

St. Paul & St Timothy's Catholic Infant School

Religious Education Handbook



2026-2027

St. Paul and St. Timothy's Catholic Infant School
Mission Statement

Love, Learn, Believe, Achieve
in the Spirit of Jesus

At St. Paul and St. Timothy's Catholic Infant School, we celebrate the individual differences and gifts that God has blessed each and every one of us with.

"The mission of schools ... is to develop an understanding of all that is true, good and beautiful."

"An inclusive education finds a place for all."

"Educating is an act of love; it is like giving life." (Pope Francis)

We believe each new day brings the opportunity to express our love for God and one another. We provide a supportive, yet challenging, learning environment where each individual is able to develop their abilities and gifts. Our school is a place where children and adults can express their belief in God; develop belief in themselves and others. We believe everyone in our school community can achieve, whatever their ability. Each achievement is as unique as each individual and all are celebrated. We aspire to equip all in our school community to proclaim the Good News and "live life to the full".

The aim of Religious Education at St Paul and St Timothy's Catholic Infant School is to help embrace and live out all elements of our mission statement daily. We aim to develop within our children, a trusting, loving and personal relationship with God by introducing them to the mystery of Christ through his teachings in the Gospel.

We provide for the Religious Educational needs of all our children including:

- Children from a supportive Catholic home.
- Children where school is their first experience of Church.
- Children from other Church traditions or faith backgrounds.

2. Aims and Objectives of Religious Education in our School.

1) To enable every individual (made in the image and likeness of God) to learn, grow and reach their full potential.

We will do this by:

- Recognising and celebrating the unique gifts and talents given by God to each person.
- Providing a high-quality education that nurtures the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and physical development of every child.
- Creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where everyone is valued and respected.
- Encouraging high aspirations and a love of learning.
- Supporting all pupils to achieve their God-given potential.
- Promoting confidence, resilience, and independence through positive relationships and experiences.
- Helping children to develop a strong sense of self-worth as beloved children of God.
- Working in partnership with families to support the growth and wellbeing of every child.
- Valuing, sharing and celebrating all achievements (Weekly celebration assemblies)
- Providing extra-curricular activities to extend learning outside the classroom. (Sports clubs, Music clubs, Little Faith Explorers club etc)

2) We aim to be a loving Christian family living the values of the Gospel.

We will do this by:

- Growing in our relationship with God through prayer and worship.
- Following the example of Jesus in all that we do.
- Treating everyone with dignity, respect, and compassion.
- Serving others and putting our faith into action.
- Promoting justice, peace, and care for creation.
- Working together to build a welcoming and inclusive community.

3) To seek to make a difference through developing caring relationships with the local and wider community.

- We will do this by:
- Building strong partnerships between home, school, parish, and the wider community.
- Serving others through charitable works, fundraising, and acts of kindness.
- Living out the principles of Catholic Social Teaching through social action and outreach.
- Welcoming and valuing all members of our community with respect and compassion.
- Taking opportunities to support those in need both locally and globally.
- Caring for God's creation and promoting environmental responsibility.
- Encouraging pupils to become active, responsible citizens who contribute positively to society.
- Celebrating diversity and fostering understanding, respect, and inclusion.

Overall aims of religious education (as outlined in RED)

Formation and education provided in schools is subject to the authority of the Church (can. 397, 806). It is for the Episcopal Conference to issue general norms concerning formation and education in the Catholic religion and for the diocesan Bishop to regulate and watch over it (can. 804).

The aims of religious education are:

1. 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;
2. to enable pupils to continually deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;

3. to 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;
4. to 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;
5. to develop the critical faculties of pupils so to bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture;
6. to stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. to enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through religious education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum.

The outcomes of religious education

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.

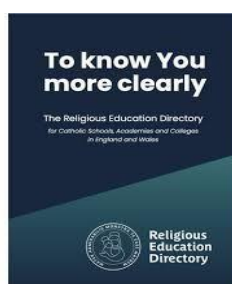
Religious education as the heart of the curriculum

1. Religious education is the core of the core curriculum and is to be the source and summit of the whole curriculum.
2. Religious education is an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and rigour as other disciplines.
3. Religious education is to be delivered within a broad and balanced curriculum, where it informs every aspect of the curriculum. Every other subject is to be informed by religious education and have a strong relationship with it.
4. In each year of compulsory schooling, religious education is to be taught for at least 10% curriculum time within each repeating cycle of the regular school timetable.

3. Our Religious Education Programme

To be fully compliant in fulfilling our aims and objectives we use the Scheme of Work recommended by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. All the content and expected outcomes are as outlined in the programmes of study for the various age groups in the Religious Education Directory – 'To Know You More Clearly' model curriculum as mandated by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

To fulfil our aims and objectives, we follow 'To Know You More Clearly' – The Religious Education Directory (RED).



Since the whole curriculum in our school is based on the values of the Gospel and because we see all education as revealing the mystery of God, we recognise two aspects of Religious Education in our school.

- Implicit, or spontaneous Religious Education – those opportunities which arise in the course of the school day where pupils can be led to understand religious perspectives or values. These opportunities can arise naturally through various topics covered in our regular curriculum or extra-curricular content, through discussions between adults and children or in relation to an event that has impacted the school or child. At St Paul & St Timothy's we encourage staff to make use of these natural moments to enable pupils to think about religion in everyday situations.
- Explicit, or structured Religious Education – those opportunities timetabled and planned periods of time given to explicit consideration of Religious Education in the classroom. At St Paul & St Timothy's we allocate 10% of our timetable to RE teaching from EYFS-Y2.

Overview of content

The Spiral Curriculum

The spiral structure of the curriculum enables a build-up, layering a critical dimension each year, deepening pupils' understanding of the story of salvation, developing a common language, and exploring the 'memory of the Church' and her teachings and how these have formed part of the history of ideas in the development of humanity.

The structure invites teachers to expose pupils to the beauty of Catholic Christianity and its shaping influence on culture through art, music, literature, science, and architecture historically and to the present day, which equips young people to dialogue with the beliefs and vision of the Church beyond intellectual remits and exposing them to the transcendent, a powerful pedagogy.

The spiral pathway students follow from their first steps into Catholic education means that teachers can plan for progression, moving through basic questioning and notional understandings to ever deeper levels of engagement with Christianity's divine and human drama and its significance for humankind

The Curriculum Structures

The model curriculum has six components that will be known as branches.

Each one has a core theme and invites pupils to learn about an aspect of Revelation, Scripture, life in Christ, and life in the Church, and to discern what their learning means academically and experientially enabling them to see, judge, and act through a deeper knowledge of the Christian faith.

To Know You More Clearly:

Branch 1 Creation and covenant: 'The heavens are telling the glory of God' (Ps 19:1)

- In this branch, pupils will encounter the God who creates and calls a people.
- They will explore revelation of the Christian belief that all that is comes from God, the Creation accounts in Genesis, and scientific explanations of the process of Creation.
- They will explore the call of God and his covenantal relationship with his people first through Abraham and Moses, then through the narrative of the Old Testament.

Branch 2 Prophecy and promise: 'In many and various ways, God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets' (Heb 1:1)

- In this branch, pupils will learn that the prophets speak of God reaching to his people, calling them back into a relationship with him.

- In this branch, pupils will explore the Christian understanding of the teaching of the prophets as they point to the fulfilment of God's promise in a messiah, Jesus Christ.
- They will explore the expectant waiting for the Messiah through the Advent season and how this speaks to Christians today as they wait for Christ.
- Pupils will encounter the story of the nativity of Jesus and the mystery of the incarnation.

Branch 3 Galilee to Jerusalem: 'God's only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known' (Jn 1:18)

- In this branch, pupils will experience the ministry of Jesus, the Word of God.
- They will learn about the life of Jesus and his revelation of the Kingdom of God through parables, encounters, miracles, and teachings.
- They will learn about the call of the disciples and the nature of being a follower of Jesus.

Branch 4 Desert to garden: 'Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day' (1 Cor 15:3)

- In this branch, pupils will study the season of Lent and its culmination in the events of Holy Week.
- They will learn about the Paschal Triduum at the heart of the Catholic Church's Liturgy and life.
- The title of this branch points both to the liturgical journey from the desert of Lent to the garden of Resurrection, but also to the Paschal journey from darkness to light, barrenness to fruitfulness, death to life.

Branch 5 To the ends of the Earth: 'Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt 28:19)

- In this branch, pupils will 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.
- They will also learn about the Catholic Church today as the apostolic Church and how its liturgy and structures flow from the early Church.

Branch 6 Dialogue and encounter: 'For "In him we live and move and have our being"' (Acts 17:28)

- In this branch, pupils will 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.

4. The Approach Chosen

Knowledge Lenses – set out the object of study for pupils, they indicate what should be known by the end of each age phase:

The study of the Catholic Religion

- Hear
- Believe
- Celebrate
- Live

The study of other Religions and Worldviews

- Dialogue
- Encounter

The Sacraments – these are taught within and across branches. 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.

The approach taken should encompass a variety of teaching and learning styles, which enable the needs of individual pupils to be met through broad and balanced, cross-curricular, creative lessons.

Ways of Knowing – set out the skills that pupils should be developing as they progress through their curriculum journey. The **three** ways of knowing are: understand, discern, and respond.

5. Planning

Long-term planning

At St Paul & St Timothy's, each year group has its own long-term plan according to the programme of study. Teachers will allocate 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education. This does **not** include Prayer and Liturgy time. This is indicated on individual timetables and monitored termly by SLT and RE link Governor.

Medium-term planning (Responsibility of RE Lead)

The R.E Coordinator will provide each class teacher with topic planning provided by the Archdiocesan CES. This will indicate the topics to be covered, the start and finish dates for RED and any special events or feast days which occur during the weeks of the topic. This also includes liturgical colours for seasons and the themes and Gospel values covered that week in Prayer and Liturgy sessions.

Short-term planning (Responsibility of individual teachers in year groups)

All class teachers will be provided with the Archdiocese planning for their topic which they will then use:

- To allocate time for each learning outcome to be achieved.
- To plan the topic to ensure achievement of the learning outcomes.
- To select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children.
- To indicate the children to be assessed, the whole class, groups or individuals and the activities chosen for the assessment.

Planning RE in St Paul & St Timothy's follows recommendations from Liverpool Archdiocese. As with other curriculum areas, there is no set planning format for RE lessons and teachers are free to organise their planning in whichever form is most helpful to them.

Foundation stage approach

Religious Education makes an active contribution to the areas of learning outlined in the curriculum for the Foundation stage, but has a particular and important contribution to;

- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Understanding the world
- Art and design.

The Foundation stage classes also keep evidence of their RE learning in a class floor book for each topic to show class, group and individual learning. Staff in the Foundation stage discuss planning of the topics on a regular basis to avoid repetition of activities and to ensure that there is progress in learning throughout the Foundation years. The teaching process is divided into whole class teaching, adult-directed group activities and continuous provision activities.

SEND

As with all areas of the curriculum, we follow the school's policy on equal opportunities for all our members of the school community in terms of gender, race, culture and academic ability. At St Paul & St Timothy's, staff work hard to ensure scaffolded opportunities for all children to achieve in RE. Teachers use a wide range of teaching and learning styles in lessons, the principle aim being to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

Lessons and objectives are taught through a variety of creative methods such as storytelling, art and role play which are used to explore and understand RE topics in an imaginative and interactive way. This also ensures that our SEND children can demonstrate their learning and understanding in a more practical way. Please also see the document 'Religious Education Curriculum Guidance for pupils with SEND with an EHC plan.

Adaptive Teaching

As with all other areas of the curriculum, the needs of our children are met through adaptation:

- To enable children to succeed in the set task or activity
- To challenge children and deepen their knowledge of religious education, encouraging them to expand and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills
- To enable children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these

6. Expected Outcomes – Assessment

Expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the Knowledge Lenses and the skills described in the Ways of Knowing; see page 40 of the Religious Education Directory. 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. Each branch and Year group will have its own discrete expected outcomes. See pages 36-38 Religious Education Directory

In our school it involves...

Assessment is focused on the overall aims and objectives of 'To Know You More Clearly' and the Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools and Colleges. Assessment in Religious Education focuses on the concepts, skills and attitudes developed through both learning about and learning from religion. It determines what children know, understand, and are capable of, while also guiding them on how to progress. The assessment provides support and motivation for the learners, but it does not evaluate spirituality or the practice of faith.

At St Paul & St Timothy's, the assessment of Religious Education aligns closely with the guidelines set by the RED and the Liverpool Archdiocese. The process includes:

Informal assessment:

Evidence of tasks in RE Workbook / PowerPoints :

General observations of children engaged in classroom activities.

Observation of contributions made to classroom displays and prayer tables.

Working at 'Expected Standard' or 'Working towards the Expected Standard' judgement completed for the topic / branch.

Formal Assessment

The ways of knowing describe the skills that pupils develop as they progress through the religious education curriculum.

We refer to ways of knowing rather than standards or levels, since progress in Religious Education is not only something that concerns performance and summative assessment, which the previous implied. They

are called ways of knowing since they describe the holistic ways human beings experience education: as a growth in understanding, as a creative and critical assimilation, and as a recognition of the application of learning to one's own life.

The three **Ways of Knowing** are: '**understand**', '**discern**', and '**respond**'.

Teachers gather each term to hold internal moderation; this is judged against the aims of each 'way of knowing' and the skills that are required to develop them through the driver words.

Early Years Staff assess children's understanding of the topic using the **Ways of Knowing** combined with the **Early Learning Goals** shared by the Archdiocese within the To Know You More Clearly programme, they will use their observations to inform their decisions.

Recording

Recording in R.E. recognises the distinct nature of the subject, provides evidence of achievement and may involve the pupils in self-assessment and dialogue with the teacher. It can take many forms:

- Notes from observations
- Comments written on pupils' work
- Visual evidence e.g., photographs of displays, portfolios.
- Children's self-assessments.
- Floor books (EYFS)
- Earwig (online recording platform)

Recording provides evidence of and celebrates the individual's achievement.

7. Tracking Data

At the end of each term, every child will be assessed using the expected outcomes (RED). This will show whether the individual is working towards expected, expected or above. This assessment will then be fed into the whole class tracking system, similar to how we track Maths and English using Sonar.

Assessment is based on teacher assessments, observations, work in books and moderated work. This will then be collated by the RE coordinator and fed back to teachers. Through this, teachers can then plan the next term's lessons to enable all children to make progress.

Data is also analysed at the end of the year to make sure it is in line with the data from Maths and English.

8. Reporting

Reporting in R.E is a natural part of teaching and is integral to the learning process. There are four dimensions to reporting in R.E.

- It provides feedback to pupils on their achievements and progress.
- It informs colleagues of the achievement of pupils and areas studied by the class.
- It informs parents of children's progress and achievement.
- It informs governors, parish and external agencies about the R.E provided by St Paul & St Timothy's Catholic Infant school.

The process of reporting includes end of year reports, parents' evenings, lists of topics covered and dialogue with relevant parties. In line with Archdiocesan recommendations, Religious Education is

reported first in the pupils' end of year report. As well as this, parents are encouraged and welcome to enquire about the progress and achievements of their children.

9. Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

Evaluation of Teaching

All teachers are involved in the reviewing and evaluating of the implementation of the RE curriculum, as we plan together, celebrate children's work through display and assemblies, select resources and discuss ideas. Individual teachers evaluate their own lessons and teaching and adapt their practise accordingly. More formal evaluation of teaching is carried out termly by the Head teacher and R.E Coordinator, in the observation of class teaching and monitoring of children's books and planning. Examples of moderated work, lesson observations and book monitoring are fed back to staff during termly staff meeting time.

Evaluation of Learning

The standards achieved in RE are in line with those of other subjects. The children's learning is being continuously assessed by the teacher through their contributions to class discussions and the production of written work / annotated or scribed work. Work is marked regularly with constructive comments included where appropriate.

This work is moderated both internally at staff meetings and externally during cluster meetings. This ensures the high quality of learning is consistent through year groups and cluster schools.

Children have the opportunity to evaluate their own Religious Education through the use of Pupil Voice. Children's responses are then fed back to staff, any changes discussed and implemented and good practise shared.

10. Staff Development

- We are committed to keeping Religious Education central to future developments within our school, as we see it as crucial, as we continue to develop our whole school mission and ethos, based on the values Jesus taught us. Staying informed about new initiatives and ideas plays a key role in our growth in Religious Education
- We will also continue to support staff in studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS), as we see this as enhancing our provision for our pupils.
- Staff have Annual Performance Management meetings with SLT, during which they are able to discuss any training and development needs they have. Requests for professional development are considered with reference to individual need and to the school's priorities, as identified within the school's development plans. This may be by attending a formal training course or it may be that the individual observes other teachers or has an opportunity to look at other children's work.
- The subject lead participates in as many professional development opportunities as possible, offered by the Archdiocese. Termly updates for subject leaders are attended as well as termly cluster meetings. The subject lead is actively involved in the local Cluster of Catholic schools, meeting regularly to plan joint events, collaborate on curriculum development and engage in moderation activities. The subject lead attends the Archdiocesan cluster leads meetings each term.
- Regular INSET and staff meeting time is given to cover key areas such as Prayer and Liturgy, planning, displays and assessments.

11. Staff Induction

New staff are given:

- A copy of the 'To Know You More Clearly' programme for Religious Education.

- A schedule outlining topics to be covered during the year along with starting and finishing dates for topics.
- A copy of the RE Handbook
- A copy of the Prayer and Liturgy Policy
- A copy of the SMSC Policy

The RE Co-ordinator goes through the programme with new staff and is available for support as and when necessary.

12. Resources

The most vital resource within our school is our committed Christian staff.

All class teachers are responsible for the direct teaching of R.E and members of staff are committed to fostering a warm, caring ethos within the school. Teaching and planning resources are kept electronically on the staff drive.

Other resources

All staff have access to a range of resources to enable them to deliver the RE curriculum effectively. Each classroom has the appropriate planning and website resource materials. Teachers and children have access to these materials which include:

- God's story 1/2/3 and Churches story 1/2/3 •
- John Burland Cd / music.
- Good News Bibles
- Golden Boxes
- Bible Buddy sacks
- Travelling Cribs
- Storybooks
- Pictures/posters
- Songbooks
- Christmas/Easter artefacts
- Other faith artefacts

New resources will be added as the need arises – especially in line with the new curriculum.

13. Staff Communication

RE and the Catholic life and mission of our school is at the very heart of all we do at St Paul & St Timothy's. Curricular notices are shared with staff at weekly staff briefings and during staff meetings. Additional notices are communicated with staff via email as and when necessary.

14. The role of the R.E. Subject Leader

The RE Subject Leader is responsible for the following areas of religious education development across phases and throughout the school:

- To offer support, guidance and direction to all members of staff relating to the teaching and delivery of religious education across the whole school.
- To monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in religious education.
- To inform staff of new developments and guidelines relating to the teaching of religious education.
- To identify further areas for development and renewal.

- To assist in planning, in conjunction with staff and children, a variety of school liturgies and assemblies throughout the year.
- To provide the preparation of children for the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation, liaising closely with parents, parish and catechists.
- To inform all parents regarding topics and themes being covered, school liturgies and other religious activities taking place through the use of the website.
- To monitor, evaluate and update all religious education documentation.
- To monitor progress being made with the R.E. Action plan.

15. R.E and the Whole Curriculum

At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person.....Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school.

In all curriculum subjects, children are encouraged to develop the following moral and spiritual attitudes:

- A sense of personal responsibility e.g., helping a partner in P.E.
- A clear sense of right and wrong e.g., through reading stories
- A sense of self-esteem and self-knowledge e.g., through academic progress
- A correct respect for authority e.g. for teachers and all adult staff and visitors
- An openness to truth e.g., through investigation in Science and History
- An awareness of the presence of God in self, others and in the world e.g., through Geographical study of other cultures
- To recognise the different styles of pupil learning and to promote an emotionally literate school through RSE, R.E, PSED, Citizenship etc.

We also have in place school policies for Special Needs, Equal Opportunities, Anti-racism, Multicultural Education and Parental Involvement.

At St Paul & St Timothy's we are following the recommended Journey in Love programme. This programme helps us to link RE, RSE, science and PSHE. It enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships and marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to God's call to love others with proper respect and dignity.

The values expressed in the Mission Statement and aims are very evident in the life and work of our school, particularly in the quality of relationships between staff and children, staff and other staff and children and children.

Please see RSHE Policy, Spiritual and Moral Policy, Prayer and Liturgy Policy.

16. Review

This Handbook with accompanying policy documentation will be reviewed and updated by the R.E. lead as and when necessary in line with the current changes in the Archdiocese.

This R.E. handbook provides a guideline that aims to ensure high standards in the teaching of RE in our school. Our aim is to support Catholic families and those of other faiths by providing a variety of experiences in school, appropriate to the age, development and cultural background of the children.

17. Catholic Self-Evaluation Document (CSED)

(Updated Sept 26)