

# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School



Together we live and learn; we  
play and pray

## Religious Education Policy

Date of Policy: September 2026

Date of Review: September 2028

Responsible for Policy: Local Governing Body

Policy Approved: September 2026

*This policy should be read alongside To Know You More Clearly: The Religious Education Directory, the school's Prayer and Liturgy Policy, Catholic Self-Evaluation Document and School Improvement Plan.*

Together we live and learn; we play and pray

*“The Catholic school is an environment in which faith, culture and life intertwine.”*

*Pope Leo XIV, Drawing New Maps of Hope, 27 October 2025, section 5.2*

At Sacred Heart, Jesus Christ is the model for all that we do, say and think. Religious Education is central to our identity as a Catholic school and is taught with the academic rigour, ambition and care afforded to every core subject. We recognise each child as made in the image and likeness of God, with unique gifts and talents.

Our policy is rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church and in the Religious Education Directory. It is distinct from, but closely connected to, the school's provision for Catholic Life and Mission and Prayer and Liturgy.

## The context of this policy

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is part of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and the Diocese of East Anglia. Our mission, 'Together we live and learn; we play and pray,' underpins an ambitious and inclusive Catholic education.

We serve a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse community. We welcome pupils and families of different Christian traditions, other faiths and none. The Catholic character of our curriculum is explicit, while every pupil is treated with dignity and respect.

## The purpose of Religious Education at Sacred Heart

Religious Education is a rigorous academic discipline in which pupils acquire secure knowledge of Catholic beliefs, Scripture, theology and religious practice, and develop the capacity to understand, discern and respond thoughtfully.

- ✚ To develop progressively secure knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and its sources.
- ✚ To enable pupils to interpret and engage thoughtfully with Scripture and the Church's teaching.
- ✚ To foster theological literacy, curiosity, reasoning and respectful dialogue.
- ✚ To develop understanding of other religions and worldviews.
- ✚ To enable every pupil to access an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum, including pupils with SEND and pupils learning English as an additional language.

## Statement of requirement

Religious Education is a core curriculum subject. At least 10% of taught curriculum time in Key Stages One and Two is allocated to Religious Education. Prayer, Mass, Celebrations of the Word and other acts of worship are not counted towards this allocation.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, RE is provided through age-appropriate teaching and experiences aligned with the Religious Education Directory and the EYFS framework.

Parents have a statutory right to request withdrawal from RE. Requests are considered sensitively by the Headteacher in accordance with applicable law and Trust guidance.

## Key principles

- ✚ **Christ-centred:** teaching is rooted in Catholic belief and faithful to the Church.
- ✚ **Academic rigour:** RE has clear knowledge, progression, assessment and challenge.
- ✚ **Scripture at the heart:** pupils encounter and increasingly understand the sources of revelation.
- ✚ **Inclusion and ambition:** appropriate adaptations secure access without limiting aspiration.
- ✚ **Dialogue and respect:** pupils learn accurately about others and engage with dignity.
- ✚ **Coherence:** RE complements, but is not replaced by, prayer, liturgy or values activities.

## Responsibilities

### Local Governing Body

Governors safeguard the Catholic character of RE, approve and review this policy, receive evaluative information, and provide informed support and challenge about curriculum quality, pupil outcomes, staffing and resources.

### Headteacher

The Headteacher ensures that RE meets diocesan and Church expectations, receives the required curriculum time, and is taught, assessed, monitored and resourced effectively. The Headteacher ensures that findings inform Catholic self-evaluation and school improvement.

### Religious Education Leader

The RE Leader supports curriculum sequencing, subject knowledge, planning, assessment and moderation; monitors the quality of provision; identifies staff formation needs; and reports findings to leaders and governors.

### Class teachers and support staff

Teachers plan and teach high-quality RE, use accurate Catholic terminology, assess pupils' understanding and adapt provision to individual needs. Support staff contribute under teachers' direction and participate in appropriate formation.

## Curriculum provision and progression

The school's RE curriculum is informed by To Know You More Clearly: The Religious Education Directory (RED). Its six branches provide a progressive structure from EYFS to Year 6.

-  Creation and Covenant
-  Prophecy and Promise
-  Galilee to Jerusalem
-  Desert to Garden
-  To the Ends of the Earth
-  Dialogue and Encounter

Teaching is structured through the knowledge lenses Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live, and develops the Ways of Knowing: Understand, Discern and Respond. Planning identifies substantive content, prior knowledge, vocabulary, intended outcomes and opportunities to revisit learning.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching begins with clearly identified religious knowledge and understanding. Staff use explicit explanation, carefully chosen Scripture, discussion, questioning, visual resources, reflection, writing and creative responses where these deepen learning.

-  Build on what pupils already know and explicitly teach key religious vocabulary.
-  Provide clear explanations and opportunities for reasoning and theological enquiry.
-  Check understanding regularly and address misconceptions.
-  Use purposeful tasks that make pupils' knowledge and understanding visible.
-  Make thoughtful links to the liturgical year, Catholic Social Teaching and lived faith without displacing the RED curriculum.

## Religious literacy, dialogue and encounter

Pupils learn accurately and respectfully about the beliefs, traditions and practices of other religions and worldviews through the RED, particularly Dialogue and Encounter. They are encouraged to ask questions, recognise differences and commonalities, and communicate with respect.

## Inclusion and accessibility

Every pupil is entitled to meaningful participation and ambitious learning. Staff use appropriate scaffolding, visuals, vocabulary instruction, oral rehearsal, alternative recording and targeted support. EAL is not treated as a special educational need; pupils' linguistic and cultural experiences are valued as assets.

## Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment establishes what pupils know, understand and can do in RE. Formative assessment includes questioning, discussion, observation and scrutiny of work. Summative judgements draw on appropriate evidence against taught curriculum expectations.

- ✚ Teachers identify misconceptions and adapt subsequent teaching.
- ✚ Moderation strengthens the consistency and accuracy of judgements.
- ✚ Assessment informs support, challenge and transition between year groups.
- ✚ Parents receive information on RE attainment through established reporting arrangements.
- ✚ The RE Leader reviews outcomes and identifies priorities for improvement.

A pupil's personal faith, religious commitment or participation in worship is not assessed or graded.

## Catholic Social Teaching and the Jesuit Pupil Profile

Sacred Heart's formation framework, 'Formed by prayer – sent into mission,' connects Catholic Social Teaching with the Jesuit Pupil Profile and the Church's liturgical year. It supports the application of faith to relationships, service and action, while complementing rather than replacing the RED.

- ✚ Autumn 1: Compassionate and Loving – Care for Creation
- ✚ Autumn 2: Faith-filled and Hopeful – Dignity of the Person
- ✚ Spring 1: Eloquent and Truthful – Subsidiarity
- ✚ Spring 2: Learned and Wise – Solidarity
- ✚ Summer 1: Curious and Active – Common Good
- ✚ Summer 2: Intentional and Prophetic – See–Judge–Act

## Relationship with prayer and liturgy

RE is the planned academic study of religion. Catholic Life and Mission is the lived expression of the school's Catholic identity. Prayer and Liturgy enables the community to pray and worship in accordance with Catholic tradition. These dimensions enrich one another but remain distinct.

The separate Prayer and Liturgy Policy sets out the school's approach to daily prayer, Mass, Celebrations of the Word, pupil liturgical formation and the Gather – Word – Response – Mission model.

## Families, parish and the wider Church

Parents and carers are recognised as the first educators of their children. Sacred Heart works with families, Sacred Heart parish, the Diocese and the Trust to strengthen Catholic education and formation. Sacramental teaching forms part of RE; preparation to receive Reconciliation and First Holy Communion is undertaken through agreed school–parish arrangements.

## Staff formation and professional development

Staff are supported to develop theological understanding, curriculum knowledge, questioning, assessment and inclusive pedagogy. Formation includes Trust, diocesan and school opportunities. The Headteacher's participation in Educare's year-long Christ the Teacher Formation contributes to leadership development and wider staff formation.

## Resources

The school makes appropriate provision for Bibles, RED-aligned teaching resources, Catholic reference materials, staff development and accessible learning resources. Resources are reviewed to support curriculum quality and progression.

## Monitoring, evaluation and school improvement

Monitoring is proportionate and focused on improving pupils' learning. It may include lesson visits, work scrutiny, pupil voice, curriculum review, assessment analysis, moderation and staff dialogue. Findings inform the Catholic Self-Evaluation Document, School Improvement Plan and governor oversight.

Priorities for 2026–27 include strengthening theological understanding, purposeful questioning, consistency of teaching and assessment accuracy.

## Safeguarding, dignity and respectful dialogue

RE is taught in a safe and respectful environment. Pupils are not required to disclose personal beliefs or religious experiences. Staff respond sensitively to difficult questions, protect pupils' dignity and follow the school's safeguarding and equality procedures.

## Review

This policy will be considered annually through the school's normal evaluation cycle and formally reviewed by September 2028, or earlier if significant changes to Church, diocesan, Trust or statutory guidance require it.

## Appendix A – Key references

-  Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, To Know You More Clearly: The Religious Education Directory.
-  Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, To Love You More Dearly: The Prayer and Liturgy Directory.
-  Catholic Schools Inspectorate, National Framework for the Inspection of Catholic Schools.
-  Sacred Heart Prayer and Liturgy Policy (2026).
-  Sacred Heart Catholic Self-Evaluation Document and School Improvement Plan (2026–27).
-  Sacred Heart Jesuit Pupil Profile and Catholic Social Teaching progression.