspects of life to our faith, particularly Global Education.
- Develop an understanding of our world and the inter-dependence of individuals, groups and nations, and the need for justice for all.

Outcome of religious education

The outcome of excellent religious education is religiously literate and consciously 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 recognise the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Religious education as the heart of the curriculum

Religious education in a Catholic school is a core subject and is given the careful planning and preparation time that is employed to other core subjects. It is allocated 10% of the teaching week (2 hours in Key Stage 1 and 2 ½ hours in Key Stage 2). This 10% should not be allocated in one block but should be split over as many days as possible so that children are constantly being brought back to the religious purpose of our school. Religious education is an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and rigour as other disciplines.

3. Responsibility

(a) Governance

The governors, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

- R.E. is central to the Catholic life of St Wilfrid's and therefore is in line with the guidance set out by the Religious Education Directory
- The R.E. subject leader supported by the Head teacher is responsible for RE in the school.
- The R.E. policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- There is a budget for R.E. that reflects its centrality to the life of St Wilfrid's Catholic school.

(b) Head teacher

The head teacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures that:

- R.E. is central to the Catholic life of St Wilfrid's school and therefore is in line with the guidance set out by Religious Education Directory and Prayer and Liturgy Directory.
- Those responsible for R.E. in St Wilfrid's school have been given appropriate training and formation to ensure that all guidance is followed and adhered to.
- There are suitable resources for R.E. in St Wilfrid's school.

(c) Religious Education Coordinator

Those responsible for Religious Education ensure that:

- To be responsible to the Head teacher and colleagues for the monitoring of teaching, assessment and planning of Religious Education based on the development of the children at each stage.
- Monitoring occurs in order to support staff and should include classroom observation, book scrutiny, planning and discussion with pupils. To track data and notice trends.
- To manage resources and facilities for Religious Education.
- To liaise with the Diocesan Department for Education particularly through attendance at the Coordinators' meetings, and inform the Head teacher and colleagues of current standards and developments within Religious Education
- Participate in Diocesan Religious Education Subject Leaders meetings and conferences.
- To advise individual colleagues and induct new members of staff as required on the Religious Education process and teaching methods. To lead regular Professional Development for Staff in school.

- To ensure that cross-curricular concerns such as literacy skills, multi-cultural issues, equal opportunity, the use of Information Technology and PHSE are reflected in Religious Education.
- In consultation with the Head teacher to communicate with parents, governors and the parish community regarding issues associated with Religious Education.
- Working with the Head teacher and colleagues, to undertake a regular audit/review of Religious Education in line with the school development plan.
- To be familiar with the current inspection framework and to consult with the Head teacher to complete the school's CSED document.

4. Overview of provision for Religious Education

Intent:

As a faith school, we follow the Model Curriculum provided in 'To know You more clearly: The Religious Education Directory 2023 (RED)', as required by Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. We intend a religious education that covers all aspects of Catholic education and introduces children to other faiths.

Our curriculum follows the six-branch model of the RED Model Curriculum, structured to align with the Liturgical Year, and explores beliefs and sources through 'knowledge lenses':

HEAR – The Word – The Bible and teaching documents of the church

BELIEVE – What do Catholics believe?

CELEBRATE – How do our beliefs shape our prayer, liturgy and sacraments?

LIVE – The impact of faith on life: ethics, philosophy, art and culture.

In addition, we recognise the responsibility of living in a multi-faith and multicultural society and aim to introduce children to other world faiths and practices with an attitude of mutual respect and tolerance through the 'knowledge lenses' of DIALOGUE and ENCOUNTER.

We use the Expected end of age-phase outcomes contained within the RED alongside the Model Curriculum's 'Ways of Knowing' Expected Outcomes for each unit. These aim to develop a range of skills over the course of primary school in the areas of Understanding ('learning about'), Discerning ('judging wisely in response to different interpretations'), and Responding ('reflecting personally and with integrity on what they have learned and considering the implications for action these may have for their own lives and the world in which they live).

Religious education will be taught discretely and developmentally. It will include the deepening of knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life. These key ideas are revisited in greater depth each year.

Sacramental knowledge progresses from Baptism in Early Years and Key Stage 1, to Confirmation, Marriage and Ordination in Key Stage 2.

We have a firm belief that every child can achieve and that they are entitled to the same knowledge and cultural capital, whatever their background or starting point. As such, we adopt a mastery approach to all of the teacher, having high expectations of all children and scaffolding those with lower starting points to be able to access and achieve these.

Local Context:

The school is a faith school and serves the local Catholic community. We are aware that we have children in our school from different faiths and backgrounds, and that we have a duty to ensure all children are brought up with knowledge and understanding of other cultures and faiths. As such, children are introduced to other world faiths and other Christian denominations, including trips to local places of worship.

Teaching and Learning

Implementation:

The pedagogical approaches to the teaching of RE in the school are closely aligned to the approaches and principles of teaching in other subject areas, with the key elements being:

- Teachers ensuring that pupils see the ‘purpose’ of each lesson and the content in relation to their lives
- Deliberate and intentional retrieval of previous knowledge to build on previous learning
- Regular checkpoints and formative assessments within lessons to tailor lessons to the needs of pupils
- Exceptionally positive relationships in school that create the conditions conducive to effective learning
- High levels of subject knowledge
- Making reference to the school rules, values, and the class purpose and culture when teaching; this supports pupils to contribute and engage in lessons and be part of a class community striving to unlock each member’s potential

Teachers are given regular opportunities to access CPD at school and through the local Diocesan centre. In addition, the Subject Leader provides regular updates to staff about upcoming events and developments within Catholic religious teaching.

The culture of the school is one which promotes openness and honesty in relation to proactively seeking support for any gaps in subject knowledge; this may be reflected in professional development meeting content, and discussions between colleagues.

Effective questioning by the teacher is key to allow pupils to practise new knowledge and to help them make links between new material and prior learning. Opportunities for retrieval practice are included to ensure knowledge is transferred into long-term memory.

Achievement for All

Equality of opportunity is one of the broad set of common values and purposes which underpin the school curriculum. All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background, have appropriate differentiated access to our Religious Education programme.

- At St Wilfrid's School we are careful to ensure that we avoid any risk of stereotyping on the basis of gender, race or religion. To achieve this, careful and thorough planning and monitoring of the curriculum and the progress of individual children is carried out to ensure that all children are achieving their full potential.
- The school curriculum is planned in order to develop children's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Global issues and their own and different beliefs and cultures, and how these influence individuals and societies.
- Pupils are provided with the opportunity to develop their understanding of concepts relating to rights, obligations and justice and the responsibilities of individuals and groups to combat injustice.
- Teachers are guided by the programme set out in the scheme and match tasks appropriate to the needs of each child. These can range from challenging to very simple and direct. Much of the work in R.E. involves discussion, drama and reflection and every child's contribution is valued. R.E. offers a wonderful opportunity for all children to realise their equality within the Family of God.
- Staff are aware of the needs of the children in their class. Some modification and adaptation is applied when necessary for children who are operating at a different level than their peers. We refer to the Religious Education Directory Guidance for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

Impact

All assessment is linked to the skills referenced in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing. This is done formatively during lessons, and at the end of each lesson teachers will complete summative assessment of the children's current level of skills. Degree of mastery of these skills will be recorded and used to inform teacher judgment on a termly basis. Task design is intentionally open in order for children to demonstrate their level of depth.

Teachers will report termly outcomes based on the learning they see in class and the evidence in children's books. This will be as a final judgement, rather than individual learning indicators. Teachers have reference to the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing when making decisions about children's depth of knowledge, understanding and

skills. In we school, we keep track of children’s progress against these standards, having three data points, one at the end of each school term.

5. Resourcing

R.E. is central to St Wilfrid’s school’s understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources. The Catholic character of St Wilfrid’s school is reflected in religious artefacts and images on display throughout the building. Visits to places of religious significance are encouraged and supported.

6. Training and formation

All new staff will be supported during induction and beyond, so that they fully understand the responsibility they carry within their individual role for teaching RE in the school. Any individual training needs will be identified and addressed through training and formation. There will also be the opportunity for whole-staff professional development at least once a year, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of RE will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

8. Review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors.

Appendices

A Curriculum overview for RE

Appendix A



St Wilfrid's RE Curriculum Rationale 2025

As a Catholic school, our aim is that every child achieves their full potential as an individual made in the image and likeness of God. This encompasses every dimension of the child: spiritual, moral, social, academic, physical and artistic. Our vision is that children will learn to be good citizens of the world, enriching society through a positive contribution to their community and beyond. Our curriculum is the vehicle through which we support and nurture children to achieve this potential. We believe that knowledge empowers and enables children to feel and be successful, and that this is the entitlement of every child.

INTENT



Alignment to National Curriculum

As a faith school, we follow the Model Curriculum provided in To know You more clearly: The Religious Education Directory 2023 (RED), as required by Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. We intend a religious education that covers all aspects of Catholic education and introduces children to other faiths.

Our curriculum follows the six-branch model of the RED Model Curriculum, structured to align with the Liturgical Year, and explores beliefs and sources through 'knowledge lenses':
HEAR – The Word – The Bible and teaching documents of the church
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In addition, we recognise the responsibility of living in a multi-faith and multicultural society and aim to introduce children to other world faiths and practices with an attitude of mutual respect and tolerance through the 'knowledge lenses' of DIALOGUE and ENCOUNTER.

IMPLEMENTATION



Pedagogical Approaches

The pedagogical approaches to the teaching of RE in the school are closely aligned to the approaches and principles of teaching in other subject areas, with the key elements being:

- Teachers ensuring that pupils see the 'purpose' of each lesson and the content in relation to their lives
- Deliberate and intentional retrieval of previous knowledge to build on previous learning
- Regular checkpoints and formative assessments within lessons to tailor lessons to the needs of pupils
- Exceptionally positive relationships in school that create the conditions conducive to effective learning
- High levels of subject knowledge
- Making reference to the school rules, values, and the class purpose and culture when teaching; this supports pupils to contribute and engage in lessons and be part of a class community striving to unlock each member's potential

IMPACT



Approach to Assessment

All assessment is linked to the skills referenced in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing. This is done formatively during lessons, and at the end of each lesson teachers will complete summative assessment of the children's current level of skills. Degree of mastery of these skills will be recorded and used to inform teacher judgment on a termly basis.

Task design is intentionally open in order for children to demonstrate their level of depth.



End Points

We use the Expected end of age-phase outcomes contained within the RED alongside the Model Curriculum's 'Ways of Knowing' Expected Outcomes for each unit. These aim to develop a range of skills over the course of primary school in the areas of Understanding ('learning about'), Discerning ('judging wisely in response to different interpretations'), and Responding ('reflecting personally and with integrity on what they have learned and considering the implications for action these may have for their own lives and the world in which they live. These link directly to the Expected Outcomes used at Secondary level.



Sequencing

The Expected end of age-phase outcomes further break down the skills which we will develop in each area. For Understanding, this begins with being able to name, remember, recall and retell, before being able to describe and use specialist vocabulary, with the aim of being able to describe and explain meaning, making links between sources, beliefs, worship and life.

Discerning seeks to build children's ability to ask and respond to questions, and make comparisons, aiming to develop their ability to find meaning and purpose in religious texts and understanding of their and others' beliefs and values. The aim is for children to be able to arrive at justified conclusions, recognising complexity with reference to different interpretations and historical context.

Responding means being able to talk about feelings and experiences, critically reflecting and responding with integrity to personal conclusions about questions of value and meaning.

Religious education will be taught discretely and developmentally. It will include the deepening of knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life. These key ideas are revisited in greater depth each year.

Sacramental knowledge progresses from Baptism in Early Years and Key Stage 1, to Confirmation, Marriage and Ordination in Key Stage 2.



Teachers' Expert Knowledge

Teachers are given regular opportunities to access CPD at school and through the local Diocesan centre. In addition, the Subject Leader provides regular updates to staff about upcoming events and developments within Catholic religious teaching.

Many of the elements of the wider curriculum, and indeed the school's approach to behaviour and relationships, is underpinned by the very latest best practice and research in relation to developing a positive climate for learning, and the very latest developments and research in child psychology. The culture of the school is one which promotes openness and honesty in relation to proactively seeking support for any gaps in subject knowledge; this may be reflected in professional development meeting content, and discussions between colleagues.



Promoting Discussion and Understanding

As a school, we use the themes of the RED to ensure the children have the skills needed to achieve as they progress through school. The themes remain the same for each year, with skills being built from year to year.

We explore the themes of Church, Sacrament and Christian Living, looking in greater depth each year. Each term's topics seek to make links between the church's teaching, community of faith and Church, celebration in ritual and Sacraments and way of life and Christian Living.

This is achieved through pupils being given regular opportunities to explore and discuss theological and philosophical questions at an age-appropriate level, and to promote knowledge, awareness and tolerance of other faiths.

Teachers use their strong knowledge of the progression in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing in order to ask questions which lead children to develop the skills we intend to promote.



Performance Data

At the end of each year, data is shared with the Diocese of Hallam. Teachers will report termly outcomes based on the learning they see in class and the evidence in children's books. This will be as a final judgement, rather than individual learning indicators. Teachers have reference to the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing when making decisions about children's depth of knowledge, understanding and skills.



Pupils' Work

It is expected that tasks are designed with reference to the skills referenced in the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing, to give children opportunities to display and build these skills. Throughout a unit, there should be opportunities to develop skills in all areas and reflect on an open enquiry question, producing an extended piece of writing in response.

Teachers are encouraged to be creative in task design, and work can take the form of artwork, discussion, drama, song, extended writing or a mixture of these. There is an expectation that the learning in RE is evidenced in books at an age-appropriate level.



Addressing Social Disadvantage

We have a firm belief that every child can achieve and that they are entitled to the same knowledge and cultural capital, whatever their background or starting point. As such, we adopt a mastery approach to all of the teacher, having high expectations of all children and scaffolding those with lower starting points to be able to access and achieve these.



Local Context

The school is a faith school and serves the local Catholic community. We are aware that we have children in our school from different faiths and backgrounds, and that we have a duty to ensure all children are brought up with knowledge and understanding of other cultures and faiths. As such, children are introduced to other world faiths and other Christian denominations, including trips to local places of worship.



Knowing More and Remembering More

Knowledge and skills build from year to year and it is important that pupils can remember and use knowledge and skills from previous learning. Effective questioning by the teacher is key to allow pupils to practise new knowledge and to help them make links between new material and prior learning (Rosenshine). Opportunities for retrieval practice are included to ensure knowledge is transferred into long-term memory.



Teacher Assessment

Teachers assess formatively and summatively in each lesson according to the Expected end of age-phase outcomes/Ways of Knowing. Task design allows children to demonstrate their progress towards each Standard.

In we school, we keep track of children's progress against these standards, having three data points, one at the end of each school term.



Talking to Pupils

The subject leader will dedicate time weekly to the scrutiny of books, discussion with teachers, enhancing subject knowledge, and discussion with pupils. Pupils will have the opportunity to talk about their work, their enjoyment and understanding of the lessons, and how much they can recall, and their responses will be used to inform teaching.

Links / References

To know You more clearly The Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools, Academies and Colleges in England and Wales – Bishops' Conference of England and Wales
Rosenshine's Principles in Action – Tom Sherrington