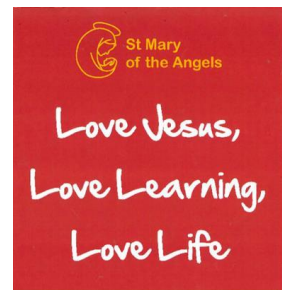


St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Person responsible: Mrs. H. Thorpe

To be reviewed: July 2027



General Aims and Philosophy

Religious Education and School Aims

At St. Mary of the Angels our religion and faith permeates every aspect of the life of the school. While addressing curricular RE through timetabled sessions we also address the spiritual needs of the children in many other ways, such as through whole class discussion, through subjects such as PSHSE and Art, in assemblies and Liturgical celebrations.

As teachers and practitioners we aim to impart and nurture the Catholic faith, values and traditions to the children in our care. Our aims for the education of our children are expressed more fully in our mission statement, Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life.

Evangelisation, Catechesis and Religious Studies

We recognise that the faith backgrounds of our children vary and that they are at different stages of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. We therefore approach and deliver Religious Education in a way which meets the needs of every child.

School, Home, Parish

We aim to provide a secure, caring and positive community which values all children, staff, parents and parishioners. We foster a school environment which enables each child to grow in love for God, themselves and each other.

We establish good relationships with home from the beginning of a child's life at the school and aim to strengthen this throughout the child's time with us. We involve parents in many events and projects and encourage them to participate in the religious life of the school, including collective worship.

We recognise that our school is an integral part of the parish community and appreciate that priests and catechists must be involved in our R.E. programme. We are blessed to be part of a broad and active parish and we aim to incorporate ourselves into the life of the parish.

Religious Education and the Curriculum

God is at the centre of the learning process at St Mary's and Religious Education is at the heart of the curriculum. With this in mind, RE at St. Mary's will never be confined to just 'timetabled slots' but will take place in a variety of contexts throughout every day. Specifically structured lessons will also take place.

10% of direct teaching time throughout the school (2.5 hours per week) is allocated to Religious Education as stated in our Statement of Justification.

We believe that cross curricular links are integral to a holistic and creative approach to Religious Education. Examples of this include, but are not exclusive to:

Literacy / English	Text selection, discussion, debates, poetry, prayer,
Design Technology and Art	Exploring religiously inspired artwork and creating our own, studying art linked to world faiths,
Music	Music to aid reflection and prayer,
History	Historical timelines of world faiths
Geography	Studying places of religious importance, e.g. The Holy Lands
Science and LOfC	Awe & wonder of God's creation, stewardship,

Programme of Study

In line with Diocesan guidance, the school follows 'The Vine and The Branches' programme of Religious Education. The contents of 'The Vine and The Branches' Programme of Study are based on the requirements of the Religious Education Directory of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales 2023.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher, Mrs Thorpe is ultimately responsible for the Religious Education of all our children and the Deputy, Mr Campbell and R.E. coordinator, Mrs Kane shares in this responsibility.

Each teacher has the task of ensuring that the children in their class receive Religious Education appropriate to their age and ability levels. All teachers prepare their own class assemblies and contribute to other services and celebrations throughout the year including assemblies and prayer leaders.

There is continual liaison with the parish priest and parish deacon on sacramental preparation, celebration of Mass, and other school celebrations.

Teaching and Learning

At St. Mary's we have high expectations. We teach R.E. in a creative way using a multi-sensory and cross curricular approach where appropriate, which enables all children to access learning and actively participate alongside their peers. Work is planned to meet the individual needs of children and is appropriate to their level of development for R.E. Children are encouraged to foster the search for meaning, value and purpose to completely fulfil their potential. We believe that for effective learning to take place the children require opportunities to inquire, question, develop responses and formulate their own views about fundamental questions. We do this by trying to develop within the children a positive attitude of enthusiasm, curiosity, respect and reflection.

Religious Education is at the core of our Curriculum. Elements of R.E permeate into every other curriculum area too. The specific times for more structured religious teaching vary in accordance with the ages of our children. This is one tenth of the weekly taught time for each class (approximately 2.5 hrs), from EYFS to Year 6. RE lessons are taught over both morning and afternoon sessions and are delivered throughout the week. RE lessons are taught by qualified class teachers with support from HLTAS and Teaching Assistants. Mrs Thorpe also teaches RE regularly in Y6 as well as other classes.

Religious Education is based on the RED with The Vine & Branches as our main scheme. The teaching styles employed in the classroom are varied and engaging, gaining depth and focus as the children grow in age and ability.

With their teachers and peer groups, children explore various themes and relate them, through their own experience, to the Christian way of life. They may be engaged as a whole class, small group, or individually in discussion, drama, writings or artistic pursuits working at their own level of knowledge

and understanding.

Formation

Formation and professional development is critical to our RECURRICULUM. All staff attend relevant training and formation opportunities led by Shrewsbury diocese. In addition, we also engage in local partnerships with our nearby Catholic schools cluster, as well as opportunities for national formation, e.g. EducareM and the NorthWest Diocesan partnership.

Internally, staff meeting time is allocated to discussing training as well as peer support with planning and assessment, throughout the year. We use The Vine & The Branches as our main resource to support the delivery of the RED with other resources to support, including CAFOD Universal Church Units, P4C resources, Lat Blaylock publications etc, and attend formation opportunities as appropriate.

Requisition

Within a set budget the R.E. Coordinator has the responsibility of requisitioning and maintaining resources for Religious Education and for the religious life of the school.

Monitoring

Assessment of RE is a continual process. All R.E. work is assessed, monitored, recorded and reported in line with whole school policy, and is included alongside Mathematics and English in whole school monitoring cycles. All R.E. data is presented to governors on a termly basis, and this is used to identify trends and address any potential areas of weakness across the school. As well as this, and in line with the Catholic Directory as specified by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales, R.E. is formally assessed on a termly basis through written tasks.

Other Religions

We live in a pluralistic society with people of different races, cultures and religions. At St. Mary's we believe it is important to prepare children for the challenges of living in modern Britain as part of a diverse, fast changing, global world, and so our children are taught about other faiths.

They learn specifically about other faiths during our Interfaith Weeks held annually. As part of the RE curriculum children have opportunities to learn about other faiths during the 'Dialogue and Encounter' topic that is taught in the summer term in every class.

Children also learn about other faiths through a variety of initiatives such as cross-curricular links (for example, with history and geography), visitors to school, assemblies and trips out of school. This teaching is in accordance with the specifications of the Bishops Conference of England and Wales.

'Within our schools we are seeking to educate all pupils of whatever religion to be able to live a way of life that integrates their beliefs with all other aspects of what it means to be human. As part of this, they must learn to live alongside others who are different and hold alternative views, including religious views.' (Para 201, 'Meeting God in Friend and Stranger.' Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales; Section 205)

Other Links

Parish Links

Sacramental preparation is now a shared programme between school and the parish. Both school staff and parish catechists deliver the programmes together. Celebrations of the Sacrament of First Forgiveness take place at St Mary of the Angels Church and celebrations of First Holy Communion take

place on a Saturday during May.

Clergy, children, parents and other parishioners unite to celebrate the Mass together on numerous occasions throughout the year. Parents and parishioners are also invited to join us for Liturgical and Prayer events, such as our Advent Service, our Ash Wednesday service etc. They also meet together for various social functions throughout the year.

High School Liaison

Liaison with Ellesmere Port Catholic High School is important throughout the primary years. To assist their transition to secondary education, Year 6 children visit Ellesmere Port High School for two full days in their final year at St. Mary of the Angels. We also work with EPCHS throughout the year on joint projects including Retreat Days, curriculum visits and more.

Community Links

The school is involved in the wider parish community in a number of ways – Masses and other liturgical celebrations, fairs, foodbank etc. During Lent and Advent and on family fast days the children are encouraged to make a small sacrifice in order to contribute to charities such as *CAFOD and CARITAS*. Local charities such as *The Hospice of the Good Shepherd* also received financial support from St Mary's.

