St. Alban's Catholic Primary School

RE Position Statement.

Summer 2026

Philosophy and Intent at St. Alban's

At St. Alban's Catholic Primary School, our RE curriculum is rooted in our school ethos: **Love, Learn, Share and Respect in the Light of Jesus.**

Religious Education is central to the mission of St Alban's Catholic Primary School.

It is the "core of the core curriculum."

Children at St. Alban's Catholic Primary School are offered a high quality RE curriculum. Our RE curriculum is rooted in our vision and values as a faith school and reflects our Catholic Ethos. At St Alban's, children are offered a wide variety of different opportunities and experiences within the RE curriculum.

The school's RE curriculum is governed by the Religious Education Directory, To Know You More Clearly (RED). The CES confirms that this is the current Religious Education Directory for Catholic schools and that they fully endorse the scheme The Vine and The Branches as meeting the 'Understand outcomes set out in To Know You More Clearly.

Prayer and Liturgy is integral to the Catholic life of our school. It is governed by the Prayer & Liturgy Directory, To Love You More Dearly. Prayer and liturgy complement Religious Education but are distinct from curriculum RE.

Some of the curriculum is pupil led, some teacher led and some is led by outside professionals and members of the wider community. We work closely with our parish community and this offers many opportunities to enrich our RE curriculum.

Catholic Social Teaching is at the heart of our school ethos, guiding us to care for others and work for the common good. Our school reflects British values through Gospel values such as love, respect, justice and tolerance. We follow Jesus' example by treating everyone with dignity and kindness. We create a welcoming and inclusive community where everyone can flourish.

We aim for all pupils to;

· be offered an engaging and systematic curriculum that develops knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.

· enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and communicate this effectively.

· gain an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching and enable pupils to relate faith to contemporary life.

· develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other religions and worldviews and their capacity for respectful dialogue.

· develop critical faculties so pupils can explore relationships between faith, life and culture.

· stimulate imagination and a desire for meaning in the light of the Catholic faith.

· develop religious literacy so that pupils can think ethically and theologically and participate thoughtfully in the life of the Church and wider society.

· support the religious formation of pupils through partnership between school, home and parish.

Teaching and Learning at St. Alban's

The Vine & The Branches

RE is the responsibility of the school, home and parish.

RE is taught for at least 10% of the timetable each week in every year group. We use the Diocese approved scheme of work 'The Vine & The Branches' (depending on year group). There are 6 topics per year group from Reception to Year 6. The topics in 'The Vine & The Branches' are the same for each year group and are progressive. The subject leader delivers training to staff to enhance teaching and learning in Religious Education as a result of specialist training received from the Diocese.

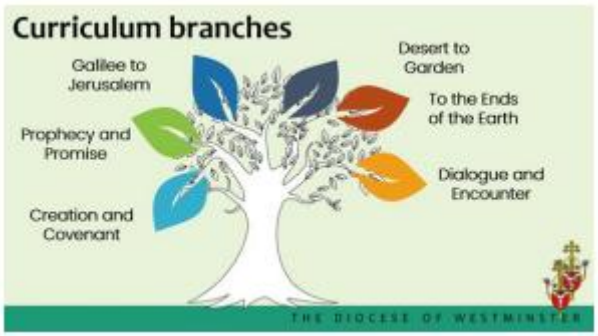
The programme of study for Religious Education in Catholic schools has a framework with four structural elements: knowledge lenses, ways of knowing, expected outcomes and curriculum branches.

Religious Education Directory

- **Knowledge lenses** divide the content of the programme of study into four systematic sub-sections for the study of Catholicism and two additional lenses for the study of religions and worldviews, which together comprise the six knowledge lenses of hear, believe, celebrate, and live (the study of the Catholic religion), dialogue, and encounter (the study of other religions and worldviews).



- **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. They are represented in the programme of study by icons: head (understand), heart (discern), and hands (respond).
- **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 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.



- **Curriculum branches** correspond to the six half-terms of a school year. The six curriculum branches are: Creation and Covenant, Prophecy and Promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, Desert to Garden, To the Ends of the Earth, and Dialogue and Encounter.
  (Refer to p20, 'To know You more clearly', The Religious Education Directory for more detail)

Creation and Covenant: In this branch, pupils will encounter the God who creates and calls a people.
Prophecy and Promise: In this branch pupils will explore the expectant waiting for the Messiah through the Advent season and how this speaks to Christians today as they wait for Christ.
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.
Desert to Garden: In this branch, pupils will study the season of Lent and its culmination in the events of Holy Week. 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.
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.

The first five branches are taught discreetly following the sequence of the academic year and corresponding to the cycle of the Liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church:

Autumn 1: Creation and Covenant
Autumn 2: Prophecy and Promise
Spring 1: Galilee to Jerusalem
Spring 2: Desert to Garden
Summer 1: To the Ends of the Earth
Summer 2: and/or appropriate points throughout the year: Dialogue and Encounter

Sacramental Preparation

At the Introductory Meeting for new parents, parents are informed that preparation for the Sacraments within 'The Vine & The Branches' begins immediately when a child starts school through the links the topics provide. This preparation is ongoing throughout the school and gives the child the opportunity to understand more fully the whole experience of the Sacraments. Through 'The Vine & The Branches' topics 'Prophecy & Promise' and 'Desert to Garden' the Year 3 children are able to learn about the Sacraments of Forgiveness and Holy Communion.

- Parents'/Carers' meetings are led by parents who are members of the parish community. Parents/Carers of children making the First Sacraments are encouraged to participate very actively in these sessions.
- Members of the parish are invited to be prayer sponsors.

- Staff join the celebrations with the children.

Teaching and Learning

We base our teaching and learning style on the key principle that good teaching in RE allows children to build on their own experiences, extend their knowledge, learn about religious traditions and to reflect on what the religious ideas and 4 concepts mean to them. Our teaching enables children to extend their own sense of values, and promotes their spiritual growth and development. We

encourage children to think about their own views and values in relation to the themes and topics studied in the RE curriculum. We use their experiences at religious festivals such as Easter, Christmas, etc. to develop their religious thinking.

Planning

RE is a core subject in a Catholic School. We plan our RE curriculum in accordance with 'The Vine & The Branches' We ensure that the topics studied in RE build on prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the progression planned into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

- RE lessons
- Masses
- Daily prayer
- Assemblies
- Cross - curricular opportunities
- Gospel Values Awards
- Class Assemblies
- Hymn Practice
- Quiet reflection
- Story time and Buddy time
- Teacher - led liturgy
- Pupil - led liturgy
- Prayers with our parents and parish
- Catholic Social Teaching projects

Charitable Work

- Various charity events are held during a year.
- Children are aware of the important work of CAFOD and other charities.
- The annual Harvest Festival also enables children to become aware of the needs of others and make an individual contribution to this.
- A record of funds raised by the school is kept by the school finance officer

Mass

- School Mass is celebrated in the school at least once per term and is prepared by the R.E Lead, Headteacher and class teachers.
- All parents and parishioners are welcome to attend Masses.

Assemblies

- Whole school assemblies are held on Monday afternoons and Friday mornings.
- Each class presents a class assembly once a year.
- Assemblies offer the opportunity for prayer, but class prayers can often be more informal and closer to the individual needs of the children, allowing the children to make up their own prayers. Children regularly recite traditional prayers such as the Our Father and the Hail Mary. On days when there are no assemblies the children have a quiet prayerful time with their own class teacher in the morning and in the afternoon. Prayers are also said before and after meals. Opportunities are also given to teach more formal and specific school prayers as well as traditional Catholic Prayers.

Staff Prayer and Reflections.

- The staff meeting or INSET at the beginning of each half term allows an opportunity for staff reflection.
- This is coordinated by the RE coordinator with each member of staff taking turns to lead.

Other opportunities for reflection/prayer.

- Teachers are encouraged, as good RE teaching practice, to build in reflection/celebrations of the word opportunities as appropriate.
- Each class must have a prayer focus area.
- Class prayer focus should reflect the liturgical seasons ensuring correct colour cloths and relevant artefacts.
- A model prayer focus area would ideally have a display board with up-to-date work from pupils relating to their current topic, example of Scripture, a cross, candle(s), and relevant prayer material.

Other Faiths

Pupils will be prepared for life in a multi-faith society by fostering respect for and understanding of rich cultural diversity. Our own school community welcomes children from diverse backgrounds and we celebrate our rich cultural heritage. In RE, children will develop the skills to encounter, make links and connections, engage and respond, analyse and evaluate using sources of evidence. We aim to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of other faiths and a willingness to empathise with people who hold beliefs that are different to our own. We help the children to learn from religions as well as about religions.

IMPACT

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. Children are invited through exploration of their

faith to cultivate a healthy self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence. This is supported by the whole school behaviour policy.

Children leave St Alban's with:

- An understanding of the wonders of God and the mysteries of life and teaching of Jesus Christ
- An understanding of the teachings of the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold
- An understanding of the religions and worldviews present in the world today
- Having experienced Masses, assemblies and participating fully in Catholic life
- Experience of giving to others in their own community and the wider community
- Experience of receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion

Whilst the impact of RE can clearly be identified through assessment it is also felt through a number of areas that cannot be specifically measured:

Revelation of God through

-The Word

–The person of Jesus Christ

-Church and Sacraments

Community

-The Church

-Parish, diocese, universal Church, continuing the work of Jesus

Celebration

-Sacraments, seasons and feast days of the church, rites, prayers,

Ways of Life

-uniqueness of the individual made in the image and likeness of God

-relationships

-Christian values as shown by the Life of Christ

Assessment and Data

Teachers will assess children's work in RE by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher informally assesses the work and gives the child written or verbal feedback to help guide progress. Children's books should hold a personal significance and children recognise it as a place where they record their work ideas, reflections and learning about beliefs and values, giving the book a sense of importance and ownership. The importance of the RE book should also be reflected in their handwriting and general presentation. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they might improve their work in the future.

- We measure children against Age Related Standards
- Children will be given a judgement of BELOW (Below Age Related Expectations), WTS (Working Towards), ARE (At Age Related Expectation) and Above ARE (Above Age Related Expectations).
- We use the Ways of Knowing to inform assessment. These three elements are Understand, Discern and Respond.



We assess Understand and Discern elements. We follow the assessment policy asset out by the Diocese as follows:

• Three assessment opportunities per year

• Emphasise the use of 'driver' words in teachers' planning and in the assessments

• The use of 'Key Vocabulary' and learning outcomes at the front of each unit of work (V & B)

• Teachers complete the RE assessment tracking grids and ensure any evidence is passed to the RE coordinator. This is collated by the RE coordinator to track and monitor for any gaps which may occur.

The class teacher keeps samples of children's books; this demonstrates the expected level of achievement in RE in each year of the school.

Our school has developed its policy on marking, recording and reporting in line with:

• whole school policies and practice

• the needs of staff and pupils

• diocesan and national developments

• to give consistent, frequent, helpful and encouraging feedback to our children about all aspects of their progress, in order to aid future learning

• to enable teachers to build a clear picture of pupils' abilities and progress, their strengths and areas for development so that future teaching can be improved

• to inform all stakeholders about progress, achievements and problems in children's learning in R.E.

We achieve our aim in a variety of ways, for example speaking to children, assessing their written work, recording observations and setting various tasks in class and sacramental books at home.

Children are given the opportunity to evaluate their learning at the end of each topic. Teacher's evaluations of children's learning take place throughout the topic. The Class teacher inputs data on their assessment endpoint objectives table on staff share and also on Arbor, which is analysed by the RE Lead.

Parents receive a written report, at the end of year on their child's progress in R.E.

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning in RE

Monitoring and Evaluation

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored as part of the appraisal process, through lesson observations and monitoring progress and attainment towards end of year targets on Arbor and RE assessment objectives for each year group.

Actions identified in the School Development Plan and RE Action Plan, intended to raise standards, are also monitored for implementation and, when appropriate, impact.

The coordination and planning of the RE curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

• supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in RE and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject.

• monitors the continuity and progression across the school.

• gives the Head Teacher an annual summary on the RE action plan in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in RE and indicates areas for further improvement.

• uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe RE lessons across the school.

• Provides and organises CPD for staff.

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is monitored and evaluated by the Head Teacher and subject leader as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations.

The RE link governor liaises with the Head Teacher and subject leader in order to be kept informed of new developments and visits school to experience RE lessons and collective worship.

RE and Inclusion

At our school, we teach RE to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. RE forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our RE teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, adaptation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. Intervention through School Support and the involvement of outside agencies will lead to the creation of an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) for children with special educational needs. This, or an SEN support plan, may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to Religious Education in line with our SEN policy.

Partnerships with Parents/Others

The New Parents Introductory Meeting provides opportunity for parents to hear about 'The Vine & Branches', to meet the parish priest, hear about our catholic faith and ethos of the school. Parents are encouraged to provide support for the work of the scheme, particularly when specific work for the Sacraments is introduced. All liturgical events and school Masses are open to parents, parishioners and Governors. The Parish Newsletter provides an excellent method of communicating events to the parish. The RE newsletter and Class Curriculum Overviews, which are sent to parents at the beginning of each term, informs them of what their children will be learning in Religious Education. Our weekly newsletter's also provide reflections and links to the liturgical year.

Children take part and lead several masses throughout the year;

- New School Year Mass
- Harvest Festival
- Advent and Lent
- St. Alban's Day
- The Parish priest is welcome and regularly visits the school.

• The school is also involved in charity events and collections e.g. CAFOD, The Good Shepherd Appeal during Lent and others that take place throughout the year.

Staff Development

• Staff regularly attend Diocesan courses and conferences. Specific development of staff is monitored by the Head Teacher.

• All courses attended by staff are recorded and disseminated at staff meetings.

• Governors and Clergy are invited to attend staff training when appropriate which may be on site or at Religious Education Centres.