

ST JOHN PAYNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

DATE REVIEWED	JANUARY 2026
RATIFIED BY GOVERNORS	
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	JANUARY 2028

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CONTEXT

Through the centuries, the Church has educated young people and adults. Staff and students of St John Payne bear daily witness to Christ and the Catholic way of life. Religious education at the school is in the first instance education in the Catholic Christian faith; students learn about and from the Catholic tradition.

“Religious education is central to the curriculum of the Catholic school and at the heart of the philosophy of Catholic education. Religious education has developed to reflect the particular identity of Catholic schools in England & Wales. It teaches about the faith in the context of a school which proclaims the Gospel, and invites the individual to respond to the message of Christ. Growth in faith and knowledge helps the child to respond to the call to holiness and understand the fullness of what it is to be human. For some, Religious education will also be received as evangelisation and for some, catechesis.”⁽¹⁾

Religious education enables students to build their sense of identity, and to flourish as citizens in a diverse society. Students learn about other faiths and beliefs, promoting respect and understanding.

Religious Education is conducted as a partnership with parents, the first educators of their children in faith. The role of St John Payne is to support the work begun in homes, parishes and primary schools, to help children explore and develop their faith as they journey through adolescence.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS A CURRICULUM SUBJECT

In line with the Religious Education Directory (2023) Religious education at St John Payne aims to:

1. Proclaim and teach the Catholic Faith with integrity, accuracy and joy, ensuring fidelity to the Magisterium.
2. Enable pupils to understand, articulate and respond to God’s self-revelation through Scripture, Tradition, liturgy and the life of the Church.
3. Support pupils in developing a religiously literate and engaged understanding of belief, practice and ethical reasoning.
4. Promote personal spiritual development and encourage students to encounter Christ through prayer, worship and reflection.
5. Equip pupils with the skills of critical thinking, analysis and evaluation, enabling them to engage confidently with philosophy, ethics, and religious questions in society.
6. Foster respect for all people and traditions, consistent with Catholic Social Teaching, forming pupils who work for the common good.

RE is the core of the Core curriculum, taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. Its Core status sees it allocated 10% curriculum time across KS3&4, with 5% in KS5.

The religious education curriculum is fully compliant with the Religious Education Directory at KS3 (2023) and all more recent instructions. GCSE at St John Payne is also fully compliant with Edexcel A Religious Studies. Assessment adheres to school procedures, the RED’s expectations and the exam board requirements.

⁽¹⁾ Religious Education Curriculum Directory (Bishops’ Conference 2012) p3

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The Diocese will support all Catholic schools in their delivery of the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and other norms of the Bishops' Conference. Diocesan policy relating to schemes of work and programmes of study encourages schools to utilise whichever resources best suit.

- Religious education at KS3 follows the Religious Education Directory. The KS3 curriculum covers all pillars of the RED systematically and coherently developing theological, spiritual and philosophical literacy.
- At KS4, students follow Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies Specification A, studying: Catholic Christianity, Judaism and Philosophy and Ethics. The KS4 curriculum meets the Catholic Bishops' requirements for KS4 RE and provides opportunities for deep encounter with Catholic tradition, sacramental life and ethical formation.
- At KS5, students follow AQA Religious Studies A Level, studying Philosophy, Ethics and Christianity and Dialogues. The KS5 curriculum enables students to engage critically with Catholic theology and the wider Christian intellectual tradition and philosophical reasoning.
- All Sixth Form students receive CORE RE (non-examined) through a school designed programme. The CORE curriculum programme covers CST, moral theology, contemporary ethical issues, interreligious dialogue and vocation, promoting intellectual formation, reflective practice and engagement with lived Catholic faith.

WIDER INFLUENCE

The Chaplain & RE department enjoy a symbiotic, reciprocal relationship that sees students grow in faith, knowledge and liturgical literacy through worship, retreats, assemblies and action for social justice. Students develop an understanding and appreciation of diversity within the social, moral, spiritual and cultural curriculum, to which the RE department contributes significantly.

See also collective worship policy.

⁽¹⁾ Religious Education Curriculum Directory (Bishops' Conference 2012) p3