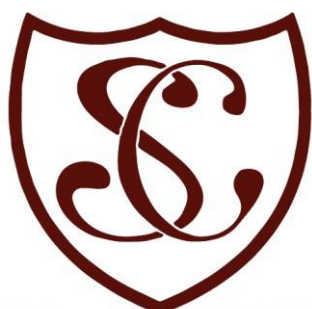


# THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

## St. Cuthbert's RC School, Englefield Green Religious Education Policy



*Living & Learning in Faith*



### Mission Statement

We are a Catholic Community, living and learning in faith. Through the Gospel values of faith, hope, trust and love we aim to recognise individuality and enable each other to fulfil their potential.

Title	Religious Education Policy
Approved and adopted by	Teaching staff, Headteacher, LGC
Policy reviewed	July 2025
Committee responsible	RE Leader/P&L Co-od /HT/DHT
New review date	July 2027

## Introduction

This policy has been formulated with our school community in mind and by seeking advice and guidance from outside agencies including the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton Education Service, the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education. The ideas and philosophies in *Christ at the Centre* (Stock 2013) and in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) have also helped to inform this policy.

## School Mission Statement

*We are a Catholic community living and learning in faith, through the Gospel values of faith, hope, trust and love.  
We aim to recognise individuality and enable each other to fulfil our potential.*

### What do these four Gospel values mean to us?

**Faith:** Matthew 17:20 He replied, *“Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”*

If we have faith in Jesus, we can do anything!

**Hope:** Jeremiah 29:11 *For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

God is always with us!

**Trust:** Proverbs 3: 5-6 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Trust in God and he will lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!

**Love:** John 13:34-35 *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*

Jesus is our role model.

## The Importance of the Role of Parents in Religious Education

Our school community recognises the central role parents have in the religious education of their children. The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales re-iterated in their statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools (2000): ***"The first educators in the faith are parents."***

In recognition of this, we strive to maintain a faithful partnership with parents, communicating clearly both the curriculum and the wider spiritual opportunities offered to families and warmly inviting parents to share their knowledge and experiences with the school community.

Our school works closely in partnership with the home and The Assumption of Our Lady Parish Church. The General Directory for Catechesis confirms, ***"This partnership between home and parish is enhanced by the role of the Catholic school in which the educational mission of the Church finds a particular and important expression."*** Religious Education in a Catholic school encompasses the whole educational mission of the Church and is not confined to timetabled Religious Education lessons.

## The Importance of Religious Education

A Catholic education is ***"focused on integral formation of its students and at the same time prepares them for full participation in civic life. It forms the Catholic student as 'both human and a person of faith, the protagonist of culture and the subject of religion'. It teaches subjects with methods proper to them and at the same time imbues the whole curriculum with a Christian outlook. It is established for Catholic students and at the same time draws others to its doors. In short, the Catholic school reflects the apparent paradox of the incarnation that is resolved in Christ: it is both fully Catholic and really a school. Religious education in a Catholic school also bears witness to the same mystery: it is both fully religious and genuinely educational."*** ([Religious Education Directory](#) p9).

## Our Aims for Religious Education

Religious education is at the heart of our school life. We aim to ensure that all pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Understand and live out our school mission statement
- Recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life
- Develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of Catholic teaching and traditions and of the teaching of other religions, so that they can explain these ideas confidently
- Make links between learning in religious education and in the wider curriculum
- Take the space to reflect and ask questions about their own and others' experience of life
- Deepen their personal faith commitment and respect the world views of others
- Develop a sense of love and responsibility for themselves, one another and the world around them, so that they can respond to this understanding in daily life (Catholic Social Teaching)

## The Curriculum

At St. Cuthbert’s Catholic Primary School, religious education is primarily based on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RED) “To Know You More Clearly”. In line with the Bishop’s mandate, this curriculum will be fully implemented from Reception to Year 6 by September 2025.

In recognition of the importance of religious education in our school, we devote 10% of the teaching week to religious education lessons. In both Key Stage 1 and 2, this is 2 hours and 30 minutes, not including Collective Worship. In Early Years, the timetable and learning style is more flexible, but teaching of Religious Education is prioritised to give children the opportunity to engage fully with the curriculum. This includes children of all faiths and those who are yet to start their journey of faith.

The Religious Education Curriculum Directory has a clear framework for learning:

Four Knowledge Lenses: Hear, Believe, Live and Celebrate indicate what should be known by the end of each age phase.

Ways of Knowing: Understand, Discern and Respond are the skills through which children progress and develop their thinking during the curriculum journey.

Expected Outcomes set out for each year group what pupils should be able to know, remember and do.

Curriculum Branches divide the model curriculum into half-term units of study which repeat annually, giving a spiral curriculum which allows children to build progressively on the prior knowledge and develop their understanding year by year.

The curriculum branches are:

<b>Autumn 1</b>	Creation and Covenant
<b>Autumn 2</b>	Prophecy and Promise
<b>Spring 1</b>	Galilee to Jerusalem
<b>Spring 2</b>	Desert to Garden
<b>Summer 1</b>	To the Ends of the Earth
<b>Summer 2</b>	Dialogue and Encounter

The curriculum is firmly founded on building children’s knowledge and understanding of Scripture, while providing opportunities to make connections to other faiths and cultures, as well as to their daily lives.

## **RE in the classroom and beyond**

### What does an RE lesson look like at St Cuthbert's?

- Every lesson begins with the Sign of the Cross and lighting a candle.
- A LO (Learning Objective) and SC (Success Criteria) are shared at the beginning of a learning focus to introduce the learning. This is revisited at the end to evaluate the learning. A LO may cover two lessons.
- A teaching input will introduce children to the main lesson content. Questions are asked to assess children's starting points or extend their thinking further.
- Scripture is read from the Children's Bible.
- A range of activities are used for children to communicate their knowledge and understanding e.g. research tasks, paintings, hymns, writing tasks, dance, drama and discussions/circle times.
- Every RE lesson will include a period of prayer and reflection.
- Hymns may also be played where appropriate to the unit.

### Prayer tables within the classroom

Every classroom will have a special area reserved for spiritual focus -this includes an RE display and a Prayer Table.

The Religious Education displays should contain: a title, some information about the topic, key vocabulary using wigits and evidence of children's learning through working wall flipchart paper.

The Prayer Table should contain: a crucifix, a living thing (e.g. plant), a Bible opened to relevant scripture, and a candle. Additional items may be on the prayer table if this is how the children have chosen to dress the table. (e.g items linked to their learning that unit)

Both areas should reflect the liturgical time of year through the artefacts, scripture readings and colours displayed. The following colours will be used throughout the liturgical year:

- Christmas and Easter: White
- Ordinary time: Green
- Advent and Lent: Violet

At St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, the teaching of religious education is designed to be as varied and creative as possible, to help children to engage fully with the ideas explored, to ask wondering questions and to lead their own learning in discerning their response.

### Learning within the classroom may include:

- Whole class discussion and teaching
  - Group discussion and feedback
  - Drama and role play
  - Independent research
  - Exploration through music and art
  - Godly Play
  - External speakers / workshops
  - Planned visits to the Church
  - Visits from the Parish Priest
- Learning in religious education cannot always be recorded and does not begin or end in the classroom. Learning from religious education will also flow into other curriculum areas as pupils make links between their learning. We aim to give children the opportunity to connect their formal learning with their wider understanding through regular opportunities to reflect and respond.

### Learning beyond the classroom may include:

- Following the example of a role model in daily life at home or in school
- Participation in charitable activity and fundraising
- Inspiration through reflection in prayer and liturgy
- Conversations with clergy or parishioners in school
- Response to catechesis in the parish e.g for Reconciliation or First Holy Communion
- Engagement with programmes based on Catholic social teaching e.g. Faith in Action; Oscar Romero Award
- Engaging in Prayer and Liturgy opportunities such as Buddy Worship
- Following the Catholic Social Teaching Principles
- Living out our school FAIR values

We work closely with parents and with the parish to support children's progress in understanding and developing on their curriculum and faith journey.

### Inclusion within the classroom

Where necessary, teaching and tasks will be adapted to suit the needs of all children. Appropriate support will be offered to ensure every child has full access to the RE curriculum.

### **Other World Views**

Catholic education seeks to form pupils who are well prepared to play a positive role in society and to follow Jesus' teaching to "love your neighbour". We therefore embrace learning about other world views with ***"a willingness... to try to understand better the religion of one's neighbours, and to experience something of their religious life and culture."*** (Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales)

The Religious Education Directory includes a branch called 'Dialogue and Encounter' which focuses specifically on exploring other world views and recognising the connections with the Catholic faith. Opportunities for dialogue and encounter are sought throughout the academic year and especially focus on broadening pupils' experiences and on real-life encounters with those of other faiths or none, to enable connections and develop understanding. Examples may include:

- Opportunities for families in our community to share their faith and experience
- Conversations with invited visitors about their beliefs and experiences
- Q&A with faith leaders online or in person
- Visits to places of worship
- Guided exploration of artefacts from other faiths
- Independent reading, research and discussion

External speakers are always checked in line with the CES checklist for external speakers, to ensure safe and constructive dialogue and encounter opportunities for our pupils.

### **Feedback, Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Feedback is given in Religious Education to support children's progress and to challenge their thinking. This follows the school's Feedback Policy and may be given verbally or with the use of live marking. Whole class next steps are given to ensure progression is made within the unit.

Assessment follows diocesan and national guidelines, assessing against the expected outcomes for each branch in the Religious Education Directory. Pupil attainment is recorded half-termly on Arbor and progress is tracked regularly termly by the RE Lead and SLT in line with the school's Assessment Policy.

The RE Lead moderates outcomes in Religious Education both internally and with local Catholic schools, to ensure consistency of expectations with other schools in the diocese.

Outcomes for Religious Education are shared in line with other core curriculum subjects, both during parent consultation meetings and in end-of-year reports.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

RE Leaders and SLT monitor every aspect of Religious Education in line with other core curriculum subjects. Monitoring is conducted at least termly through a learning walk, book look and pupil voice. Feedback is given to individual staff. Outcomes inform further training at staff meetings or actions for the subject action plan.

Self-evaluation of Religious Education is the responsibility of the Headteacher, the RE Lead, Governors and the Senior Leadership Team, with further input from all teachers of religious education, from families and from pupils. This process ensures a culture of continuous improvement, so that teaching and learning in Religious Education remains the best it can be.

### **Staff Formation**

All staff support the Catholic ethos of our school and strive to develop children's progress and

understanding in matters of faith. There are regular opportunities for all staff to engage in personal prayer and reflection which may support their professional role. The staff are invited for Monday morning prayers where they reflect on the Gospel message. The Parish Priest leads on CPD sessions based on the liturgical calendar or Sacraments. This is delivered at the appropriate time of the year. Staff work with the RE lead to prepare and plan their own Class Mass.

All teachers involved in planning and delivering Religious Education lessons have attended half-termly diocesan training on the curriculum directory resources. The RE Lead collaborates with other local schools to share best practice more widely.