



SAINT NORBERT'S CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

Mission Statement: To live, love and learn in the footprints of Jesus.

Religious Education Policy

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

As a Rights Respecting School, we acknowledge our role as 'duty bearers' in promoting and protecting children's rights.



As a Catholic and Rights Respecting School, we recognise the inherent dignity of every child, created in the image and likeness of God. Our commitment to children's rights therefore complements our Catholic understanding of the dignity of the human person and our responsibility to seek the common good.

Aims and Objectives

Religious Education is at the heart of the curriculum at Saint Norbert's Catholic Voluntary Academy and is central to our mission, "To live, love and learn in the footprints of Jesus." Through Religious Education, we seek to enable every child to grow in knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, to encounter Christ through Scripture and the living tradition of the Church, and to consider thoughtfully how faith can shape the way in which we understand ourselves, others and the world.

Our Religious Education curriculum is rooted in the Religious Education Directory, '*To know You more clearly*' and follows the programme and guidance of the Diocese of Nottingham. Through the interconnected ways of knowing – Understand, Discern and Respond – pupils are enabled to develop secure religious knowledge, think deeply and theologically, make connections, ask and explore meaningful questions, and express considered personal responses to what they encounter.

As a Catholic and Rights Respecting School, we recognise the inherent dignity and worth of every child, created in the image and likeness of God. Religious Education therefore contributes significantly to our Whole-Child Curriculum, supporting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual formation of pupils and helping them to recognise their responsibility towards others, the common good and the care of creation.

The aims of Religious Education at Saint Norbert's are to enable pupils to:

- develop secure, progressive knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, its beliefs, teachings, traditions and practices;
- encounter and engage with Sacred Scripture and the living tradition of the Catholic Church;

- understand what Catholics believe and how these beliefs are expressed and lived;
- discern meaning through theological thinking, making connections, asking questions and considering different interpretations and perspectives;
- respond personally and thoughtfully to their learning, expressing ideas, reflections and responses in increasingly informed and meaningful ways;
- develop the religious literacy and vocabulary necessary to communicate their knowledge, understanding and thinking with increasing confidence, accuracy and depth;
- encounter other religions and worldviews with knowledge, understanding, respect and sensitivity, recognising both difference and the shared dignity of all people;
- recognise the relationship between faith and life, including the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and their call to uphold human dignity, serve others, seek justice, care for creation and contribute to the common good;
- develop curiosity, reflection and increasingly independent thinking about questions of faith, meaning, purpose and human experience;
- recognise that Religious Education is a rigorous academic discipline in which all pupils are entitled to an ambitious curriculum, with appropriate adaptation and support enabling every child, including those with SEND, to know more, understand more and achieve well;
- develop the knowledge, understanding and dispositions that contribute to their spiritual and moral formation and enable them to flourish as the people God calls them to be.

The Status of Religious Education

Religious Education is a core subject within the curriculum of Saint Norbert's Catholic Voluntary Academy and is central to the school's Catholic mission. It is taught in accordance with the Religious Education Directory, *To know You more clearly*, and the requirements and guidance of the Diocese of Nottingham.

In accordance with the requirements of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, a minimum of 10% of curriculum teaching time is devoted to Religious Education. This is separate from time allocated to Prayer and Liturgy.

As a Catholic school, our approach to Religious Education reflects the distinctive nature and purpose of Catholic education and the school's responsibilities as part of the mission of the Church.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning in Religious Education reflects its distinctive nature as a rigorous academic discipline and a central part of the Catholic curriculum. Teaching is rooted in the Religious Education Directory, *'To know You more clearly'*, and enables pupils to develop increasingly secure knowledge and understanding through the interconnected ways of knowing: Understand, Discern and Respond.

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and ensure that learning builds purposefully upon prior knowledge. Lessons make effective use of Sacred Scripture, religious vocabulary, questioning, discussion, theological thinking, reflection and creative expression, enabling pupils to know more, remember more and think with increasing depth and independence.

We are committed to ensuring that every pupil can access and succeed within the same ambitious RE curriculum. Teaching is adapted responsively to remove barriers to learning, particularly for pupils with SEND, through approaches such as explicit vocabulary teaching, modelling, carefully chosen resources, scaffolding, questioning and appropriate adult support. Adaptation supports pupils towards increasing independence rather than reducing expectations or limiting curriculum entitlement.

Pupils are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions, make connections between their learning and consider how Catholic belief is expressed and lived. Appropriate opportunities are provided to encounter and understand other religions and worldviews with knowledge, respect and sensitivity.

Assessment is integral to teaching. Teachers use pupils' responses, discussion and work to identify what has been understood, address misconceptions and adapt subsequent teaching. Appropriate challenge enables pupils to deepen their theological thinking, make increasingly sophisticated connections and communicate their understanding with accuracy and confidence.

Where meaningful, learning is enriched through the liturgical life of the school, visits, artefacts, sacred art, music and engagement with the parish and wider Catholic community. Such experiences complement the taught curriculum and help pupils appreciate the relationship between the faith they study and the way in which it is lived.

Curriculum Planning in Religious Education

Nottingham Diocesan materials, designed to deliver and fulfil the requirements of the Religious Education Directory ('To know You more clearly') are used in all RE lessons. All staff receive the training necessary to plan and teach lessons and assess pupil outcomes using this approach.

Learning in Religious Education builds upon pupils' prior learning and experiences. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each 'branch', and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. Work for children with SEND is adapted, depending on their precise needs, so that they can access the same learning as their peers.

There are six 'branches' delivered over the course of each academic year, with each taking approximately one half-term to complete.

Religious Education and the Wider Curriculum

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) / Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Religious Education contributes to pupils' understanding of the dignity of the human person, relationships, moral responsibility and the common good. Appropriate connections are made with the school's Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum where these genuinely enhance pupils' understanding.

RSHE is taught principally through Ten:Ten 'Life to the Full Plus', in accordance with statutory requirements, diocesan guidance and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Further detail is provided within the school's Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy.

In general, by promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate what it means to be proactive members of our pluralistic society. Our weekly 'Statements to Live By' enable all the school to focus on one particular aspect of their social and emotional learning.

Our Whole-Child Curriculum

Religious Education is integral to our Whole-Child Curriculum, contributing to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual formation of every pupil. Through RE, children are encouraged to reflect on faith, dignity, relationships, justice, service and care for creation, making meaningful connections with Catholic Social Teaching and our commitment as a Rights Respecting School.

While purposeful links are made across the wider curriculum, we recognise and protect the distinctive nature of Religious Education as an academic discipline, ensuring that connections enrich rather than dilute its specific knowledge, vocabulary and ways of knowing.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils encounter questions of faith, meaning and purpose; consider moral and ethical issues; and develop their understanding of human dignity, relationships, justice and responsibility.

Through Catholic teaching, Catholic Social Teaching, engagement with other religions and worldviews, and our commitment as a Rights Respecting School, pupils learn to respect the dignity of others and recognise their responsibility to contribute positively to their communities and the common good.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in Religious Education and is used to establish how securely pupils are meeting the expected outcomes of the Religious Education Directory through Understand, Discern and Respond. Teachers use pupils' work, discussion and responses to identify what has been understood, address misconceptions and inform subsequent teaching.

Assessment information is used to identify pupils requiring additional support or challenge and to evaluate progress over time. Judgements are moderated within school and, where appropriate, through diocesan moderation and support. Feedback reflects the distinctive nature of Religious Education and enables pupils to deepen their knowledge, theological thinking and ability to communicate reasoned responses.

Resources and Enrichment

High-quality, age-appropriate resources are used to support the delivery of the Religious Education Directory, To know You more clearly and to deepen pupils' religious knowledge and understanding. These include Sacred Scripture, religious artefacts, sacred art, texts and other resources relating to Catholicism and the study of other religions and worldviews.

Our close relationship with St Norbert's Church, our parish priest and the wider Catholic community provides valuable opportunities to enrich the taught curriculum through visits, celebrations, pilgrimages and encounters with lived faith. Appropriate opportunities for family participation further strengthen the relationship between home, school and parish.

Religious Education and Prayer and Liturgy

Religious Education and Prayer and Liturgy are distinct but closely connected aspects of the Catholic life of the school. Opportunities for prayer and reflection may arise naturally from pupils' learning in RE; however, Prayer and Liturgy is not a substitute for curriculum RE and does not form part of the 10% curriculum entitlement.

Prayer and Liturgy provides opportunities for pupils to encounter Christ, respond in faith and participate in the prayer and liturgical life of the Church. Further detail is set out in the school's Prayer and Liturgy Policy.

Formation and Professional Development

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff have the knowledge, confidence and formation necessary to contribute fully to its Catholic mission and to deliver high-quality Religious Education. Staff receive appropriate school, Trust and diocesan training, including specific induction and formation for those new to Catholic education.

The Headteacher/RE Subject Leader engages regularly with the Diocese of Nottingham and ensures that relevant guidance, training and developments are shared with staff. Continuing professional development is informed by monitoring and evaluation and is used to strengthen subject knowledge, pedagogy and the quality of pupils' experience of Religious Education.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher/RE Subject Leader retains strategic oversight of Religious Education, ensuring effective implementation of the Religious Education Directory ('To know You more clearly') and consistently high standards.

RE is evaluated through the school's five-thread monitoring model, through which leaders consider: curriculum and subject integrity; teaching and pedagogy; inclusion and adaptive teaching; assessment, progress and outcomes; and pupil experience and personal development. Evidence is gathered through lesson visits, work scrutiny, pupil voice, assessment information and case sampling. Findings identify strengths and priorities, inform professional development and ensure that actions lead to sustained improvement.

The RE Link Governor provides appropriate support and challenge, while diocesan moderation, support and quality assurance provide external validation of the school's evaluation of RE.

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