St Alphonsus RC Primary School
Religious Education Policy

September 2026

Our Mission Statement:

GOD LIVES IN ME

God lives in me. I am His witness.

I respect everybody, everybody respects me.

In our loving school, everyone is unique.

Just like the flowers in the field, as they

grow, we too grow in God's love each day.



Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement is our Whole School Prayer which is taught from Reception and prayed and lived out daily in our school.

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Rationale Of Religious Education:

At St Alphonsus, Religious Education is the beating heart of our school and we believe that God is the central focus for everything we do - 'God lives in me' (School Mission Prayer). Religious Education is considered as our ultimate core subject and the Holy Bible is our core text. We have a shared vision of where we believe the school is headed, and this is based upon our "community of faith" in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and religious education is where that faith seeks understanding. The primary aim of Religious Education in our Catholic school is to engage in a comprehensive and 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.

All members of our school community have a common goal, a common purpose, common values, working together for the common good. Our school community, at St Alphonsus, includes everybody involved in the Catholic social, moral, spiritual, cultural and educational development of the children in which Christ is our foundation.
Religious Education permeates the whole of St Alphonsus' school curriculum and each day, children are provided with enriched engaging opportunities to apply their faith, knowledge and skills in cross curricular studies to deepen their understanding of religious truths and allow them to think spiritually and creatively, deepen and enhance their personal faith, or discover answers to the deepest questions of life. This is provided within an atmosphere of love, controlled freedom and enjoyment where children are motivated and challenged in order to develop positive self-concepts and are encouraged to be loving, thoughtful, spiritual, resilient, tolerant and independent learners.
As they 'grow in God's love each day' (School Mission Prayer), they have the knowledge and confidence to reach their full individual potential - we strongly believe in our school motto: 'Nothing is impossible to a willing heart' because we know that 'With God, all things are possible.' (Matthew 19:26)
Religious Education is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects.

Dialogue and encounter

Each classroom is a place of respectful dialogue. We believe Religious Education has an important part to play in this dialogue, by presenting a curriculum that includes a study of other religious traditions and worldviews. Every day, at St Alphonsus, we celebrate the diverse nature of our school community so that we can promote respectful dialogue and live out the teachings of The Catholic Church which teaches us that by virtue of their baptism, Catholics are called to engage in dialogue with others. Opportunities for a variety of cultural expressions to coexist in our school is, therefore, a natural occurrence. This dialogical attitude is nurtured in our school through its provision of a pluralistic Religious Education curriculum and its modelling of respectful dialogue in every day classroom practice. Our aim is to prepare pupils for the world they will encounter outside of the Catholic atmospheres of the home, parish, and school. In addition, the provision of a pluralistic

curriculum opens for pupils, the opportunity to engage in meaningful interreligious and intercultural dialogue that is relevant to all pupils, not just to those who are Catholic. (RED, 2023)

The primacy of Religious Education in the school curriculum:

1. Religious Education at St Alphonsus Primary School is the core of the core curriculum and is 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. It is organised, led, coordinated, taught, resourced and quality assured as a core subject.

3. Religious Education is delivered within a broad and balanced curriculum, where it informs every aspect of the curriculum. Every other subject is informed by Religious Education and has a strong relationship with it.

4. Our Religious Education Leads have parity in status and remuneration with those of any other curriculum area. (RED, 2023)

Outcome 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. (RED, 2023)

Through a well-structured religious curriculum, our pupils acquire a secure, comprehensive, progressive and deep understanding of the Catholic Church, faith, Scripture, Catholic tradition and Sacramental life. They are confident at using specialist religious vocabulary to articulate their understanding and reflections on faith. Our children are consciously engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, think theologically and reflect deeply on ethical choices, recognising how their faith influences their personal decision-making and the lives of others in their community and globally. Rooted in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, we encourage children to be true witnesses to Christ and activists of God's love, growing in self-awareness and appreciating the human dignity of all in their community and globally. Guided by compassion, dignity and a commitment to social justice, children are empowered to grow into agents of change through living out the Gospel values and school values of love, grow, respect and forgiveness.

We aim:

- To promote an atmosphere of reconciliation within which differences are resolved with patience and understanding so that each new day brings a fresh start – "To be like Jesus"
- To provide opportunities for celebration, prayer, daily worship and reflection in implicit and explicit ways.
- To provide children with the language of religious experience – a "literacy" in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, people and objects, through a range of creative teaching styles.
- To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects making links and connections, appreciating the impact which their faith has on the lives of others.
- To provide a systematic presentation of the Christian event, message and way of life stimulating pupils' imagination and provoking a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith.
- To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
- To prepare children for the participation in, and appreciation of, the blessed sacraments.
- To develop co-operation between home, school and parish based on mutual respect and support.

Compliance with the Religious Education Directory (2023) and Catholic School Inspection

1. St Alphonsus complies with the Religious Education Directory and ensures full curriculum compliance from September 2026.

2. From September 2026, as recommended by the Diocese of Salford, this school is teaching Religious Education using Lighting the Path scheme as the principal resource in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

3. 10% of the curriculum teaching time is timetabled and dedicated to RE in all classes in line with the requirements set out by the Bishops of England and Wales.

   The importance of the Religious Educator
   In our Catholic context, it remains desirable, as far as possible, that teachers of Religious Education should be committed Catholics. Where Religious Education is taught by a person who bears witness to their belief, they can bring the lived dimension of a life in Christ into their classroom community. However, we are full of gratitude for the commitment of every teacher whether Catholic or not who is part of the noble endeavour to teach Religious Education in a spirit of dialogue to the next generation. Every teacher of Religious Education requires a genuine expertise in the subject. Therefore, developing the skill set of all teachers must form a critical part of professional development to facilitate appropriate levels of theological literacy. Religious Education teachers also need to become guardians of dialogue. As well as being competent in subject knowledge, they must be agile conductors of classroom debate, resilient custodians of religious wisdom, and sensitive mentors to enquiring pupils and students. (RED, 2023)

At St Alphonsus, all new staff are supported during induction and beyond, so that they fully understand the responsibility they carry within their individual role in teaching Religious Education in the school. Any individual training needs are identified and addressed through training and formation. There is also the opportunity for whole-staff professional development termly, so that all staff understand the importance of religious education and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required. The 'Lighting the Path' scheme is ideal for specialists and non-specialists alike. It also offers CPD support to build teacher knowledge in the form of Teaching Guides and videos.

Curriculum provision: EYFS-KS2
To fulfil the aims of Religious Education and to ensure compliance with the norms set out in the Religious Education Directory (RED, 2023) our curriculum provision for Religious Education follows the model curriculum from the RED and is structured in the following way:

Curriculum branches
The curriculum is structured in six curriculum branches – a branch each half term. The branches are rooted in the story of salvation history and lead pupils/students on a journey each year that gives sequence and progression to their learning. As they revisit each branch in each year of school they come to a deeper understanding of its significance for Catholic belief and practice, as well as other Christian denominations and other religious traditions. The six curriculum branches are:

1. Creation and Covenant,
2. Prophecy and Promise,
3. Galilee to Jerusalem,
4. Desert to Garden,
5. To the ends of the Earth,
6. Dialogue and Encounter.

Knowledge lenses
The first five curriculum branches are divided into four sub-sections called knowledge lenses that set out the object of study for pupils/students. These four sections are:

Hear: focuses on the Word of God which we hear: the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, a person in whom God is fully revealed, whom we know by faith and who is revealed to us through the Sacred Scriptures and the living tradition of the Church.
Believe: focuses on the content of the Church's own profession of faith, what she believes, professes, defines, and teaches. In this lens we look at those doctrines that constitute the Catholic faith: trinity, incarnation, the Holy Spirit, the communion of saints, the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and salvation and eternal life.
Celebrate: deals with the liturgy in which the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery of Christ which accomplished the work of salvation. In this lens we look at prayer, liturgy, and sacrament, sacraments of initiation, the Eucharist, sacraments of healing, sacraments at the service of communion, and other liturgies and sacramentals.
Live: focuses on the impact of faith on how Christians live. In this lens we look at the dignity of the human person; freedom, conscience, and virtue; law, grace, and sin; Catholic Social Teaching; and the relationship between faith and life as expressed in art, in culture, and in the lives of those who are exemplars of Christian living: the saints.

Two other knowledge lenses constitute the sixth and final curriculum branch: Dialogue and Encounter.
Dialogue: is an exemplification of the Church's teaching on the relationship between Catholicism and other Christian traditions, between Catholicism and Judaism, between Catholicism and other religions, and between Catholicism and non-religious or atheistic worldviews. It is called 'dialogue' because it focuses on the importance of dialogue as the only authentic way of living faithfully in a pluralistic world.
Encounter: pupils are expected to engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews. As they progress, pupils will study:
• Other Christian denominations
• Judaism
• Islam
• Dharmic religions and pathways
The study of other religions is a study of how those who profess that religion or worldview understand it on their own terms.

Ways of knowing
There are three ways of knowing: ***Understand, Discern and Respond,*** that set out the skills that pupils should develop as they progress through the Religious Education curriculum. 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. Each age phase has its own exemplification of the ways of knowing.

Expected outcomes
The expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing. Each age phase has a set of outcomes that 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 knowledge within each lens (In EYFS there are no prescribed outcomes).

Curriculum Provision
The Religious Education curriculum for EYFS through to Key Stage 2 is taught through The Oxford University Press scheme – Lighting the Path which is approved by the Diocese of Salford. The programme follows the model curriculum from the Religious Education Directory.

Teaching of other religious traditions and worldview

As part of our Catholic ethos and vocation, it is our school's mission to foster intercultural awareness and love of all cultures, traditions and beliefs in order for all our children to feel recognised and respected and to follow the call to love one's neighbour. Here, at St Alphonsus we celebrate our diversity every day contributing to the

common good by increasing mutual respect between those members of our school community of different religions.

In curriculum Religious Education, within Branch 6- Dialogue and Encounter of the RED pupils are provided with the opportunity to engage with a discrete study of other faiths, religions and worldviews across both Key Stages. In addition, throughout the year, children are provided with the opportunity to embrace other religions during special days, festivals and multi- faith celebrations and in their everyday dialogue.

Inclusion and Equality

We recognise each child 's God given dignity and value. All pupils in our school, irrespective of ability, faith and background, have appropriate differentiated access to the Religious Education programme. Children with specific needs take a full and inclusive part in all aspects of school life. At St Alphonsus, a variety of creative teaching and learning strategies are used from across the curriculum and adapted appropriately to meet the needs and learning styles of pupils through ordinarily available inclusive provision and high-quality adaptive teaching that models and scaffolds learning. Teachers have high expectations. Work is challenging yet achievable and structured in a way so that all pupils can achieve success. A variety of appropriate teaching resources are used that do not reinforce stereotypes, but reflect our diverse school and wider community.

Further information is available in our SEND policy.

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Assessing and Recording Achievement

As a Catholic school our main concern is with the development of:

- the whole person
- the formation of character
- the ability to take their place in society
- the fulfilment of academic potential

In this broad context, we use assessment against the expected end phase outcomes stated in the RED. In EYFS through to Key Stage 2 the assessments offered through each of the branches in Lighting the Path forms the assessment practice.

Progress and achievement will be reported to Governors in the termly full Governing Body meetings.

At St Alphonsus RC Primary School, we believe that the assessment must contain the philosophy that it is ultimately for the good of each child. Assessment contributes to the focus of the school's aims. Curriculum RE is monitored and assessed in the same way as other core subjects. Lessons in Religious Education are assessed through observation and knowledge where skills, concepts and understanding are discussed and recorded. Children are regularly given feedback about their learning and progress made and where necessary, how they can challenge and deepen their knowledge and understanding further. Whole school summative assessment record sheets are used for each class to record assessment outcomes for children working below expected level, at expected level and above the expected level for their year group. These record sheets will be fully implemented in September 26.

Achievement and progress are reported to parents/carers on Open Day in the autumn term, Parent's Evening in the spring term and end of year Record of Achievement Reports in summer term. In addition, our school has an 'open door' policy where the Headteacher or class teachers are readily available if parents or carers need to speak to them about any aspects of their child's learning.

Monitoring and evaluating of RE is the same as the other core subjects and is achieved in a variety of ways:

- Regular professional discussions with staff concerning progress of groups and individuals.
- Classroom observation and working alongside colleagues (mainly by the Head Teacher or RE Co-ordinator) to help identify strengths and areas to improve upon and to provide support to individual members of staff as appropriate. This will be recorded on the St Alphonsus Lesson observation form.
- Pupil Voice
- Sharing good practice
- Regular auditing of resources.
- Reviewing of assessment outcomes to evaluate the quality of learning in RE across the school.
- Checking that appropriate opportunities raise multicultural and gender issues are created and taken.
- Ensuring that the time spent on the teaching of curriculum RE is in line with the requirements prescribed by the Bishops of England and Wales.
- Co-ordinator feedback to staff, Senior Management Team and Governors (as appropriate).
- 'Book Looks/analysing pupils' work.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

• To draw up the Religious Education policy, in consultation with relevant staff
• To ensure the policy provides adequate coverage of the RED (2023)
• To ensure the policy is available to parents
• To ensure the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g. Catholic ethos / spiritual and moral policy, SEND policy and in accordance with Equalities Act 2010.
• To ensure parents know of their right to withdraw their children
• To establish a link governor or a group of governors to share in the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education.

Headteacher

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy but can delegate the operational responsibility to a subject lead for Religious Education. The headteacher has overall responsibility for liaison with the governing board and the Diocese of Salford.

Religious Education Subject Lead

In line with diocesan protocols 14.6, in primary schools, the Religious Education Coordinators are members of the school's Senior Leadership Team.
The Religious education coordinators lead the subject by example in their commitment to high-quality religious education. Their deep and genuine passion for RE, inspires both staff and pupils, fostering a rich learning environment across the school.
The RE coordinators are responsible to the Headteacher colleagues and governors for the monitoring of, teaching, assessment and planning of Religious Education based on the development of the children at each stage. They are responsible for leading managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Religious Education.

RE coordinators liaise regularly with the Diocesan Department for Education attending all relevant courses, online courses and cluster meetings informing the headteacher and staff of current standards; new initiatives; key developments and sharing good practice.

RE Coordinators are active in enhancing their professional development by attending these courses and disseminating this to colleagues.

They advise, induct and support new members of staff on teaching and learning of Religious Education.

RE Coordinators are instrumental in the implementation plan of changes to the interim Age-related standards in Religious Education supporting staff during the transition period.

At the end of each academic year, samples of children's books are collected in all KS1 and KS2 classes to show evidence and identify pupils working at expected level, below expected level and above expected level.

Moderation of pupils books is completed in spring term within school and diocesan moderation meetings with required pupil books is carried out throughout the year.

They complete an annual audit of resources and policy curriculum statements working with the headteacher and colleagues in line with the school development plan.

The Headteacher and coordinator have attended all CSI courses consulted with SLT and DSEF

In consultation with the Headteacher, RE coordinators communicate with parents, governors and the parish community regarding issues relating to Religious Education.

The coordinators keep up to date with changes to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.

RE resources are stored centrally in the hall stock cupboard. Each class has its own prayer focus area and crucifix as a focus for worship. Sets of hymn books are stored in individual classes within Key Stage 2. Key Stage sets of class Bibles, recommended by the diocese, were ordered and have been used to support teaching and learning of the RED.

RE resources are evaluated annually and will include a full audit of RE resources and staff training needs. This information, as well as plans for assemblies are filed in the RE central resource cupboard.

Religious Education is classed as the core of core subjects in our school and is central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, this is reflected in the annual budget allocation which is equal to the budget allocations of other core subjects.

Parents and carers

Catholic schools exist to assist parents, who are the primary educators of their children, in the education and religious formation of their children (Christ at the Centre, A1.2). It is essential therefore, that there is a close relationship and a dialogue between parents and the school to support pupils' religious formation and growth in religious literacy.

The partnership between home, school and parish is vital and we strive constantly to deepen these links. Religious Education and the development of our children is at the centre of all we do. The impact the relationship and dialogue between home and school has on our pupils, works to support their spiritual growth. Parents are directed to our website for initial curriculum coverage. Parents and carers are encouraged to attend coffee mornings, open afternoons and Parents' Evening to discuss aspects of their child's academic, religious literacy and emotional growth. Our school has an 'open door' policy where the Headteacher or class teachers are readily available if parents or carers need to speak to them about any aspects of their child's learning.

Right to Withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of Religious Education. The law provides parents with a conscience clause; this should not be understood as a general opt out of Religious Education. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher in writing following the school's policy. However, before granting such a request it is good practice for the headteacher to discuss this request with parents and if appropriate with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of Religious Education. The school must ensure a record is kept of requests to withdraw from Religious Education.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects

This policy supports and complements the following policies:

RSHE
Behaviour
All Curriculum subjects
PSHE
SEND

Consultation process

This policy was drawn up by governors in consultation with staff of St Alphonsus RC Primary School and will be reviewed on an annual basis.