

St. Anselm's Catholic Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Date of Approval:	19 th March 2024
Review frequency:	Bi-annual
Next review date:	Spring 2026
Reviewed by:	Mrs Laura White, Headteacher Mrs Kathleen Head, RE Subject Leader

This policy is based on the document developed by the Religious Education Advisory team and approved by the Trustees within the Archdiocese of Southwark.

This policy was presented to the FGB on 19th March 2024 and will be reviewed in Spring 2026, or sooner if required

Mission Statement

St Anselm's is a community of faith, serving local families and providing a Catholic education.

We strive to work in partnership with parents and carers to:

- **Inspire children to be ambassadors of Jesus** through meaningful prayer, thoughtful reflection and exploration of the Gospel;
- **Ignite a love for life-long learning** by encouraging and challenging children through purposeful learning opportunities;
- **Include and value everyone**, recognise and celebrate uniqueness and promote self-appreciation;
- **Empower children to be ambitious, confident and aspirational** now and in their vision for the future;
- Provide an environment where positive wellbeing and mental health ensures everyone feels **safe, happy and loved as children of God.**

Introduction

The ultimate aim of Religious Education, at St Anselm's Catholic Primary School, is to situate Christ at the centre of all that we do. Jesus Christ is the absolute revelation of God. Through the Holy Spirit, each of us, in the Communion of Christ's Church, has the means to know and to love God, our Father, by knowing and loving his Son, Jesus Christ.

"This is why religious education in our schools must be as rigorous as any other academic discipline: but it cannot, as it were, stop at the point of academic rigour. It is the working of the Holy Spirit that transforms knowledge into love; that moment of 'conversion' when the person encounters the risen Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. And this process, of course, has no limits in terms of the intellectual ability (or otherwise) of the individual student. One of the most beautiful aspects of personal faith is its capacity to bring together persons of all abilities." (from a homily given by Monsignor Matthew Dickens NBRIA Conference, April 2019)

Within the curriculum, classroom Religious Education's main purpose is to engage pupils in a systematic study of the mystery of Christ which we believe holds the fullness of the truth that God has revealed. It will also provide the basis for an openness to the 'seeds of the Word' that are to be found in other religions (cf Redemptionist Missio 56, Nostra Aetate 2).

Conference of Catholic Bishops of England and Wales (CCBEW) Requirements

The Religious Education Curriculum Directory (3-19) for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales 2012 (RECD) clearly states, the Bishops' Conference expectation that 10% of taught curriculum time is given to the teaching of Religious Education in each academic year from EYFS through to Year 6.

RE is a core subject at St Anselm's and therefore 10% of curriculum time is devoted to its delivery. These time allocations do not include collective worship, assemblies or hymn practice.

Legal requirements

The law, School Standards and Framework Act 1998, requires all maintained schools:

- provide Religious Education for all pupils;
- recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship.

In addition:

- Foundation governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools;

Leadership of Religious Education

The governors and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that Religious Education has a high profile, and is taught as a core subject, within the curriculum of the Catholic school.

At St Anselm's:

- the named persons responsible for leading curriculum Religious Education are Mrs Laura White and Mrs Kathleen Kelly, both of whom are practising Catholics;
- the named governor responsible for Religious Education is Fr Patrick Zammit;
- the curriculum Religious Education is well resourced, both in regard to content and the continuing professional development of those teaching the subject;
- there is regular and comprehensive monitoring of curriculum Religious Education which clearly demonstrates the impact the subject has on the school.

Each year, the staff team devote at least one INSET day to the development of RE. Where possible, one of these is led by Fr Pat, the Parish Priest, who leads a day of retreat which focuses on the staff developing their own knowledge of the faith and personal relationship with God. A second day can be one where the Gravesend Deanery come together to develop a specific aspect of teaching and the RE curriculum. When these are not possible or available, they are replaced by INSET in school that addresses the key priorities identified in the SEF/SIP/RE action plan. The Subject Leader also attends Diocesan training events which forms regular high quality school based training for all staff.

The Headteacher and governors ensure that the school's self-evaluation processes monitor and evaluate the identity of the school as a Catholic community; the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Form is regularly reviewed and this feeds in to the development of the School Improvement Plan and RE Subject Leaders plan. All teaching staff are involved in the self evaluation of RE provision within the school.

Staff confidence in RE is developed through the use of termly peer observations and feedback from formal observations.

Curriculum Religious Education

At St Anselm's, The 'Come and See' scheme is used as a basis for teaching and learning. Subject Leaders then use this resource to plan lessons for each year group. The scheme is supplemented with religious music and contemporary scriptural art to invigorate the RE learning. Each lesson is given a planned opening and closing reflection, in line with the learning in the lesson. All Programmes of study comply with the expectations of the RECD, and subsequent versions.

At St Anselm's governors and leaders ensure that the curriculum content of taught Religious Education meets the requirements of the RECD as well as any additional requirements of the Local Ordinary. As the RECD is updated, planning will be adapted as necessary, within the required timeframe.

Sacramental preparation and the Catholic School

Sacramental preparation takes place in the parish of St Vincent's Dartford. The school liaises closely with the parish in order to ensure appropriate support and connections between parish sacramental preparation and school Religious Education programmes. The RE learning in the Year 3 class makes reference to the children's spiritual development, towards them making their First Holy Communion and receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Teaching of Other Religions:

At St Anselm's, children learn about other religions in all phases from Early Years Foundation through to Year 6. Pupils learn about and from other faith traditions as this will help to prepare them for living as full members of our diverse society. Other religions are taught for the equivalent of 4 weeks of Religious Education lessons, in each academic year (Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism). This is planned by the RE coordinator, using the Come and See planning as a basis. The learning is enhanced through the use of video clips, stories, artwork and artefacts. Where possible, we invite believers of other faiths into school to share their religion and beliefs. At the end of each 'Other Faiths' weeks, the children share their learning in a special sharing assembly.

Planning, assessment and recording of Religious Education:

At St Anselm's, learning is assessed using the age-related standard for Religious Education published by the Catholic Education Service (CES) and the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA). Supporting documents produced by the Education Commission are also used. Rather than assessing individual pieces of work, learning is assessed throughout the unit including both spoken and written evidence. Teachers then input this assessment into the school's online tracking system.

Teaching and Learning in Religious Education is monitored with the same rigour as that for the other core subjects.

Home Links

At St Anselm's, we recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children. Religious Education in our school, taught through the planned curriculum and across other areas, endeavours to support the parents in this important mission. Parents are informed of what their children are learning in Religious Education through termly RE 'knowledge and skills organisers' which is shared at the start of each term in the 'Meet with the Teacher' session or on the school website. A copy is also posted on the School website.

Review

St Anselm's undertakes a regular review of Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school with input from the governing body, staff, parents, pupils and the Education Commission. Outcomes are used to identify priorities for the School Improvement Plan and plan staff training and development needs.