



Together with Jesus, we grow in love

# Holy Family Catholic Primary School

## RE Policy

Last Reviewed: October 2025  
Review date: October 2026

The whole school policies, planned curriculum and ethos of Holy Family Catholic Primary School are reflected in our school Mission Statement. Religious Education expresses the philosophy of education in our Catholic school, making significant contributions to our pupils' education.

'Religious Education is the core of the core curriculum and is to be the source and summit of the whole curriculum.' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2023, p6). Through Religious Education, children explore their beliefs, values and the way of life of the Catholic tradition, and where appropriate, of other faith traditions. 'The Religious Education Directory serves the Bishops of England and Wales, the Catholic Education Service, and diocese and Catholic schools in revealing the Good News and making the little stories of children meet the big stories told by the disciples.' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2023, p64).

Every pupil is enabled to grow in love and develop a confident attitude to life, to develop an interest in and ability to reflect upon the world around, to become aware of the relationship between faith and life, and to become aware how and why people commit themselves to beliefs and causes. It is a school policy to ensure that all children, regardless of gender, faith, social or cultural background, intellectual or emotional standing, are offered equal opportunities and catered for as possible.

## Aims

Our Religious Education programme at Holy Family Catholic Primary School will allow our children to:

- Grow in knowledge and understanding of the Christian story and vision, message and Catholic way of life, in ways appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
- Grow and explore a set of beliefs, values and actions, underpinned by the Catholic tradition, and further enriched by the recognition and respect of other faith traditions.
- Grow their capacity for wonder, awe, reverence and imagination for the spiritual and of the mystery of God.

## Objectives

- To gain an understanding of the teachings and beliefs of the mystery of God, life and ministry of Jesus Christ, core beliefs, celebrations and the relationship between faith and life.
- To enable children to have opportunities for active reflection upon their own and others' experiences, beginning to establish their own set of beliefs, values and actions, including understanding religious commitment in everyday life in relation to contemporary culture and society.

- To provide children with the language of religious experience through places, stories, symbols, rituals, people and objects, becoming religiously literate.
- To develop a social conscience through the inclusion of Catholic Social Teaching.
- To support the work of the local parish in educating children in the Catholic faith, including the preparation for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.
- To gain an understanding of religions and worldviews present in the world today, developing respect and dialogue with other religions and worldviews.
- To provide training and support for the RE coordinator and all members of staff, through the Archdiocesan Christian Education Department, to ensure understanding of the underlying theological and educational principles.

## **The Religious Education Programme**

To fulfil our rationale and aims, we use:

To Know You More Clearly from the Religious Education Directory (2023) for Early Years – Year 4

Come and See programme based on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012) for Year 5 and 6

As recommended by the Archdiocese of Liverpool, To Know You More Clearly (2023) is being phased through the school. This will meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales directive to comply with the directory by September 2026.

The Religious Education Directory (2023) is being phased in as follows:

September 2023: Early Years

January 2024: Year 1

April 2024: Year 2

September 2024: Year 3

September 2025: Year 4

TBD: Year 5 and 6

Year groups will continue to use Come and See until these dates.

## **Overview of Content (To Know You More Clearly)**

The Model Curriculum has a spiral structure, where the six branches taught are built upon each year, deepening pupils' understanding. Each branch has a core theme, following the Liturgical Year and inviting pupils to learn about an aspect of scripture, life in Christ, the mystery of God and the life of the Church.

**Creation and Covenant:** 'The heavens are telling the glory of God.' (Psalm 19:1)

In this branch, pupils will encounter the God who creates and the God who calls His people into covenant. They will explore the Creation accounts in Genesis, the call of God and the covenants God made with Abraham, Moses and throughout the Old Testament.

**Prophecy and Promise:** 'God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets.' (Hebrews 1:1)

In this branch, pupils will encounter the prophets, who speak of God, call his people back into a relationship, and prophesy the fulfilment of God's promise for the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Pupils learn about the Advent season, the nativity of Jesus and the mystery of the incarnation.

**Galilee to Jerusalem:** 'God's only Son... has made him known.' (John 1:18)

In this branch, pupils will encounter the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the Word of God. They will learn about Jesus' life, parables, miracles, teachings and revelations about the Kingdom of God, as well as the nature of being a follower of Jesus through the example of the disciples.

**Desert to Garden:** 'Christ died for our sins... was buried and he was raised on the third day.' (1 Corinthians 15:3)

In this branch, pupils will encounter the heart of the Catholic Church's liturgy and life through the events of the Paschal Triduum. Pupils learn about the season of Lent and the events of Holy Week. They will study the journey from the desert to the garden of Gethsemane and Calvary to the garden of Resurrection.

**To the ends of the Earth:** 'Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations.' (Matthew 28:19)

In this branch, pupils will encounter the coming of the Holy Spirit, the events of the Feast of the Ascension and of the day of Pentecost, the work of the apostles and the early Church, and the liturgy and structures of the Catholic Church today.

**Dialogue and Encounter:** 'In him we live and move and have our being.' (Acts 17:28)

In this branch, pupils will encounter the religions and worldviews present in the world today. This includes how Christians work together for the common good, knowledge and understanding of other religions and worldviews and developing respect and intercultural dialogue.

## **The Process**

There are four lenses, which reflects the language of the Catechism, stating the mystery of faith which we hear, believe, celebrate and live (CCC 2558).

### **Hear**

The first part of every topic is Hear. This reflects the primacy and sacredness of scripture, the Word of God, within RE. At the heart of RE is the proper study of Sacred Scripture. Pupils listen to authentic readings of Bible stories, explore stories in more depth through Golden Story Boxes, retell and respond to the moral imperatives of Bible stories. They also learn about the context of the Bible stories, the genres in the Bible, the purpose and intent of the author, the historical, political and geographical contexts of the text.

### **Believe**

In this lens, pupils encounter the beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church and the contents of the Creed, the Church's profession of faith. This includes the triune God, incarnation of Jesus Christ, communion of saints, role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, eternal life and salvation.

## **Celebrate**

In this lens, pupils encounter the way in which the Church celebrates the mystery of God, Christ and salvation. Prayer is included, teaching children about the expression of the lived relationship that we can have with God, a form of communication in the heart of each person. This lens also includes traditional prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer, liturgy, the seven sacraments and other sacramental, such as Ash Wednesday.

## **Live**

In this lens, pupils encounter the impact of faith and belief on how Christians live in contemporary culture and society. It explores key themes about human nature, such as the purpose of humanity, freedom, conscience, sin, grace and virtue. Catholic Social Teaching is explored, enabling children to develop a social conscience, seeing the impact of faith in action, using the examples of a range of charities, people of faith and the saints. The living expression of faith is explored through art, music and culture.

## **Overview of Content (Come and See)**

Central to the programme is the Christian belief in Jesus Christ, Word and Revelation of God.

Each term, a basic question – belief about the mystery of life is explored within the Catholic faith tradition.

Autumn	Where did I come from?	Life - Creation
Spring	Who am I?	Dignity – Incarnation
Summer	Why am I here?	Purpose – Redemption

Year groups study different topics throughout the year around a central theme. For each level, there are clearly stated aims, achievable learning intentions, and a selection of experiences and activities for each of the learning intentions. These allow for pupils to work according to their different abilities. The basic question – belief for each term is explored through three themes. Each theme, based upon the documents from the Second Vatican Council, is taught once in every season time, gradually building upon the understanding of the previous theme.

## 1. Community of Faith – Church Themes

Autumn	Family	Domestic Church
Spring	Community	Local Church
Summer	World	Universal Church

## 2. Celebration in Ritual – Sacramental Themes

Autumn	Belonging	Baptism/ Confirmation
Spring	Relating	Eucharist
Summer	Inter-Relating	Reconciliation

## 3. Way of Life - Christian Living Themes

Autumn	Loving	Advent/Christmas
Spring	Giving	Lent/Easter
Summer	Serving	Pentecost

In addition, for two weeks every year, the children take time to celebrate Other Faiths. At Holy Family, we look, discover and respect Judaism and Islam. Together with Christianity, these form the Abrahamic Faiths, with a shared heritage, belief in one God and revelation to Abraham.

## The Process

The process for delivering Come and See has three elements which enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. It enables the children to:

### 1. Explore (1 week)

The aim is to look at, share and become aware of an aspect of their life experience, their relationships and their world. It is an introduction to the topic, with an opportunity to talk about and reflect upon the significance of their experiences. This can be done through practical tasks of story, music, dance, drama, photographs/artwork, investigation and discussion. All children complete a prior learning sheet from EYFS to Year 6.

### 2. Reveal (2 weeks)

This is the heart of the Come and See programme. The aim is to make links with the Christian understanding of the mystery of the Trinity. It explores the mystery of human life through Scripture, Church practice and teaching, doctrine, prayer, and the lives and way of living of the Christian community, influential Christians and Saints. It makes links with the universal experience and, where appropriate, the experience of other faiths. This can be done through listening to and learning about Bible stories and traditions, gathering facts, researching, asking questions and discussing, acknowledging different perspectives, and making links between Christian beliefs and actions.

### 3. Respond (1 week)

This is where learning throughout the topic is assimilated, celebrated and responded to, in order to discover significance and value, and come to a deeper understanding. It allows children to ask and respond to the big questions, and consider how they will apply the learning to their own lives. This is completed in a Learning Journal floor book that follows each class through school.

**Remember:** The teacher helps the child to select, in order to hold on to, a way of remembering and expressing their new understanding.

**Rejoice:** The children plan and lead a collective worship that celebrates what has been explored and revealed in the topic.

**Renew:** Each child makes an individual response, looking back and evaluating their learning and looking forward, applying their learning to their own life.

## Relationship of RE to the Whole Curriculum

A key aim of Religious Education, according to the Religious Education Directory is ‘to enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through religious education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum’ (2023, p.6). It both enhances and is enhanced by other areas of the curriculum. At its best, an integrated and meaningful curriculum will allow children to develop cohesive and connected learning, making sense of the world around them. Whilst making links with other areas of learning it is important that teachers remain focused on the learning outcomes of the Religious Education topic.

Key topics and themes in English texts and the wider curriculum often develop children’s understanding of issues in our world today, eg. Wild and Friendly (the animal kingdom) in Early Years, protecting the oceans in Year 2, protecting the rainforest and the impact of war in Year 6.

**English:** RE written work reflects a wide range of writing styles and genres. It is often used as a primary source of cross-curricular writing, supporting end of year judgements. Role play and other drama techniques are often used as a way to retell a story, understanding the characters’ thoughts and feelings.

**Get Set for Life/ RSHE:** The interpersonal values taught and encouraged in Get Set for Life/RSHE are supported through the Catholic ethos of the school and in the Religious Education programme.

**Science:** Several topics throughout the school encourage knowledge of and respect for God’s creation, eg. Changes of seasons and as humans grow in Year 1 and 2.

**Art and Design:** Critically engaging with religious artwork and applying the skills taught within the Art and Design curriculum can allow for opportunities for awe and wonder.

## Planning

**Long Term Planning:** The Archbishop of Liverpool recommends the curriculum to be followed. Decisions about when to implement the new Religious Education Directory are made by the Senior Leadership Team, taking heed of the advice of the Archdiocese of

Liverpool. The Religious Education Directory (2023) has a Model Curriculum for Early Years to Year 9. This is being used as the Long Term Planning. A curriculum map of dates will be available on the school website.

**Medium Term Planning:** Medium term planner, including themes, topics, dates and time allocation, provided to all teachers by the RE coordinator. All classes allocate 10% of curriculum time to teaching RE and timetable it appropriately, monitored by the RE coordinator and Senior Leadership Team. The Model Curriculum of the Religious Education Directory (2023) is mapped out across the half term by the RE coordinator in conversation with the class teachers involved. This ensures full coverage of Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live across the topic.

**Short Term Planning:** Teachers can use their own planning formats, in a way that is meaningful to them. In Early Years, there should be planning for whole class inputs, adult-directed groups and Child Initiated Provision. In Year 1 to 6, there should be planning for whole class inputs and pupils to individually respond, whether practically or through written tasks.

## Differentiation

The teachers at Holy Family Catholic Primary School are aware of the developing stages and levels of maturity being experienced by the children and aim to ensure that the children are enabled to progress through these stages and are catered for at their own particular stage. The RE curriculum has built in progression in the nature of the planning of topics and in the driver words used within learning intentions. Children are set tasks that enable them to meet their Learning Objective, showing progression appropriate to their starting points.

The planning of the Sacramental Programme is aimed to coincide with the developing maturity of the children, with First Holy Communion and Reconciliation in Year 4.

## Assessment

In Holy Family Catholic Primary School, we carry out both formal and informal assessment. Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do in relation to the driver words for each age and stage. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith.

**Informal Assessment:** Children are assessed continually on an informal basis, which informs future planning and is referred to at the end of each topic's planning. Children are assessed through general observations of children involved in classroom tasks and activities, observation of contributions made to classroom displays, and marking of formal written work, applying a policy of positive and challenging comments, linked to the religious nature of the work and the driver words in the learning intention.

**Formal Assessment:** Teachers plan assessment tasks termly. Children are set an appropriate task where they work independently to show what they know about the topic, applying the skills that they have learned throughout the term. It is linked to the Expected driver words and outcomes for that year group. The pieces of work are kept in a file for each child that follows them throughout their Catholic school life. After the assessment, all teachers

moderate the work of two Expected pupils, and one Greater Depth pupil (if this applies), and the RE coordinator retains a copy of this. They are also used for external moderation within school clusters. Each term, children's attainment in RE is recorded, which the RE coordinator and Senior Leadership team have access to. Children are assessed as Below, Working Towards, Expected or Greater Depth.

### Assessment of Come and See

In Come and See, the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of the themes and the learning objectives for each topic are assessed.

Come and See is assessed using the Archdiocese of Liverpool's End of Year Standards, based upon the Age-Related Standards in Religious Education, released by the Department of Catholic Education and Formation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in July 2018. Each term, staff assess children against the Archdiocese of Liverpool's End of Year Standards for that year group. These are kept in an RE Assessment folder with the formal assessments for every child. Each term has a different colour to highlight with.

### Assessment of To know you more clearly

In To know you more clearly, the Ways of Knowing are the skills that pupils develop. They are holistic statements to express the ways that pupils develop in education, grow in understanding and apply their learning to their own lives. From the Religious Education Directory (2023, p.36), the Ways of Knowing are:

<b>Understand</b> 	<b>Discern</b> 	<b>Respond</b> 
In this way of knowing, you are aiming to help pupils to be able to <b>understand deeply</b> the <b>meaning</b> of sacred texts, religious beliefs, sacred rites, and the lives of individuals and communities who are shaped by these texts, beliefs, and rites.	In this way of knowing, you are aiming to help pupils to be able to <b>judge wisely</b> in response to <b>different interpretations</b> of the meaning, significance, and implications of texts, beliefs, rites, and ways of life so that <b>they can arrive at justified conclusions</b> about what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful.	In this way of knowing, you are aiming to help pupils <b>reflect personally</b> and <b>with integrity</b> on what they have learned and consider the <b>implications for action</b> these may have for their own lives and the world in which they live.

To know you more clearly is assessed using the Model Curriculum's outcomes for each topic. Each half-term, staff assess children against the expected outcomes for that topic for that year group. These are kept in an RE Assessment folder with the formal assessments for every child. These inform the termly reporting of children's progress.

### Reporting

At Holy Family Catholic Primary School, we recognise that reporting is a natural part of teaching and integral to the learning process.

- It provides feedback to pupils on their achievement and progress through discussion/marking.
- It informs parents of the progress and achievements of their children in an annual written report and through parents' evenings.
- It is provided at the end of the Early Years and Foundation Stage through the relevant statements in the Early Learning Goals. These will also include reporting of the Religious Education Learning Goals at the end of Reception, from the Religious Education Directory (2023, pp.71-77).
- It informs parents, governors, the local parish, the Archdiocese of Liverpool and external agencies through curriculum documents, Headteacher reports, displays of work and monitoring files.

## **Evaluation of Teaching**

Reviewing and evaluating the teaching of RE at Holy Family Catholic Primary School is carried out through:

- Observation of class teaching
- Monitoring of pupils' written work, including marking and feedback
- Monitoring of displays and resources
- School wide data tracking
- Moderation of RE books and floor books
- Moderation of assessment
- Pupil voice/surveys

Observations of lessons focus on the extent to which teachers:

- Have a secure knowledge and understanding of Catholicism, RE and the programme in use.
- Set high expectations so as to challenge pupils and deepen their understanding, knowledge and skills.
- Plan lessons effectively, with clear religious learning objectives, meeting the learning needs of all pupils.
- Use teaching methods and strategies which match pupils' needs.
- Manage pupils well and have high expectations of pupils' learning, attitude and behaviour.
- Provide feedback to children, which meets the needs of and challenges pupils.
- Use time and resources efficiently and effectively.
- Assess pupils' work effectively and use assessments to inform teaching.
- Use resources to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

Observations of lessons focus on the extent to which pupils:

- Acquire new knowledge or skills, develop their ideas and increase their understanding in RE.

- Consolidate prior learning and apply it in new contexts in RE.
- Apply intellectual or creative effort in their work.
- Are productive and work at a good pace.
- Show interest in their work in RE, are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves.
- Understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve.

## **Evaluation of Learning**

At Holy Family Catholic Primary School, our pupils are enabled to respond to their own learning, reflecting personally and with integrity. Teachers aim to encourage the pupils to recall and review the work done in the topic, then hold on to and make their own what they have understood of their experience and the experience of the Church community, applying their learning to their own lives and the implication for action. This is done by:

- Giving children time to remember what they have done in the topic.
- Asking questions to discover what learning has been achieved.
- Summarising and reinforcing learning that has taken place.
- Recording statements of new knowledge on a concept map.
- Giving children time to reflect on what they would like to hold on to.
- Helping children to focus on that which encapsulates their understanding and enables them to bring it to mind again, eg. a song, hymn, prayer, photo, reading.
- Exploring the potential for living in a fuller and deeper way.
- Encouraging children to use a religious vocabulary.
- Identifying ways of applying this in life.

## **Staff Development**

We aim to ensure that staff, including the RE coordinator, are kept up-to-date with the changes and developments in RE, and are given opportunities to develop their own knowledge, understanding and skills in RE through whole school and individual in-service training and courses provided by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The RE coordinator is also a part of a local cluster group of leaders, facilitated by the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

New staff to the school are informed of curriculum and assessment practices are given appropriate training in the RE curriculum. Additional support with planning is offered to non-Catholic teaching staff, including co-planning and the RE coordinator modelling lessons or parts of lessons.

The responsibility for the induction of Early Career Teachers rests with their mentor, though assistance and support is provided by the RE coordinator, in order to help plan topics and with reference to any specific problems.

Staff are kept up-to-date with new information being disseminated to staff through staff meetings, emails and face-to-face. Opportunities for raising issues and asking for support

with RE are available in staff briefings and meetings, along with during the RE coordinator's management time.

In preparation for the implementation of 'To know you more clearly', the Headteacher and RE coordinator attended training with the Archdiocese of Liverpool. All staff have had training on the new curriculum from the RE coordinator in a staff meeting (July 2023, November 2023, January 2024). Before the curriculum is implemented in each year group, the class teacher attends training with the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The RE coordinator and the class teacher map out the Model Curriculum to create a medium term plan.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Holy Family Catholic Primary School strives to be a welcoming, caring school at the service of the community. We endeavour to serve the needs of each pupil, recognising their value in the school, the home and the community, enabling each to fulfil his/her potential.

Each person should experience understanding and forgiveness, based on the principle that each person is valued as an individual, and given the dignity and respect afforded throughout the Gospels. Parents, children and all visitors should experience this welcome on first coming into the school. All teaching and non-teaching staff members should provide good role models, in accordance with our school values. Throughout the school, and in all areas of the curriculum, opportunities should be taken to develop social skills and discuss the moral implications of action.

### **Evaluation of Religious Education**

The RE policies are reviewed and updated by the RE coordinator in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team. Any policy changes are put to the whole staff before being implemented.

Reviewing and updating the Mission Statement is carried out in consultation with staff, pupils and governors.

## **APPENDIX 1: Rights of Withdrawal**

### **Religious Education**

‘Pupils have a right to receive an overall religious education that 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 that is within them (1 Peter 3:15)...Therefore Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.’ (Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, January 2000.)

At Holy Family, in line with the Archdiocese of Liverpool we have adopted 'Come and See' and 'To know you more clearly' as our Programmes of Study for Religious Education.

However, where parents prefer their children to receive RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, and they cannot reasonably or conveniently send their children to a school where the syllabus is in use, then the governing body must make arrangements for RE to be provided to the children within the school in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus unless they are satisfied that there are special circumstances which would make it unreasonable to do so.

In Liverpool, there is a locally agreed syllabus for RE, written by the SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for RE), a programme of study which is predominantly Christian based.

*‘Every locally agreed syllabus must reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.’ (Religious Education in Britain: Non-statutory guidance 2010).*

### **Collective Worship**

Holy Family Catholic Primary School has a distinctive nature, determined by its Catholic values, which underpin everyday life in the school as well as all of its policies and procedures. There is a daily act of collective worship, as set out in the school’s policy.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from any or all acts of Collective Worship (Education Reform Act, 1988, Section 9 (3)).

- The parent does not have to give a reason for this request.
- The school retain responsibility for the pupil's health and safety.
- Arrangements may be made to provide facilities on the school premises for alternative provision for pupils withdrawn from collective worship.
- These arrangements must not by law entail any expenditure from the school budget.
- It is advisable that schools keep a record of such withdrawals.
- Parents can withdraw their children from collective worship even if they attend a faith school.