SS Peter & Paul
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

Approved by	**Full Governing Body**
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Policy lead	**RE Leader - Claire Rough**
Version	**2.0 (supersedes version 1.0, 2023)**

'Learning Together, Achieving Together in Christ'

Version control

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Approved
1.0	2023	RE policy written while the school continued with Come and See, pending a scheme for the new Religious Education Directory.	FGB
2.0	October 2026	Moved to the school policy template. Updated to the Religious Education Directory (2023) as delivered through Lighting the Path, the scheme endorsed by the Archdiocese of Southwark and taught across the school from September 2026, replacing Come and See. Removed the 1944 Education Act and other outdated references, and private Google Docs links. Updated assessment to the RED ways of knowing, and the Archdiocese's education service name. Added inspection by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate, Catholic Social Teaching and the Oscar Romero Award, and the parental right of withdrawal. Review overdue since July 2025.	FGB-December 2023

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1. Introduction

At SS Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School, the ultimate aim of Religious Education is to place Christ at the centre of all that we do. This means integrating Gospel values and the social teaching of the Catholic Church into every aspect of learning, teaching and school life. Jesus Christ is the fullness of God's revelation. Through the Holy Spirit, each of us, in communion with Christ's Church, can know and love God our Father by knowing and loving his Son, Jesus Christ.

We want every child who journeys with our community to grow in love and knowledge of God the Father, Jesus his Son and the Holy Spirit. Through engaging, well-planned lessons, our pupils develop their understanding, challenge their thinking and build the skills they need to deepen their relationship with God, so that when they leave us they are equipped for a lifelong journey of knowing and loving God more.

We want children to understand that they are made in the image and likeness of God, to develop a closer, more personal relationship with him, and to grow in their understanding of their own worth as individuals and in respect for others, other faiths and other cultures.

Religious Education is at the centre of our school community. It raises awareness of the Catholic faith that informs all aspects of our life together, within and beyond the school. We help children to become familiar with the language, symbols, signs and gestures of religious belief, and to practise their faith and worship within a Catholic community.

Religious Education is a core subject and extends to every aspect of school life. Everyone (teachers, pupils, governors, parents, support staff, priests and visitors) is on a personal journey of faith, and each person is at a different stage of that journey. The beliefs and values of our faith, made visible through the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, permeate the daily life of the school as we walk in the footsteps of Christ together.

The Religious Education Directory states that "the outcome of excellent Religious Education is religiously literate and 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 are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life."

To support excellent Religious Education, the school invests in professional development throughout the year so that all staff, Catholic and non-Catholic, grow in knowledge and confidence. Before each unit, staff explore the content across all year groups and phases, to understand opportunities for depth, build familiarity with content across the curriculum, and address any misconceptions or potentially challenging content.

2. Legal Framework and Diocesan Requirements

SS Peter & Paul is a voluntary aided Catholic school in the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Southwark. In a voluntary aided school, Religious Education is determined by the Governing Body in accordance with the school's trust deed and the requirements of the Archbishop, as set out in the Education Act 1996 and Schedule 19 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Religious Education, collective worship and the Catholic life and mission of the school are inspected by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The school follows:

- the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales Religious Education Directory, *To Know You More Clearly* (2023);

- the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, *To Love You More Dearly* (2023);
- the policies and guidance of the Archdiocese of Southwark Education Service.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education. Given the central place of RE in a Catholic school, any parent considering this is asked to discuss it with the Headteacher first.

3. Objectives

Religious growth and development are the main aims of this policy. Religious Education underpins the whole school experience, so that the whole curriculum supports religious growth and development alongside academic and social progress. To achieve this, we:

1. provide an education for all, and of all, offering a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares children for the wider world;
2. present the truths of our faith gradually, building on the experiences children bring and recognising that they have a lifetime to journey in faith;
3. make sure prayer and worship are part of daily school life, with opportunities to develop a personal relationship with God through private and shared prayer, in formal and informal styles and settings, including at the start and end of the day and at lunchtime;
4. make sure whole-school assemblies and liturgies are sensitive to the nature of worship and appropriate for the wide range of ages and stages of our pupils;
5. make sure a true act of worship takes place in class Celebrations of the Word and liturgies, where children, staff, parents and visitors are invited to pray in an atmosphere that supports prayer;
6. provide school Masses, which help children to celebrate and learn more about their faith;
7. build a strong link with the lives of our patron saints, St Peter and St Paul, and learn from the lives of our class saints as a way of knowing Jesus more clearly;
8. provide guidance on social and moral issues, rooted in Catholic Social Teaching;
9. give pupils the experience of belonging to a Christian community;
10. foster respect for other faiths and cultures;
11. work with our parish catechists to help prepare children for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion;
12. build links between home, parish and school.

4. Leadership and Management

The Headteacher and governors make sure that Religious Education has a high profile, is taught as a core subject, and is well resourced and monitored. The RE Leader leads, manages and supports the teaching of Religious Education and staff training across the school. The Headteacher and governors also make sure that the school's self-evaluation monitors and evaluates the Catholic life and mission of the school, Religious Education and collective worship, in line with the Catholic Schools Inspectorate framework.

5. Teaching and Learning

We aim:

- to promote and respect each child's natural capacity for wonder, awe, reverence, imagination, mystery and spirituality;
- to help children grow in the love of God;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of the mystery of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Church and of the central beliefs that Catholics hold;
- to develop attitudes of appreciation, reverence, care and respect for others, for the natural world and its inhabitants, and for property;
- to help children use prayer in all its forms to develop their personal relationship with God;
- to encourage questioning, exploration, discernment and reflection;
- to support the sacramental preparation of children, their families and the parishes that prepare them;
- to understand how the principles of Catholic Social Teaching are lived, and can be lived, every day;
- to promote mutual respect and tolerance of people of different faiths and beliefs.

6. Curriculum and Planning

6.1 The Religious Education Directory and Lighting the Path

The school teaches the Religious Education Directory, *To Know You More Clearly* (2023), through **Lighting the Path**, the RE programme endorsed by the Archdiocese of Southwark. Lighting the Path replaced Come and See in stages, and is taught across the whole school from September 2026. The scheme was implemented in KS1 first in the year 2025/2026 and then in KS2 during the year 2026/2027.

The RED is organised in six branches, which are revisited each year so that knowledge builds as pupils move through the school:

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

Each unit draws on Scripture and the teaching of the Church, and helps pupils explore, reveal and respond. Religious Education also follows the liturgical year: Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter, devotion to Mary (including the Rosary in May and October), and the feast days of the saints.

6.2 Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is the Church's guidance on how to live out Gospel values and build a just, fair, and compassionate world, rooted in the belief that every human person is made in the image and likeness of God. Its seven core principles are: Dignity of the Human Person, Common Good, Solidarity, Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers, Stewardship of Creation, and Participation and Subsidiarity.

These principles are woven through RE and the wider curriculum, using the CAFOD "Easy as CST" resources, and in Key Stage 2, the principles are represented by keys. Having achieved the Participator Level of the Oscar Romero Award, the school is now actively working towards the Developer Level to further embed and celebrate how Catholic Social Teaching shapes our leadership, curriculum, worship, and community life.

6.3 Curriculum time

The Religious Education Directory sets out the Bishops' Conference expectation that at least 10% of taught curriculum time is given to Religious Education in each year. SS Peter & Paul meets this expectation, which is monitored by the RE Leader and senior leaders and set out in the staff handbook. This time does not include liturgies (whole-school, phase or class), Masses or hymn practice.

7. Progression

Progress in RE is shown through:

- wider and more detailed knowledge of religious beliefs and practices;
- deeper understanding of the meaning of stories, symbols, events and practices;
- deeper understanding of the life of Jesus and the lives of the saints;
- more fluent and accurate use of religious language;
- increasing skill in responding to questions of identity, meaning, purpose, values and commitment;
- making links to Scripture to support a point of view;
- progress in the RED's three ways of knowing: **understand**, **discern** and **respond**;
- progress in the key skills used across the school, such as questioning, making a reasoned judgement, making links and explaining impact.

8. Assessment and Reporting

Assessment in RE covers knowledge and understanding, discernment, response, analysis and evaluation. Teachers assess through discussion, written work and observation, and use assessment for learning strategies in every lesson.

Teachers assess pupils' progress against the RED's age-related expectations for each branch, using the assessment materials provided with Lighting the Path, at the end of each unit and term. This replaces the 2018 Age-Related Standards and Come and See progress descriptors used previously.

Assessments are moderated within the school and with deanery partners, so that judgements are accurate and provision can be planned to deepen knowledge and understanding.

Parents are told about their child's progress in RE at parent-teacher meetings and in written reports.

9. SEND, Adaptation and Challenge

Our commitment to Christ's ministry and to the uniqueness of each person means a Catholic school is well placed to respond with imagination and sensitivity to children with SEND. This requires respect for the dignity and gifts of each person and a positive response to their needs.

RE is adapted at every stage according to pupils' understanding, learning needs and circumstances. Teachers have high expectations and give every pupil opportunities to achieve their highest possible standard, whatever their starting point, using a range of teaching strategies adapted to pupils' needs. Lessons include challenges that allow every pupil to deepen their thinking.

10. Celebrating Learning

Every child has a unique set of gifts and talents. At SS Peter & Paul, pupils try their best, encourage others and never give up, in line with our core values. We believe all learning is a gift from God and a cause for celebration.

1. The class liturgy timetable is planned termly by the RE Leader and the Headteacher, based on the themes of Lighting the Path and the liturgical year.
2. At the start of the week, a whole-school assembly, usually led by the Headteacher, focuses on the Gospel of the weekend.
3. At the end of the week, a celebration assembly celebrates the good news, work and achievements of our pupils.
4. The RE Leader works with the parish priests to prepare school Masses for holy days.

Achievements are also celebrated through awards (for living our core virtues, academic excellence, and resilience and perseverance), Headteacher's awards and comments in books, and in Masses, liturgies and prayer, including with other schools in the Archdiocese.

11. Other Faiths

Raising pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities prepares them to live as respectful Christians in a diverse society and as part of our global family. Through the *Dialogue and encounter* branch of the RED, pupils learn about Judaism, the root of our faith, and other world religions. The school also holds two World Faith Weeks each year: Judaism in the autumn term, and Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism in rotation in the summer term. Pupils explore these religions through practical activities and, where possible, through visits and visitors from other faith communities.

12. Resources

1. All classes have access to the RE scheme and supporting resources on the school's shared drive.
2. All classes have several copies of the Bible, and a class copy of a Catholic children's Bible suitable for the age and abilities of the children.

3. Every classroom has a prayer focus area, with cloths in the colour of the liturgical season and displays that reflect the liturgical year.
4. Additional resources recommended in Lighting the Path are bought where appropriate.
5. Staff have access to a central collection of artefacts, books and Bibles, including artefacts for the study of other faiths.
6. Music for collective worship and RE lessons is available on the school's shared drive.

13. Spiritual Development

Spiritual development at SS Peter & Paul is fostered by developing:

- religious and personal beliefs, and an understanding of how beliefs shape identity;
- a sense of awe, wonder and mystery;
- inner resources that help pupils rise above everyday experience;
- a sense of meaning and purpose, through reflecting on life and responding to its challenges, such as beauty, suffering and death;
- self-respect and self-awareness, including thoughts, feelings, emotions and responsibilities;
- relationships that recognise and value the worth of each person, and a sense of community;
- creativity, expressing thoughts and feelings through art, music, literature and crafts, and using imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight;
- feelings and emotions, including being moved by beauty or kindness and hurt by injustice or aggression, and knowing when to manage emotions as a source of growth.

Spiritual development takes place within the Catholic ethos of the school and is part of the whole curriculum, not separate from it.

14. Liturgy and Prayer

Children's understanding of and interest in liturgy are developed through preparing for Masses in the parish church and in school, through planning and leading collective worship, and through lessons about the Mass. Children are helped to understand that we offer ourselves, our work and our lives with the bread and wine, and that we receive the Lord himself in Holy Communion.

Children learn to say and understand traditional Catholic prayers, and are encouraged to write their own prayers of thanksgiving, petition and praise. Prayers written by children are used in whole-school, phase and class liturgies and at Mass, and recorded in the class RE big books kept in the prayer focus area. Children learn about and practise prayer through the liturgical year, for example praying the Rosary in October and May.

The school's arrangements for collective worship are set out in the **Prayer and Liturgy (Collective Worship) Policy**.

15. Relationships and Health Education

The school follows *Life to the Full* from Ten Ten Resources, a programme approved for use in Catholic schools. Further information is in the school's Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy.

16. Home, Parish and Community

Parents are the first educators of their children in the faith, and the school is one part of the partnership between home, parish and school. The parish and the wider community also nurture our children and encourage hope in their lives. We work with families and the wider community by teaching through positive example and the Gospel message, and we make this clear to new families when they join.

We meet parents regularly and warmly invite them to school Masses and liturgies. Our parish priests, Fr Stephen and Fr Gerry are regular visitors, celebrating Masses, liturgies and the sacrament of Reconciliation, and supporting the teaching of RE. We work with parish catechists to prepare children for First Holy Communion.

We welcome parishioners to Masses and liturgies, support local food banks through our harvest collection, fundraise for chosen charities in Advent and Lent, and have close links with CAFOD.

The RE Leader sends a Religious Education newsletter home each term, telling parents about the programme of study, how they can support their child, and key liturgical dates, Celebrations of the Word and Masses.

17. Visitors and External Speakers

Visitors and speakers make a positive contribution to the work of the school. Preparation is carried out before any visit is agreed, so that pupils are safe. The Headteacher is told about any proposed visit, with a clear explanation of its purpose and who will be visiting. The member of staff organising the visit completes the school's checklist for external speakers, to make sure the work and values of the visitor or organisation are compatible with the aims and ethos of the school and the Catholic faith. All visitors follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Catholic Education Service guidance on external speakers.

18. Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Leader, the Headteacher and the RE link governor monitor and evaluate RE by:

- overseeing long, medium and short-term planning;
- observing RE teaching regularly to evaluate its implementation;
- evaluating the implementation of Lighting the Path;
- reviewing pupils' work;
- checking that prayer focus areas are well used;
- co-ordinating and moderating assessment, within school and with deanery partners;
- working with the Archdiocese of Southwark Education Service and other partners as appropriate.

19. Professional Development

Training is provided in school and by the Archdiocese of Southwark Education Service. It aims to:

- support staff in developing their own religious and spiritual life;
- improve the teaching and learning of RE;
- help staff assess and moderate pupils' work accurately;
- increase knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and tradition;
- induct new staff and support teachers who are not Catholic.

20. Roles and Responsibilities

We work in partnership, communicate well and hold high expectations of each other in upholding the Catholic ethos of the school.

The Headteacher

- has overall responsibility, on behalf of the Governing Body, for Religious Education, working with the whole school community;
- makes sure RE is taught to a high standard, with the RE Leader;
- agrees a clear monitoring schedule and analysis of RE outcomes with the RE Leader;
- allocates a budget for RE resources.

The RE Leader

- makes sure RE is taught to a high standard and that this policy is implemented, updated and reviewed;
- monitors pupils' progress and attainment through reviewing work and planning;
- provides training and staff development;
- makes sure assessment is accurate;
- keeps staff up to date on developments in RE;
- buys resources to support learning.

Teaching staff

- uphold the Catholic ethos of the school and its aims for RE;
- plan and teach RE to a high standard in line with Lighting the Path and Archdiocesan guidance;
- adapt lessons to the needs of the children;
- track and record pupils' progress and attainment, and share evidence with the RE Leader;
- report progress to parents;
- prepare children for whole-school celebrations and class or year group liturgies.

Support staff

- uphold the Catholic ethos of the school and its aims for RE;
- support high standards in RE for the children they work with;
- help prepare children for celebrations and liturgies.

Parents, home and parish

- are kept informed about their child's progress;
- support their child's religious development;
- help prepare their children for the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

The parish priests

- maintain school-parish links with the Headteacher, RE Leader and governors;
- celebrate whole-school and year group Masses.

21. Related Documents

This policy is read with:

- Religious Education Directory, *To Know You More Clearly* (2023)
- Prayer and Liturgy Directory, *To Love You More Dearly* (2023)
- Archdiocese of Southwark policies and guidance on Religious Education and collective worship
- Prayer and Liturgy (Collective Worship) Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy

22. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, senior leadership team, RE link governor and RE Leader monitor the effectiveness of this policy throughout the year. The Headteacher and RE link governor report to the Governing Body on RE each term and recommend any improvements. This policy is reviewed annually while Lighting the Path is being embedded, and whenever the Archdiocese issues new guidance.