ST MONICA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

'Strive to succeed in the presence of God'
Together – as a Catholic community
Everyone - children, staff, parents, carers and parish
Achieves – in their unique way and tries to be
More – like Jesus

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Mission Statement

Strive to succeed in the presence of God

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Everyone - children, staff, parents, carers and parish

Achieves – in their unique way and tries to be

More – like Jesus

Vision and Mission Statement:

Our vision and mission statement serve as a reminder that all things are achievable when we are with God. At St Monica's, we strongly believe that all children can succeed in the presence of God.

We believe that having a strong partnership between home, school and parish is the foundation of a successful school experience. It is important for children to see parents and teachers working together, providing the stability, confidence and model they need to develop positive attitudes towards their learning.

Additionally, strong partnerships demonstrate to the children that we are united and it exhibits the importance of us all working together in the presence of God. To support this collaboration, each year group sends home a newsletter every half term which encompasses an outline of what their child will be learning about in their Religious Education lessons.

Our mission is to foster a shared understanding of right and wrong, grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ. We are guided by the core values of justice, forgiveness, love, respect, honesty, trust and inclusivity. These values form the foundation of all that we do at St Monica's.

We are committed to delivering a high-quality education, where excellence is expected and learning experiences nurture the whole child – helping all children to achieve their full potential.

Our goal is to educate and prepare children for 'life beyond the classroom' by supporting the growth of confident, compassionate and well-rounded individuals.

We strive to create a welcoming, inclusive and stimulating environment where children feel safe, happy and eager to learn. With this aim, we work to provide a place to celebrate all children for the unique individuals that they are.

We celebrate and respect diversity, valuing each member of our school community. We also cherish our partnerships with our parish, families and wider community, working closely together in mutual support.

Our House Saints:

We consider our main task to be that of sharing our faith in Christ. The message of the Gospels permeates every aspect of school life.

We are inspired by the lives of Saints and have four House Saints which underpin our Catholic school values and drive our curriculum.

St John Baptist de la Salle is the Patron Saint of Teachers. He was founder of schools for the poor and strongly believed that children should not only have an excellent academic education but also one which focused on Gospel values and civility. Through his example we strive to provide an education which is fully inclusive of all children.

St Cecelia is Patron Saint of music and she inspires us to foster a love of music and develop our creativity.

St Francis of Assisi is the Patron Saint of the Environment and through his example, we aim to teach the children about their place in the world and themes around conversation and climate change.

St Theresa of Lisieux is also known as “St Theresa of the little ways”. She advocated doing small things with great love. She stated, no one alone can solve world peace but as individuals we can do small things which collectively make a huge difference towards achieving a peaceful world. St Theresa inspires us to care for the emotional health of each individual in the school.

Using the example of these leaders from Jesus, through to the Saints we strive to instill a sense of leadership into each child. They learn responsibility and independence and learn over time that they are all unique with a range of gifts and talents.

Rationale of Religious Education

The purpose of Catholic Religious Education is to foster individuals who are religiously literate and actively engaged. It aims to provide knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically, whilst also responding to the challenges of religious commitment in daily life.[1] Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church: ‘At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education’.[2]

St Monica’s Primary School is a Catholic Voluntary Aided School, established primarily to provide a Catholic education to the children of the parish and its surrounding community. As such, Religious Education is a core, essential and deeply embedded part of our school life. In a Catholic school, Religious Education is at the centre of the core curriculum and is to be a source and summit of the whole curriculum.[3] At St Monica’s, we believe that the beliefs and values explored through Catholic Religious Education lie at the heart of school life, inspiring and guiding every aspect of our community. Religious Education is more than just a subject—it is the foundation that shapes and supports a child’s entire educational journey. Religious Education is planned, delivered, assessed and monitored with the same level of rigor and importance as other core curriculum subjects.

Religious Education within St Monica’s recognises the diverse faith backgrounds and experiences of our students. For some, Religious Education will support the deepening of a personal faith already lived and practiced. For others, it may represent a process of evangelisation, offering a first meaningful encounter with the core truths of the Christian faith. Regardless of individual starting points, the principal aim of Religious Education is to provide a systematic and developmental study of the mystery of Christ, the teachings of the Catholic Church and their relevance to daily life.[4]

Furthermore, Religious Education provides a comprehensive and well-structured exploration of God, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Church and the core beliefs of the Catholic faith. It also examines the reasons behind these beliefs and their relevance to daily life. We believe Religious Education is essential in deepening children’s understanding of their faith and encouraging them to live it with meaning and conviction. We also affirm that the Gospel of Jesus Christ invites all who embrace

[1] Religious Education Directory, 2022, p. 6
[2] Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, 2000, para 4
[3] Religious Education Directory, 2022, p. 6
[4] Religious Education in Catholic Schools, a statement from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 2000, p. 8-9

it to experience a life of fullness and hope.

Our approach to education nurtures every aspect of a child's development—intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional and physical. We aim to support each student on their journey towards becoming a mature and unique individual.

The aims of Religious Education:

- To uphold and strengthen the Catholic ethos of the school by embodying Gospel values through a spirit of love, compassion and genuine freedom.
- To engage students in a structured and thoughtful exploration of the mystery of God, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the core beliefs of the Catholic Church, their foundations and how faith connects with everyday life.
- To help students grow in their religious and theological understanding, whilst developing the ability to express this understanding clearly and confidently.
- To present the Church's moral and social teachings in an authentic way, offering students a solid framework for living and the tools to thoughtfully engage with modern culture and societal issues.
- To foster an understanding of the diverse religions and worldviews present in today's world, and to equip students with the skills needed for respectful and meaningful dialogue with others who hold different beliefs.
- To cultivate students' critical thinking, supporting them to make thoughtful connections between faith and life and between faith and culture.
- To help children live out what they have learned about their faith, understanding that their actions should be guided by the teachings of Christ.
- To inspire students to seek personal meaning and purpose through reflection on the truth revealed in the Catholic faith.
- To support students in linking the insights gained through Religious Education with their learning across other areas of the curriculum.[5]
- To support the Christian faith within our students' families and foster a nurturing, family-like environment where children encounter God's love through the actions and attitudes of those around them.
- To collaborate with the clergy and Parish team in nurturing and supporting the children's religious growth and formation.
- To create opportunities for children to develop a strong work ethic, achieve success in their tasks, work both independently and collaboratively and develop an appreciation for human effort and accomplishment.

We strive to achieve these aims by:

Following the guidance of the Bishops' Conference, Religious Education is allocated 10% of the total curriculum time. This allocation is separate from time set aside for Collective Worship and Relationship and Health Education (RHE).

Programme of Study:

To achieve these aims and cover the four key areas of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory—Revelation, Church, Celebration, and Life in Christ; children from EYFS to Year 6 follow the Religious Education Directory (RED), which features a programme of study approved by the Bishops' Conference. Staff are actively participating in the Diocesan training to support the effective implementation of the RED and are drawing on their subject expertise to design a curriculum that meets both its requirements and the specific needs of our pupils.

Curriculum structure:

The Religious Education model curriculum is organised into six components, referred to as branches, which align with the six half-terms of the academic year. Five of these branches are built around core theological themes—Revelation, Scripture, life in Christ and life in the Church. They are designed to deepen pupils' understanding of the Catholic faith both intellectually and personally. Through these themes, pupils are encouraged to reflect critically, make informed moral decisions and apply their

[5] Religious Education Directory 2022 p6

learning in meaningful ways. This empowers them to see, judge and act through a more profound knowledge of the Christian faith.

The sixth branch, Encounter and Dialogue, focuses on the study of World Faiths and worldviews. It supports pupils in developing respectful and informed attitudes by engaging with diverse beliefs, guided by the Church's teaching on interreligious and intercultural dialogue. Refer to https://st-monicas.enfield.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Updated-World-Faiths_sequence-of-learning-table.pdf for the sequence of progression for our teaching of Encounter and Dialogue.

Further details on the structure and content of the curriculum can be found in the Religious Education Directory 2023

Methodology

Religious Education aims to help students become aware of the significance of their own experiences, illuminated by the teachings of the Gospel, enabling them to respond more deeply to God. Personal experience also serves to clarify and deepen understanding of the Christian message, aiding in the reflection and acceptance of the truths revealed through Divine Revelation.

A diverse range of teaching and learning methods is employed, tailored to meet the varied learning styles and needs of pupils. These include creative approaches such as drama, role play, music and art, alongside traditional methods for recording knowledge and understanding. Each half term, students explore a 'Wonder Question' designed to encourage thoughtful engagement with key religious concepts and to promote meaningful responses to the faith.

Adaptive teaching strategies are integral to Religious Education, ensuring all lessons are inclusive and responsive to the individual needs of every child, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This approach reflects best teaching practice and contributes significantly to improving pupil outcomes.

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment of standards is carried out against the Expected Outcomes in RED 2023.
- Assessment moderation takes place in school amongst colleagues, at deanery meetings and at diocesan meetings.
- Teaching and learning are monitored through termly moderation of Religious Education books and annual lesson observations.
- Progress and achievement is recorded and tracked in line with our school Assessment & Feedback Policy
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to Governors at least termly in line with other core subjects.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers each year in line with other core subjects.

Relationships and Health Education (RHE)
The school is subscribed to Ten Ten, which has provided the framework for our revised RHE programme. This programme was introduced following a comprehensive consultation process with parents.

Leadership of the subject
Shannon Nolan, the subject leader, has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of Religious Education and the continuous professional development of teachers in Religious Education.
Fionnula Hegarty and Richard Carver are the link governors with responsibility for Religious Education.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff who teach RE will:

- Exhibit a consistent commitment to living out and exemplifying the teachings they are entrusted to convey, serving as authentic role models of the Catholic faith and values in both word and action.
- Acknowledge and embrace their integral role as members of the Church's teaching ministry, which is exercised in communion with the local bishop, thereby ensuring that their instruction aligns with the doctrinal authority and pastoral guidance of the Catholic Church.
- Dedicate themselves to fulfilling their professional responsibilities in a manner that actively supports and enhances the spiritual, academic and communal life of the Catholic school, contributing positively to its mission and ethos.
- Uphold and maintain high expectations for every pupil, fostering an environment that encourages both academic excellence and the holistic development of each child's character, faith, and personal growth.
- Engage in ongoing professional development with a commitment to continually broadening and deepening their theological knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, ensuring that their teaching remains informed, relevant, and inspiring.

The headteacher will:

- Ensure the appointment of staff who are both suitably qualified and committed to delivering high-quality Religious Education in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Provide access to relevant resources and professional development opportunities to support staff in enhancing their knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching Religious Education effectively.
- Guarantee that Religious Education consistently receives at least 10% of the total curriculum time, in line with diocesan and national guidelines.
- Maintain oversight of the Catholic Life of the school, ensuring that its mission, values, and practices are actively promoted and integrated throughout the school community.

The Religious Education subject leader is responsible for:

- Monitoring and evaluating the standards of pupils' work and the overall quality of teaching in Religious Education to ensure consistent progress and high achievement.
- Providing ongoing support and guidance to colleagues in the effective delivery of Religious Education, fostering professional development and collaboration.
- Reviewing samples of pupils' work and conduct classroom visits to observe teaching practices, ensuring adherence to curriculum objectives and pedagogical best practices.
- Staying informed about current developments, educational research, and diocesan guidelines relating to Religious Education to maintain a contemporary and relevant programme.
- Providing strategic leadership and clear direction for the development of Religious Education within the school, aligning it with the school's mission and values.
- Maintain and regularly update the Religious Education development plan and policy documents to reflect evolving educational standards and priorities.
- Encouraging and promoting the implementation of effective and appropriate teaching practices throughout the Religious Education programme.
- Facilitating open consultation and communication with staff at all levels, ensuring that pertinent information regarding Religious Education is shared promptly and clearly.
- Managing and updating teaching resources to ensure they are current, relevant and support learning objectives.
- Promoting the use of external resources and opportunities, such as visits and guest speakers to enrich the Religious Education curriculum.

Right to withdraw

Religious Education is a core subject within this Catholic school and lies at the heart of the school's mission and ethos. The school is committed to providing a rich and meaningful programme of Religious Education for all pupils.

In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, parents have the legal right to withdraw their child, wholly or partly, from Religious Education and collective worship. Parents are not required to give a reason for requesting withdrawal. Any request for withdrawal should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher. The request will remain in effect unless and until it is withdrawn by the parent. The school will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the supervision of pupils who are withdrawn, in line with legal requirements.

Policy review:

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by Mrs Kate Baptiste (Head Teacher) and updated every 2 years.