



# St Thomas of Canterbury

## Catholic Primary School

*Being the best that we can be*



### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Policy compiled by: Headteacher  
Date of last review: Autumn 2024  
Review Date: Autumn 2025



#### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School family.  
We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves.  
We will encourage everyone to be the best that we can be.*

#### OUR SCHOOL AIMS

- To guide our children to grow in the love of God and build relationships that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the school and society.
- To develop an exciting, challenging and creative curriculum that produces confident and successful learners who are the best that they can be.
- To develop high quality learning that enables every child to flourish, to discover their talents and be lifelong learners.
- To establish a teaching and learning environment that encourages everyone to enjoy, to achieve, to be inclusive, to be healthy, and to stay safe.
- To nurture a strong partnership between home and school.
- To have respect and understanding for our school, our community and our world, helping our children to become responsible citizens and good role models.

#### OUR SHARED VISION

- Every child** at St Thomas of Canterbury is special and will achieve their full potential academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally through the provision of a loving community and rich and varied learning opportunities and the highest quality teaching and learning.
- Every staff member** at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to provide the opportunities that we want for our children and to do so as part of a loving community which has the highest expectations of and for all.
- Every Governor** at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to act as a critical friend to the School and to be accountable for the School's strategy. They will play a visible role supporting all children, their parents and staff at School and in the wider community, to provide the best environment possible for learning and spiritual growth.



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## OUR GOLDEN RULE

**We treat others as we would like to be treated**

St Thomas of Canterbury is a Catholic Academy Primary School, a part of the family of schools within the Xavier Catholic Education Trust.

## Special Considerations

1. The children are largely drawn from the four Churches, (St Josephs, St Marys, St Pius X and St Edward the Confessor), that constitute the large Catholic Parish of Guildford, in the diocese of Arundel and Brighton. Three priests serve these four churches.
2. The school welcomes all children and, whilst the majority of children in the school are Catholic, the school family includes children of many different religions and of none.
3. The children's experience of church varies from belonging to a supportive Catholic family to others whose only experience of Church is school.

## Agreed Syllabus

In line with the Bishop's mandate for the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, we follow The Religious Education Directory (RED) "To know You more Clearly", in Years EYFS, 1,2,5 and 6. Years 3 and 4 follow the previous "Come and See" Scheme in line with other diocesan schools. By September 2025, the Directory will be fully in place across the whole school.

## Time Allocated

The time allocated for R.E. is as follows:

Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1	- 10% (2 hours 30 mins)
Key Stage 2	- 10% (2 hours 30 mins)
(This does not include times of Collective Worship.)	

## Aims and Objectives

Religious Education promotes the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God. With this thought in mind, religious growth and development cannot be confined purely to the "academic" timetabled R.E. lesson. We seek to provide a whole-school experience, in which our Catholic curriculum stimulates religious growth and development hand in hand with academic and social progress.

Every child is at a different stage of a faith journey and this needs to be considered when providing for his/her religious needs. This may not always take place in the formal R.E. lesson, but should occur in other aspects of school life. We aim to help the children to experience, understand, celebrate and live their faith in ways suited to their age and development. The school tries to support, clarify and extend the child's experiences at home. We seek to proclaim the Gospel values of care, commitment, acceptance and respect.



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## Objectives

1. To provide a structured and balanced programme of Religious Education that helps to develop the knowledge and understanding of the mystery of the Trinity, of the Church and the central beliefs, which form the Catholic Faith.
2. To encourage the children to appreciate, through their own experience of life, a love and sense of wonder and awe of the Gospels, Revelation and Tradition.
3. To promote enriching opportunities for prayer and worship, and to help the children to understand and appreciate the value of the Sacraments on their journey through life.
4. To promote the growth of sound personal relationships, including an awareness of the nature and importance of human sexuality, as part of God's plan for them and an appreciation of the values of the family.
5. To foster appropriate attitudes by showing regard and respect for the views of others, a tolerance and some knowledge of the beliefs and traditions of other faiths.
6. To appreciate that living as a Christian involves a commitment to peace, justice, care and concern.

## Content

### Religious Education in Reception, Year 1, 2, 5 and 6

The RED framework has four structural elements:

- Knowledge lenses which indicate what should be known by the end of each age phase. These are split into hear, believe, live and celebrate.
- The 'ways of knowing' are the skills which develop as the children progress through their curriculum journey. These are split into understand, discern and respond.
- Expected outcomes are set for each age phase and indicate what pupils are expected to know, remember and be able to do.
- Curriculum branches are the way the programme of study presents its model curriculum. There are six half term branches for each half term which are the same in each year group

Curriculum branches for Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6:

- Autumn 1- Creation and Covenant- Encounter the God who creates and calls all people with a focus on the accounts of Creation.
- Autumn 2- Prophecy and Promise- Explore the expectant waiting for the Messiah through the Advent season.
- Spring 1- Galilee to Jerusalem- Experience the ministry of Jesus, the Word of God. They will learn through parables, encounters, miracles and teachings.
- Spring 2- Desert to Garden- Study the season of Lent and its culmination in the events of Holy Week.





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- Summer 1- To the ends of the Earth- Study the events that flowed from the Resurrection and Ascension in the coming of the Holy Spirit and the work of the apostles and early Church.
- Summer 2- Dialogue and Encounter- Learn how Christians work together with people of different religious backgrounds, building an understand that all people work towards a common good and should respect all humanity.

## Religious Education in Year 3 and 4

In line with our fellow Diocesan schools, we are using a scheme called 'Come and See' in Year 3 and 4. This forms the basis of our Religious Education provision. It is based on the theological foundations of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Catechism and the revised RE Curriculum Directory. 'Come and See' is an invitation to all to explore the promise of life. This scheme provides a schoolwide overarching theme, which each group approaches at an age appropriate level.

During the Autumn term the children will focus on three key themes:

- Domestic Church (Family)
- Baptism and Confirmation (Belonging)
- Advent and Christmas (Loving).
- The children will also spend one week studying Judaism.

As we move into the Spring term we will be studying:

- Local Church (Community)
- Eucharist (Relating)
- Lent/Easter (Giving).

Within the Summer term each unit reflects upon the role the Holy Spirit plays in our lives. We will be studying the three themes:

- Pentecost (Serving)
- Reconciliation (Inter-relating)
- Universal Church (World).
- The children will also spend one week studying Islam.

## Our Policy for Religious Education

### 1. Mission Statement Ethos

Religious Education at St Thomas' begins with our general ethos, which seeks to proclaim the Gospel values of care, commitment, acceptance and respect. This philosophy permeates all areas of school life and all subjects taught.





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## **2. The Bible**

In our lessons, assemblies and liturgies, we try to introduce the children, in a way suitable to their age and stage of development, to the variety of literacy forms in the Bible, to understand its origins and treat it with respect and reverence. The younger children primarily build on their own experience and then are gradually introduced to the Bible.

## **3. Multi-cultural, Multi-faith society**

Our school recognises that we live in a diverse society and seeks to reflect and celebrate that diversity. We try to develop the child's understanding of the self and to encourage attitudes of openness and sensitivity towards people whose religious beliefs and customs may be different to their own. We look to invite visiting speakers, look for suitable literature concerning the variety of celebrations and festivals, and seek opportunities on topics, music etc. to widen our children's awareness of other Faiths and cultures.

As part of the two RE programmes we follow, children are given the opportunity to explore and understand other faiths. The 'Come and See' programme teaches Judaism during the Autumn Term and Islam during the Summer Term. The 'To know you more clearly' provides the opportunity for children to discover and discern other faiths during the Summer Term.

## **4. Teaching and Learning Techniques**

A range of teaching and learning techniques is involved according to the age and needs of the child. Children are encouraged to aim at the highest standards of presentation and to display work for others to share. Children with special needs of any kind are central to our concern and every effort is made to adapt the curriculum to their individual needs and to recognise their talents. Every member of staff has a line manager who has special responsibility for their pastoral care and professional development, and is available to assist with personal problems. For children, their class teacher oversees pastoral care, which is overseen by our SWIT Team (Safeguarding, Welfare and Inclusion Team) who meet weekly to review the needs of children across the school.

We seek to develop a sense of social justice in our children by supporting charities such as Mission Together, The Catholic Children's Society and the Poppy Appeal. We have strong links with our partner school in Busenya.

## **5. Home/ School Partnership**

Parents are recognised and valued as being the children's first educators in their faith. We work to build strong partnership between school and parents through communication of the R.E curriculum, access to information and guidance on how to support their child's learning in R.E. The school website and newsletters are used to do this. Parents are invited to their children's prayer services, assemblies, and class and school Masses. Teachers plan one homework task for each RE topic to foster our home school link and further develop the children's learning in R.E.



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## Assessing, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in Religious Education is ongoing and pupil progress is assessed according to the learning focus in each area of learning. Assessment follows Diocesan guidance. Each pupil's attainment is recorded on the school's assessment recording system termly. Comparison and analysis is then made with pupil's performance in other subjects, particularly Writing. This enables the class teacher and RE Leader to ensure progress is being made for every pupil.

- Progress in R.E achievement is reported to parents and carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.
- Progress and achievement in R.E is reported to governors through an annual monitoring report to the governors.

Assessment for learning underpins the teaching and learning of R.E. Teachers therefore:

- share learning goals with pupils;
- help pupils to know and to recognise what to aim for;
- provide feedback which leads pupils to identify what they should do next to improve;
- have a commitment that every pupil can improve;
- involve both teacher and pupils in reviewing and reflecting on pupils' performance and progress;
- involve pupils in self-assessment.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, and R.E Subject Leader are responsible for the self-evaluation of the Catholic Life of the School. This process enables us to identify what actions are required to further improve and build an effective Action Plan for R.E.

*This policy of St Thomas of Canterbury School upholds the school's ethos and Mission Statement. It must be read in conjunction with and implemented in accordance to the school's policies for Health & Safety Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding. Copies of these policies are available from the school website.*

