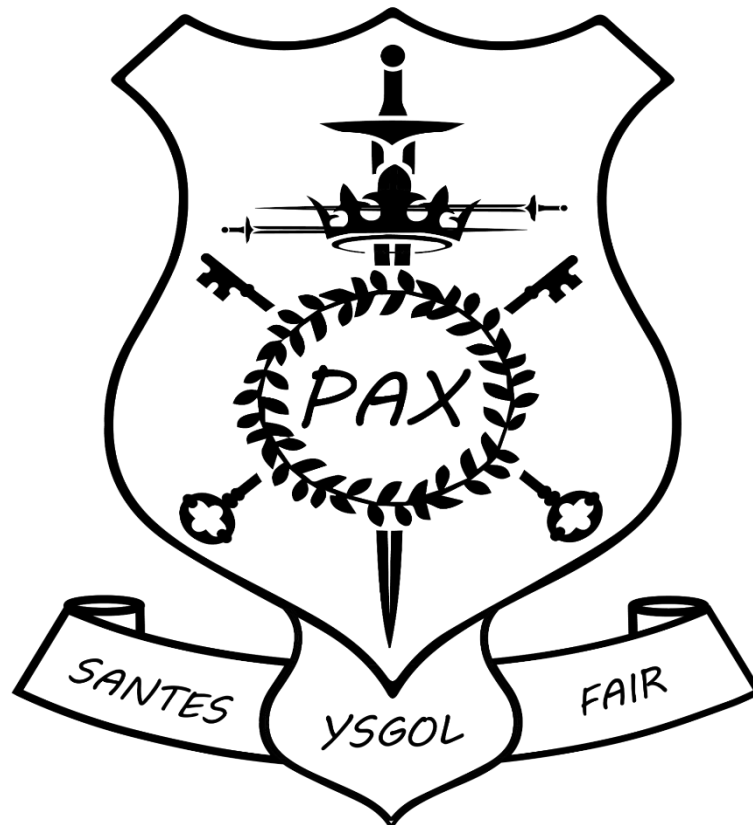



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Ysgol Gatholig Santes Fair



Religious Education Policy

Review Date	Policy adopted by	Signed	Summary of Amendments
Summer 2025	Headteacher and Governing Body	<i>Rachel Azzopardi</i> 	Policy updated due to adoption of new resource - Magister
Summer 2027			

St Mary's Catholic Primary School Ysgol Gatholig Santes Fair

*As a Catholic Family,
we will do our best to live and learn as
Christ taught us.*



We are a school where children and staff live their faith proudly and visibly, where prayer, love and kindness are at the heart of each day.

“A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints.” Pope Benedict XVI

Through our broad curriculum, rich in knowledge, skills and experiences, our children foster a passion for learning and curiosity, where the virtues are nurtured to develop each young person as an ambitious, capable learner.

We are an inclusive environment, where we celebrate the uniqueness of each person and where we support each other to be happy, healthy and confident individuals. Our curriculum challenges, excites and inspires our children to be ethical, informed citizens of Bridgend, Wales and the World, empowering them to make a positive difference. Through our curriculum, culture and ethos we promote opportunities for our children to be enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work. Together, we strive for success and persevere when we are challenged.

Our Mission as a Catholic School

Catholic schools put into practice the “educational mission of the Church to make ‘Christ known to all people’ (Christ at the Centre, 2012, p.7).

Catholic schools play their part in this mission by supporting parents in the formation of their children as disciples of the One who calls them to life in all its fullness (Jn 10:10).” (Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2023 2023 Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales)

Rationale:

- In a Catholic school, all pupils are invited to encounter Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as the living person at the heart of their study in a way that respects their individual religious identity. (Religious Education Curriculum Directory, preface 2023)
- As well as seeking to assist parents with the education and religious formation of their children, Catholic schools strive also to be of service to society. Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2023 (2023)
- Religious education plays its part in this endeavour by enabling all pupils ‘to be confident and secure in their religious faith and knowledgeable and respectful of other religions,’ and so play ‘a crucial role in building a cohesive society’ (Christ at the Centre, 2012, p.9).
- The Religious Education Directory (2023), upon which our Religious Education curriculum is formed, is intended to ensure that the subject of religious faith is studied in the context of the faith community and reflects its missionary character.

Purpose of RE

Purpose of RE Religious Education is vital to our curriculum, fostering each pupil’s academic and spiritual development. We believe that RE is a journey of growth in knowledge and relationship with God as well as their relationship with themselves and their relationship with others. Through RE, pupils learn about their faith, develop ethical reasoning, and gain cultural awareness, preparing them to live lives rooted in love, respect, and service.

Curriculum time allocation

In line with Bishops' Conference expectations, at least 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. Lessons include Scripture, Catholic teachings, and relevant social and moral/ethical themes, providing pupils with a full understanding of their faith. This allocation of time does not include Prayer and liturgy.

Aims of the Religious Education Curriculum

“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 Directory, 2023, p6)

The RE curriculum strives to:

- Engage in a systematic study of the mystery of God, of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold, the basis for them and the relationship between faith and life.
- Enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively.
- Present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching to provide pupils with a sure guide for living and the tools to critically engage with contemporary culture and society.
- Give pupils an understanding of the religions and worldviews present in the world today and the skills to engage in respectful and fruitful dialogue with those whose worldviews differ from their own.
- Develop the critical faculties of pupils so to bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.
- Stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith.
- Enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through religious education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum.

The Programme of Study

Religious Education Curriculum Directory framework has four structural elements.

These are:

1. **Knowledge Lenses**- sets out the object of study for pupils; they indicate what should be known by the end of each age-phase
2. **Ways of Knowing**- set out the skills that pupils should be developing as they progress through their curriculum journey.
3. **Expected Outcomes**- are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing. Each age-phase will have a prescribed set of outcomes that will indicate what pupils are expected to know, remember, and be able to do, using the language of the ways of knowing and applying it to the discrete knowledge within each lens.
4. **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.

1. Knowledge Lenses

The knowledge lenses are the object of study for pupils; they indicate what should be known by the end of each age-phase. (5-7, 7-9 and 9-11)

There are 6 knowledge lenses:

- Hear
- Believe
- Celebrate
- Live
- Dialogue
- Encounter

2. Ways of Knowing

The ways of knowing describe the skills the pupils develop as they progress the RE curriculum.

The three ways of knowing are:

- Understand
- Discern
- Respond

Lessons are planned to help pupils **understand**, Catholic teaching, **discern** what they mean and apply it their daily lives, and have a personal **respond** by putting their faith in action and service to others.

3. Expected Outcomes

Pupils are encouraged to grow in knowledge in age-appropriate ways. Expected outcomes, as outlined in the RE Directory, provide a pathway for skill development, guiding pupils toward a deepening understanding of faith, respect for diversity, and a commitment to living as a follower of Jesus.

Each age-phase has a prescribed set of expected outcomes that indicate what pupils are expected to know, remember and be able to do, using the language of the ways of knowing and applying it to the discrete knowledge within each lens. It is against these expected outcomes that we assess pupil progress, both formatively, and summatively.

4. Curriculum Branches

With a strong focus on stories and scripture, pupils encounter scripture and what the Church teaches about scripture and what this means for a life lived in Christ as part of the Catholic faith, through six curriculum branches.

These are:

- Creation and Covenant
- Prophecy and Promise
- Galilee to Jerusalem
- Desert to Garden
- To the ends of the Earth

To fulfil the above aims and to address the four areas of study outlined in the RED, the CES approved resource, *Magister*, is used throughout the school and within our cluster.

Catholic Social Teaching

Our curriculum, especially within our incorporates the 7 principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

- Human Dignity
- Participation
- Subsidiarity
- Solidarity
- The Common Good
- Preferential Option for the Poor
- Promoting Peace
- Stewardship
- Distributive Justice

At St Mary's, we believe that everyone has the power to contribute to making our world a better place for all. These teachings, deeply rooted in Scripture and particularly in the teachings of Jesus from the Gospels, call us to follow Christ's example. He inspires us to bring love and compassion to those both near and far. We are called to embody the values of Jesus seeking to improve the lives of others by putting our faith in action.

Teaching and Learning

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils as outlined in our Lesson Charter.

Other Faiths

Through branch 6: Dialogue and encounter, pupils learn how Christians work together with people of different religious convictions and all people of goodwill towards the common good, respecting the dignity of all humanity. They will also encounter other pathways of belief drawing on the teaching of the Church about intercultural dialogue.

'Dialogue' and is an exemplification of the Church's teaching on the relationship between Catholicism and other Christian traditions, between Catholicism and Judaism, between Catholicism and other religions, and between Catholicism and non-religious or atheistic worldviews. It is called 'dialogue' because it focuses on the importance of dialogue as the only authentic way of living faithfully in a pluralistic world.

In 'Encounter' pupils engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews, modelled on the concentric circles of Ecclesiam Suam. As they progress through school, pupils will study:

- Other Christian denominations
- Judaism
- Islam
- Dharmic religions and pathways
- Other religions and worldviews, including non-religious worldviews.

Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting:

This takes place through:

- Observation of children engaged in general tasks and activities and their contributions made to classroom lessons and display in Foundation Phase field notes and teacher evaluations;
- Children complete an ipsative multiple choice quiz at the start and end of each term, assessing pupils' knowledge of Branch 1&2, Branch 3&4 and Branch 5&6.
- Teacher feedback - verbal and written comments in children's books and the use of marking to take learning forward;
- Shared understanding of progression sessions where children's books are scrutinised to ensure consistency and progression occurs across all classes. This takes place during INSET and Cluster sessions;
- A range of monitoring tools are used, these include: learning environment, lesson observations and learning walks, work scrutiny, listening to learners, analysis of data, evaluating the views of stakeholders. As a result of the monitoring, areas of strength and areas to be developed are highlighted and actions/targets are identified to address these;
- Monitoring individual progress through the use of our RE tracker. Progress is tracked and analysed through pupil progress meetings where pupils who are under achieving are identified and strategies are put in place, as well as identifying those who are exceeding expectations and need greater challenge;
- Reporting on progress and effort in Religious Education to parents/carers through parental consultations, an interim written report in the spring term and a written report at the end of each academic year;
- Reporting on Religious Education and any updates to governors in full Governing Body meetings;
- Celebrating the children's successes and achievements in RE through awards, displays and the newsletter.

Prayer and Liturgy within RE

Within RE lessons, it is expected that there will be an element of worship/prayer for children to reflect on the learning and scripture, considering how this will impact on their lives. Examples could be use of Lectio Divina or Visio Divina to reflect on scripture/artwork, Sacred Silence, Christian meditation or Guided Meditation etc. This can also be used in other Areas of Learning (Domain lessons) where links can be made to Catholic Social teaching, virtues or papal encyclicals. For further details, see Prayer and Liturgy Policy.

Inclusion and Equality

All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background will have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme. The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best

for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

All work is valued and teachers plan to ensure that learning experiences can be accessed by all children so that all learners can achieve their full potential through a variety of support and extension strategies.

Bilingualism

The Welsh language is used in all areas of school, including learning and teaching activities. Incidental Welsh, e.g. greetings, instructions, is used by staff and children in all sessions. The Archdiocese have developed 'Canllaw Addoliad i Ysgolion Catholig- A Worship Resource for Catholic Schools' that is used to support teachers and pupils in their use of Welsh language in Religious Education.

Classroom Environment

In each classroom there is:

- A display board with examples of pupil's learning;
- A Pupil Profile Virtue tree for the half-term;
- A prayer table which demonstrates the liturgical year/current Branch with religious symbols e.g. Bible, candle, crucifix etc.

Management of the Subject

Head Teacher and SLT RE Lead have responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of the training and monitoring in Religious Education with support from the Archdiocese of Cardiff Education Department.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed every two years, involving input from the Senior Leadership Team, RE Lead, Governors, and feedback from pupils and parents. However, this policy will be updated whenever necessary to reflect any change to guidance, new initiatives or new resources etc. in order to support the continued religious growth and spiritual development of our pupils.