# Holy Cross Catholic

# Voluntary Academy

*We live, grow, learn and pray together in faith, showing God's love in all we do and say.*

# Part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic

# Academy Trust

# RE Policy

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| **Policy Revised:** | September 2025 |
| **Next Review:** | September 2027 |
| **Headteacher:** | Karen McVea |
| **Chair of Governors:** | Hilari Chetwood |

**Rationale**

In the life of the Catholic School, Religious Education plays a vital and central part. At the heart of Catholic education lays the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in Religious Education. Therefore, Religious Education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire education process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic Religious Education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school.

All pupils, therefore, have the right to access Religious Education which 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, which is within them (1 Peter 3:15). Religious Education is therefore the core subject in a Catholic school.

It is recognised that children come from a range of backgrounds and abilities, and the teaching of Religious Education will reflect this.

**Aims**

Curriculum religious education in Catholic schools' aims 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 continually to 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

Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (Religious Education Directory;2023)

**What is Religious Education?**[1]

- Religious Education is about engaging with the deepest questions of life and finding reasons for the hope which is within them
- It is about the Christian vision of the human person
- It is the core subject which is central to the life of the Catholic school
- Religious Education is the systematic study:
    - Of the mystery of God, as discovered through the Bible and particularly through the life and teachings of the Church;
    - The lives of the saints;
    - The relationship between faith and life.

[1] "Expectations of Religious Education in Catholic Schools" - Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, (January 2000)

**Expectations of Classroom Religious Education**

- Excellence in Religious Education is achieved by:
    - Clarity of succinct religious learning objectives
    - Key content
    - By appropriate methodologies
    - Rigour
    - Richness of resources
    - Achievement of identified outcomes
    - High expectations
    - Accurate methods of assessment.

**Outstanding Religious Education requires:**

- Analysis and reflection and critical appreciation of sources
- Marked progression through the different stages of education
- The unequivocal support of the Leadership of the Catholic school
- 10% of the timetable of the taught week for every Key Stage of education
- The encouragement of investigation, questioning and reflection
- Development of appropriate skills and attitudes which allows for a free, informed response to God's call in everyday life
- The use of skills in other areas of the curriculum
- To be embedded in the life of the school
- To be valued by all members of the community as a core subject

**Teaching and Learning**

The following aims and strategies underpin the effective delivery of Religious Education in the Catholic school, and therefore, at Holy Cross:

- Religious Education will be taught discretely and developmentally it will include the deepening of knowledge and understanding of key theological ideas and their application to life.
- Ample opportunities will be offered for children to apply and use their knowledge and skills in cross curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and think creatively
- Engagement with their own and others' beliefs and values will help to develop good attitudes and dispositions so that children are instilled with a love of learning and a desire to go on learning
- Engagement with difficult questions of meaning and purpose which everyone has to face will enable them to think critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose.
- Offer the children a sense of worth through their experience of belonging to a caring community and an awareness of the demands of religious commitment to everyday life

**The *Religious Education* Curriculum- RED 'To know you more clearly'.**

- **.** At Holy Cross School, children are taught using the RED curriculum 'To Know you more Clearly'. The Religious Education Directory includes the programs of study approved by the Bishops' Conference for the various age groups.

- The program of study for religious education in Catholic schools presented in this directory has a framework with four structural elements: knowledge lenses, ways of knowing, expected outcomes, curriculum branches

**The Branches – RED**

The model curriculum has six components that will be known as branches which are taught over the six half-terms of the school year. 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.

**1. Creation and covenant:** 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 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.

**2. Prophecy and promise:** 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.

**3. Galilee to Jerusalem:** 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.

**4. Desert to garden**: 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.

**5. To the ends of the Earth:** 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.

**6. Dialogue and encounter:** 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.

***The RED Curriculum ' To know you more clearly'*** includes objectives and learning intentions which consider the religious and educational needs of all children

- Those from supportive Catholic homes
- Those for whom the school may be their first and perhaps only experience of the Church
- Those from other Christian traditions
- Those from other faiths
- Those of no faith experience.

Other faiths are taught, in line with the thinking of the Church, with respect and in recognition of their holiness and strength, in a spirit of friendship. Teaching formally about other faiths occurs in each year group every year.

At Holy Cross, children will, over time, develop their knowledge and understanding of Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. As well as being supported through the RED Curriculum , learning is enhanced through the rich resource that is the community of the City of Leicester itself. Children have the opportunity to visit places of worship from other faiths including the Jewish Synagogue and the Mosque.

**Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

The school follows guidance and advice from the NRCDES on all matters relating to assessment, recording and reporting. Pupil progress is judged through observation, discussion and recorded work. Children are encouraged to self and peer evaluate their work and to respond to the teachers marking in order to help them to make progress.

**Resources**

A range of suitable resources are kept up to date and are stored in designated storage cupboards, classrooms and in the Chapel. Bibles, God's Story and Church's Story books are treated with respect at all times and to be maintained in good condition.

**Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is to be monitored by the Religious Education Subject Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the Governors and whole staff every two years