

ST AMBROSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



POLICY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

September 2025

Review: September 2026

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of St. Ambrose Preparatory School and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

At St Ambrose we aim to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 3 to 11; St Ambrose is an inclusive school where the Gospel teachings and our school values are at the centre of everything that happens in our school family. At St Ambrose we strive to develop happy, fulfilled, well educated, confident and caring children who know and understand the love, joy and peace of Jesus; and to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

Our Vision

Our Vision is to be an exemplar Edmund Rice School, with an enviable reputation amongst our peers, both as an organisation and for the services and facilities we provide, making us first choice for parents and pupils in our geographic area.

Our Ethos & Values

At St Ambrose we provide a Catholic school community in which pupils feel welcome, safe, recognised for their individuality – supported by a community of love, and affection. We strive to live the Gospel in all aspects of school life and policy, following Blessed Edmund's footsteps.

St Ambrose Preparatory School

Religious Education Policy

Mission Statement

At St Ambrose Preparatory School we are joyful learners and are inspired to always do our best. We nurture the many gifts we have been given and seek to use them wisely for the benefit of ourselves and others. We put love into action each day so we are advocates of change in the world, Living the Gospel and the Catholic faith and celebrating the values of Blessed Edmund Rice, with our family and the whole Ambrosian community.

‘Have courage, the good seed will grow up in the children's hearts’

Blessed Edmund Rice

Rationale

At St. Ambrose preparatory School, we are fully committed to providing opportunities for all children to know, love and serve God, in such a way that will enrich their own lives and help them to understand their Catholic faith traditions, in an ever-changing world and within the multicultural society they live in. We will provide opportunities to help our children develop the skills and capacities necessary to become reflective and questioning individuals and to promote knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Religious Education permeates all that we do at St. Ambrose.

Through our teaching of Religious Education, we endeavour to enrich the lives of the individuals in our school. Religious Education is a core subject in our Catholic school and because of this it is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each child is addressed through all aspects of the curriculum as well as through everyday school life.

We see our role, in partnership with parents, in leading their children to a greater understanding of who God is and developing a deeper Faith.

At St. Ambrose, we believe Religious Education to be the ‘core of the core curriculum’. We see it not as one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. We hope that our school will be a place where not only the teachings of the faith are taught,

but also where God is experienced as a reality and where Christ's Gospel comes to life.

Aims

To develop in the children, including those in the Foundation Stage, a love for God and an understanding of the principles of the Gospel in the tradition of the Catholic faith.

Objectives

1. To develop in the children, including those in the Foundation Stage, an awareness of their individuality as children created and loved by God that they might know and love God as Father through His son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.
2. To help each child to develop an awareness of how Jesus wishes them to live through the study and appreciation of the Gospel, fostering a caring and respectful attitude towards others.
3. To accompany the children on their own journey of faith.
4. To teach them the doctrine of the Catholic Faith, developing children's understanding of Christian morals and values and reflect on how they are going to live according to them.
5. To prepare our children for life in a multi-faith society and to actively promote tolerance, understanding and harmony among all religious backgrounds.
6. To help the children to strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, liturgy and worship, leading our children to be reflective, open and enquiring.
7. To build upon the other experiences the children have in their Parish and in their local community and to encourage active participation.
8. To develop children's understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and how they can use the themes in their daily lives.

STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

The Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to preserve the distinctive nature of our Catholic school by ensuring that the R.E. policy is observed and implemented by all members of staff

both Catholic and non-Catholic.

R.E. Co-ordinators

The Religious Education co-ordinators will work alongside the head teacher to ensure that the R.E. policy is observed and implemented by members of staff, both Catholic and non-Catholic.

Classroom Teacher

The class teacher will normally be a committed Catholic and will also be responsible with the head teacher and co-ordinator for implementing the R.E. policy within the classroom. In the event of the class teacher being non-Catholic appropriate support will be given.

All Staff

All teaching staff are involved in the worship and liturgical celebration that is central in the life of our school. Other school personnel are always welcome to participate.

R.E. CURRICULUM

The Religious Education Directory (RED) curriculum has six components that known as branches which are delivered over the six half-terms of the school year. Each one has a core theme and invites pupils to learn about an aspect of Revelation, Scripture, life in Christ, and life in the Church, and to discern what their learning means academically and experientially enabling them to see, judge, and act through a deeper knowledge of the Christian faith.

Key features of the RED scheme are:

- **The knowledge lenses: hear, believe, celebrate and live**

- o (hear)make meaningful connections between scriptural texts Catholic beliefs
- o (believe) prayer and liturgy
- o (celebrate)
- o (live)the relationship of faith to life

- **Ways of knowing:**

- o (understand) the meaning of sacred texts
- o (discern) engage in creative and critical thinking
- o (respond) personal reflection

Teachers plan and deliver the weekly entitlement of 10% of the curriculum timetable for the teaching and learning of RE, which includes 3, 40 minute sessions in KS1 and 3.5, 40 minute sessions in KS2.

The first four lenses systematically set out what a study of Catholicism comprises. The two lenses called 'dialogue' and 'encounter' set out the requirements in relation to the teaching of other religions and worldviews. The first of these two lenses is called 'Dialogue' and 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. In addition to understanding what the Church teaches about its relationship to other faiths, religions, and worldviews, our pupils engage in a discrete study of other faiths, religions, and worldviews. Therefore, as they progress through school, our pupils will study and encounter:

- o Other Christian denominations
- o Judaism
- o Islam
- o Dharmic religions and pathways
- o Other religions and worldviews, including non-religious worldview.

Religious Education in the Early Years

The Religious Education Curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage aims to be at the heart of the curriculum and at the core of learning where appropriate. The curriculum will inform schemes of work and programmes of study to enable well-written, quality holistic planning and resources for early learning. The curriculum for the Early Years follows each branch as outlined in the Religious Education document and provides the adaptation of the statutory framework to suit Early Years planning, teaching, and learning. It provides Religious Education within the Early Years areas of learning as a bespoke foundation for secure grounding for Key Stage 1 and beyond. The Religious Education ways of knowing provide evidence of children's outcomes and development.

ASSESSMENT IN RE

The expected outcomes are a synthesis of the content outlined in the knowledge lenses and the skills described in the ways of knowing. Each year group has a prescribed set of expected 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 discrete knowledge

within each lens. It is against these expected outcomes that we assess pupil progress summatively. Summative assessments are evidenced on the schools in house tracker at the end of each branch.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RE Leads along with the Headteacher, on a termly basis, conducts a book look and planning scrutiny, and feedback is provided with next steps. Each term, learning walks are conducted and a discussion with pupils about their learning in RE takes place. Pupil voice is carried out as part of this monitoring process throughout the year. At the end of each branch, staff participate in moderation of RE books to verify the pupils have been accurately assessed. SLT meet with the RE Leads to monitor progress and impact.

STAFF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN RE

The RE Leads ensures that training opportunities are shared with staff where appropriate and provides up-to-date CPD and updates on current matters. The RE Leads regularly liaise with teaching staff to identify where support is needed and this is considered when allocating training and future CPD.

Edmund Rice Network

We are inspired by the work of Edmund Rice, who, in Ireland at the turn of the 19th century was inspired by the Gospels to actively reach out to the destitute. With a group of friends, Edmund formed a religious congregation that sought to improve the lives of those made poor, via transformational education. From our interconnectedness we draw inspiration and strength.

Ethos of an Edmund Rice School:

The bond between the 10 schools in England is our commitment to 'The Eight Essentials' drawn from the educational charism of Blessed Edmund Rice. As an Edmund Rice school we accept these principles as its governing philosophy and strive to make them the focus our daily school life and development.

Our Edmund Rice Values are:

- **CELEBRATE** Jesus' values in all we do
- **GROW THROUGH** and talk about our beliefs
- **BUILD** an inclusive community in school and beyond
- **HELP** people who need it
- **BE THE BEST** I can be
- **CREATE** a better future for everyone
- **LIVE** by Jesus' example
- **CARE** for one another and our world

Justice society and our wider Community

The justice society works to promote justice for at-risk groups locally and worldwide. The steering committee is made up of children from all classes who work to learn about issues affecting people, and work advocate to raise awareness of social issues. Their action plan consists of working towards ending child poverty, the schools earth pledge and working together with refugees. The Justice Society also promotes our work to becoming a Rights Respecting School Award. This involves learning about and teaching our friends about children's rights, and working with children and adults to ensure that children in our school know their rights.

Children and their families are encouraged to be aware of the wider community at every level. Regular newsletters inform parents and carers about their children's RE topics. Parents and carers are informed of all school celebrations, including Masses and assemblies. Parents are invited to participate in events such as the Caritas or CAFOD fund raising activities. They pray at home, using the travelling crib and our Lenten and Advent Bags. The Sacramental Programme strengthens the links with families, as school lead the programme and are involved at every stage. At St. Ambrose, the children are invested in the local community- for example - visiting a local care home in the village. The Social Justice group positively promote their message of 'children helping children', through their events. New opportunities to make positive links locally, are always being investigated.

All Children are encouraged to 'live' their Faith, through various events, such as fundraising for CAFOD, Mission and our Edmund Rice partner schools, by being aware of world events.

Children are informed through learning about global concerns as part of RE curriculum, visitors to school, educational resources from CAFOD and Mission Together and Laudato Si.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Spiritual development of the pupils involves:

- the development of insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes and values, which guide and motivate us.
- a developing understanding of feelings and emotions which causes us to reflect and to learn
- a developing recognition that their insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes and values influence, inspire or guide them in life.

Moral development involves the distinction between right and wrong in a social context. Moral development is about a growing awareness of, and a positive response to, the demands of living as an individual with others in community and knowledge of the Fundamental British Values which underpin our society. Each pupil is encouraged to develop in his or her unique way within an identifiable Catholic community.

Special Educational Needs and Disability/Equal Opportunities

All pupils, regardless of ability, race or gender, will be given equal access to RE.

Classroom organisation and management should take account of such issues and materials used will be of an unbiased nature. Appropriate support is given to children with special educational needs or disabilities. The staff are made aware of these children through the SEND register. They are given the necessary support and care to include them fully in worship, liturgies and Assembly. All pupils have equal access to a broad, balanced and relevant RE Curriculum.

Monitoring and review

Every three years the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the Subject Leader, the Headteacher and the nominated governor and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors.

Policy reviewed by:	Mrs. M. Cooke
Review Date:	September 2025
Next Review Due:	September 2026