St Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Policy for Religious Education



OLAAS MAC

Date of previous review	**2025-2026**
Date of last update	**September 2026**
Date agreed and ratified by the governing body or management committee	**September 2026**
Date of next full review	**Spring 2028**

St Andrew's Catholic Primary School
'To Live, Love and Learn together, as Witnesses for Christ'

Introduction and Mission

Catholic schools are established to be part of the Church's mission, placing Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people's lives. At St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life, and we strive to ensure that our pupils are educated in the Catholic Church's beliefs and devotional practices. This is reflected in our school mission statement:

'To Live, Love and Learn together, as Witnesses for Christ'

At St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, we manifest a Catholic ethos that is evident and open to all who enter the school. We strive to promote Gospel values and ensure that the teachings of the Catholic Church are an integral part of our mission. We provide a religious education which studies the mysteries of God and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. In delivering the curriculum, we recognise the uniqueness of each child and respect the value, dignity, and individuality of every learner. We celebrate diversity and promote the values of mutual respect, individual liberty, and tolerance.

Within our school, great emphasis is given to Religious Education. Prayer and Liturgy, the celebration of the Mass and preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist and Confirmation are given great importance. Every effort is made to live by and promote the teaching of Our Lord and his Church concerning faith and moral living.

We attach great importance to forging strong relationships within the school community and recognise that the partnership between school, home, and parish must be nurtured if we are to grow and develop as a living and worshipping community and provide a truly Christ-centred environment for the children in our care.

As a school within the Archdiocese of Birmingham, we fully embrace the mission of the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service (BDES) to be:
"Forming Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice."
This mission is reflected throughout both the Religious Education curriculum and the wider life of the school. Through high-quality Religious Education, pupils are encouraged to develop a deep knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, to think critically and ask meaningful questions, and to grow in their relationship with God and others. The curriculum supports pupils in becoming informed, reflective and compassionate individuals who are equipped to respond to the challenges of the modern world in the light of the Gospel.

As a member of the Our Lady and All Saints (OLAAS) Catholic Multi Academy Company, we work collaboratively with schools across the MAC to promote excellence in Religious Education. This partnership provides opportunities for shared professional development, moderation, curriculum development, the sharing of best practice and the strengthening of Catholic life across all schools. Through this collaborative approach, we ensure that Religious Education remains rigorous, engaging and faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church, enabling all pupils to flourish academically, spiritually and morally.

In partnership with the OLAAS MAC, the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service and the wider Church, we are committed to ensuring that Religious Education is at the heart of our school's mission and contributes to the formation of young people as Christ-centred pilgrims of hope.

Aims and purposes of Religious Education at St Andrew's Catholic Primary School

At St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum and school life. The Religious Education Directory (RED) describes Religious Education as **"the core of the core curriculum"**, reflecting its central importance in the mission of Catholic education. Through Religious Education, pupils are enabled to deepen their knowledge of the Catholic faith, encounter Christ and grow academically, spiritually and morally.

We aim to:

- To develop an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each child's life and to encourage a personal response to that presence.
- To allow each child to develop their conscience and make sound moral judgements based on commitment to following Christ.
- To enable each child to learn and develop their full potential according to their abilities and adopt attitudes of care and respect for each other.
- To develop within our school a respect for the dignity of each human being and provide children with the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the diverse nature of our society.
- To promote the sacramental life of Christian families and to encourage parents to take an active part in the preparation of their children for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- To foster school-parish links to ensure that our children remain exposed and committed to the Catholic faith beyond the realms of the school curriculum into the wider community.

How we meet our Aims

We work together to meet these aims through:
a) Following the new Diocesan Scheme of work 'Discerning Disciples'
b) Sacramental Education and preparation from 'Discerning Disciples'
c) Prayer and Liturgy – Celebrations of the Word
d) Gospel Values education and promotion
e) British Values
f) Catholic Virtues education and promotion
g) Promotion of the 'We Are All Saints… Children's Charter
h) Personal Daily Witness

Religious Education Entitlement and Provision

Religious Education in our school is an integral part of our ethos, aims and relationships, as Christian values and virtues permeate all aspects of the curriculum and all relationships.

RE is a core subject and is allocated 10% of Curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference. The 10% relates to 'curriculum time', which is the time allocated for the taught curriculum of Religious Education. This 10% is provided every week of the school year. It does not include time committed to activities such as assemblies, hymn practice, PSHE, RHE, preparation

and attendance at Mass etc. Consideration is given to the time of day allocated for RE, ensuring it is taught during both morning and afternoon sessions. RE is taught across three lessons and is not delivered as a single block. In EYFS, there are a minimum of two discrete input sessions each week. Continuous provision is linked to the lesson theme, and the 'Discerning Disciples' strategy is taught in its entirety.

Religious Education Scheme of Work

The school implements the Discerning Disciples curriculum, rooted in the shared diocesan mission. The curriculum complies with 'To Know You More Clearly'- the Religious Education Directory for Catholic schools, Academies and Colleges in England and Wales. It provides coherent, sequential and progressive learning across six branches, meeting the expected end of age phase outcomes for each relevant age-phase.

Through implementation of the curriculum, the school ensures that learning:

- develops the three prescribed ways of knowing (understand, discern, respond);
- gives appropriate weight to the six required knowledge lenses: scriptural texts (hear), Catholic beliefs (believe), prayer and liturgy (celebrate), the relationship of faith to life (live); and dialogue and encounter (the study of other faiths, religions and worldviews);
- includes philosophical and ethical issues, artistic expression and lived religion within the live lens in each year of study;
- reflects the global nature of Catholicism and its diverse cultural expressions;
- supports pupils to encounter Christ, recognise the dignity of every person and grow in wisdom, virtue and love;
- includes learning about other faiths and religions to develop knowledge, understanding and respectful dialogue.
- develops pupils as discerning disciples through systematic engagement with the Word of God, the Gospels, the life and mission of the Church, and reflection on the relationship between faith, reason and lived experience.
- progressively develops pupils' ability to reflect, question and make informed judgements in the light of Catholic faith.

Teachers plan and teach every RE lesson using the Diocesan DISCERN pedagogical model.

Worldview: Other Faith and Religions

A worldview is the way a person understands life, the world, and what is most important to them, which shapes how they think and act. People with different worldviews, such as Christians, Muslims, or those with no religion, often share values like kindness, justice, and care for others.

The school teaches other faiths and religions in accordance with Branch 6 of the Discerning Disciples curriculum, with its focus on Dialogue and Encounter. Teaching develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and capacity for respectful dialogue. It is an authentic study into various beliefs and traditions of other faiths and religions and not a comparative approach with Catholicism. Visits to places of worship and contributions from external speakers are arranged where appropriate and must comply with the school's educational visits and visitor procedures and CES external visitor guidance.

The school makes intentional and considered connections between its Catholic Life and Mission and all curriculum areas, including Religious Education. Teachers identify and plan relevant opportunities, including Catholic Social Teaching principles, the Catholic School Pupil Profile and links to our mission and patron, St Andrew, where these support the intended RE learning.

8. Inclusion and SEND

All pupils are entitled to a high-quality RE curriculum. Teachers adapt teaching, resources and activities to enable pupils, including those with SEND, to access and participate meaningfully in RE while maintaining high expectations. Provision is implemented in accordance with the school's Inclusion, SEND and Teaching and Learning policies and the CES Religious Education Directory guidance for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities. [Specify arrangements for any separate resource base, where applicable.]

Feedback, assessment and reporting

Feedback

Feedback in RE is provided in accordance with the school's policies. Teachers use questioning, discussion, observation and pupils' work to assess knowledge and understanding, address misconceptions and identify next steps in learning.

Assessment and the DART

In Nursery, no formal RE assessment judgement is made. Floor books evidence Nursery RE provision and its impact on pupils' learning, including through adult scribing of children's responses. Evidence from children's attainment in Nursery may inform the end-of-Reception judgement.

In Reception, teachers record assessment data on the EYFS RELG spreadsheet and make a best-fit judgement for each pupil on whether they have achieved a Good Level of RE development (GLRED) in each category. To achieve an overall GLRED, all RELG categories must be at a good level of development. The judgement takes account of all RELG categories.

In Years 1–6, teachers complete two formal assessment elements in each branch:

- Knowledge assessment: Teachers administer one Diocesan multiple-choice quiz in the week specified by the Diocesan Education Service.
- Discern assessment: Teachers administer the task from the relevant document in the assessment folder on the Primary Resource Base. Teachers judge whether each pupil has met or not met the standard prescribed.

The school submits the required assessment data to the Diocesan Education Service using the Diocesan Assessment Reporting Tool (DART).

Reporting to parents and carers

The school reports pupils' progress and attainment in RE to parents and carers through [insert school reporting arrangements], in accordance with its reporting procedures, reflecting the status of RE as the core of the core academic subject.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RE Leader, senior leaders, governors and directors (where applicable) monitor and evaluate RE provision and its impact on pupils' learning. Monitoring draws on lesson visits, scrutiny of pupils' work, pupil discussions, [insert school practices]. Findings are reported to relevant staff and governors, and directors (where applicable) through relevant reporting procedures] and outcomes inform strategic improvement priorities.

Resources

Governors ensure the resourcing of RE reflects its status as the core of the core curriculum; this applies to the financial and practical resourcing of the subject. Staff use resources that are age-appropriate and support the faithful teaching of the Discerning Disciples curriculum.

RE displays

RE displays celebrate and support pupils' learning, reflect the current curriculum focus and provide opportunities for reflection and contribute to pupils' formation.

Links with parents, carers and parish

The school works in partnership with parents, carers and the parish to support pupils' religious education. Partnership arrangements include [insert school-specific arrangements, focusing solely on RE].

Role of the RE Leader

The RE Leader leads, develops and monitors RE across the school in accordance with the school's mission, Diocesan Directives and Protocols, CSI Compliance requirements and the Discerning Disciples curriculum. The RE Leader's additional duties are defined in the role's job description on Primary Resource Base.

Legal right of withdrawal

The school recognises parents' legal right to request withdrawal of their child from all or part of RE provided by the school. Any request for withdrawal should be discussed with the headteacher and handled in accordance with current statutory requirements and Catholic Education Service (CES) guidance. See CES website.

RE Link Governor

All governors oversee the school's compliance with Diocesan Directives and Protocols, CSI requirements and diocesan expectations for the Discerning Disciples curriculum. There is a named governor for RE. The link governor and director (where applicable) carries out the role with reference to the Primary RE Link Governor Checklist, available on the Primary Resource Base.

Policy review

This policy is reviewed by the governing board in accordance with the school's policy review cycle.

Acronyms and abbreviations

- **CES** – Catholic Education Service
- **CSI** – Catholic School Inspection
- **DART** – Diocesan Assessment Reporting Tool
- **EYFS** – Early Years Foundation Stage
- **GLRED** – Good Level of Religious Education Development
- **RE** – Religious Education
- **RED** – Religious Education Directory
- **RELG** – Religious Education Learning Goals
- **SEND** – Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

Mr Carroll – **Headteacher**
Miss Ghanbari – **Deputy Head Teacher/ RE Co-ordinator**
Mrs McElwee **– Assistant Headteacher**
Sister Susan Collins **– RE Link Governor**

Reviewed September 2026
Next review: September 2027

Approach every RE lesson using the Discern Model

To ensure every lesson is grounded in best practice and faithful to the curriculum, DISCERN offers clear, memorable pedagogical principles for lesson planning and delivery to form Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice.

	Component	What it looks like	In a nutshell
D	Dialogue ...from the beginning and throughout the lesson	i. Unlock prior knowledge (30-60 second discussions.) ii. Pupils talk, share, and recall together. iii. Images or key words stimulate discussion. iv. Teacher and pupil dialogue move beyond recall towards reasoning and wise judgement.	Begin by activating relevant prior knowledge and using talk to stimulate thinking, reasoning, and discernment from the outset. Dialogue is purposeful, brief, and tightly focused on activating and using knowledge, not open-ended discussion.
I	Introduce new knowledge 'I do'	i. Introduce the direct knowledge statement(s) as curriculum content not learning objectives. ii. Pupils rehearse the statement(s) orally throughout the lesson. iii. Teacher explains their meaning clearly. iv. All tasks secure understanding before 'discern' and 'respond'.	Treat the knowledge statement as core content, check understanding in the moment, and address misconceptions immediately so no pupil moves on without secure foundations.
S	Scaffolded support	i. Teacher models, explains, and appropriately scaffolds for pupils. ii. Support enables pupils to move from remembering to discerning meaning. iii. Appropriate examples or images for SEND pupils. iv. Well-timed challenge for all.	Design and remove scaffolds deliberately so all pupils move from secure knowledge to meaningful discernment. Challenge matched to age, stage, and need through depth of thinking, not different outcomes.
C	Collaborative conversation 'We do'	i. Pupils discuss discovery questions with teacher guidance. ii. Talk supports reflection, reasoning, and wise judgement using the knowledge statement(s).	Pupils deliberately use secure knowledge through structured talk to form age-appropriate judgements about what is true, good, and beautiful. Without the knowledge, pupils cannot discern as they do not have enough information to judge wisely.
E	Evaluate understanding	i. Teacher checks that all pupils are secure and ready to discern independently. ii. Responsive questioning and adaptive teaching prepare pupils to think deeply.	Check understanding, address misconceptions in the moment, and adapt teaching so pupils are genuinely ready to apply discernment independently.
R	Record responses with discernment 'You do'	i. Pupils independently record understanding and response. ii. Work shows how pupils think, not just what they recall. iii. Pupils independently record the direct knowledge statement(s) from memory.	Set appropriate independent tasks that make pupils' thinking visible, showing how learning shapes discernment and response. Long written explanations are not needed every lesson.
N	Next steps & notes	i. Pupils self-assess. ii. Reflect and feedback focus on: a. security of independent recall b. quality of judgements c. impact on actions and choices iii. Teachers' use professional judgement to plan next lesson.	Use age-appropriate reflection and feedback to evaluate learning and inform pedagogical decisions about what comes next.

Appendix B – Learning Builder

