

## Religious Education at St Mary's Parent Information

At St Mary's, Religious Education (RE) is at the heart of everything we do. We have been gradually transitioning to the Religious Education Directory: To Know You More Clearly, which is the new curriculum used in all Catholic schools across England and Wales. From September 2026, this will be fully implemented across the whole school. This curriculum has been approved for use by Bishop Patrick of the Nottingham Diocese. As a Catholic school within this diocese, we are instructed to follow this curriculum, ensuring consistency and high standards in Religious Education for all pupils.

### What is the aim of RE?

RE in Catholic schools is designed to:

- Help children learn about God, Jesus Christ, and the Church
- Deepen pupils' understanding of faith and how it connects to everyday life
- Develop respect and understanding for other religions and worldviews
- Encourage children to think about big questions about life, meaning, and truth
- Support pupils in becoming thoughtful, caring members of society

### Why is RE so important?

In Catholic schools, RE is described as "the core of the core curriculum" because it shapes:

- Children's values and moral understanding
- Their ability to reflect and make good choices
- Their sense of identity and belonging in the world

RE is taught as a rigorous academic subject, just like English or Maths, while also supporting children's spiritual and personal development.

### What does children's learning look like?

The curriculum is structured around key areas:

- **Hear** – learning about scripture and the Word of God
- **Believe** – understanding Catholic beliefs
- **Celebrate** – exploring prayer and liturgy
- **Live** – applying Gospel values in daily life
- **Dialogue** – learning to talk respectfully about beliefs
- **Encounter** – meeting and understanding others

These areas help children grow into religiously literate, reflective, and respectful individuals

### How is the curriculum organised across the year?

The Religious Education curriculum is organised into six key branches, which are taught across the academic year. Each year group revisits these branches annually, building on prior learning and developing a deeper level of understanding over time. The six branches are:

- Advent Term 1 - Creation and Covenant
- Advent Term 2 - Prophecy and Promise
- Lent Term 1 - Galilee to Jerusalem
- Lent Term 2 - Desert to Garden
- Pentecost Term 1 - To the Ends of the Earth
- Pentecost Term 2 - Dialogue and Encounter

### Our vision

At St Mary's, we aim for every child to:

- Grow in their relationship with God
- Be curious and thoughtful learners
- Show love, respect, and compassion to others
- Understand their role in building a fair and caring world

## Pentecost Term 2 - Dialogue and Encounter in RE

As part of the Religious Education Directory, two important strands are Dialogue and Encounter. These help children develop understanding, respect, and empathy in today's diverse world.

### What is Dialogue?

Dialogue means talking, listening, and learning from others.

In RE, children are encouraged to:

- ❖ Share their own ideas and beliefs confidently
- ❖ Listen carefully to others
- ❖ Ask questions and explore different viewpoints
- ❖ Show respect, even when views are different

The Directory explains that dialogue helps pupils grow by understanding others while being confident in their own identity.

👉 Child-friendly definition:

"Dialogue means talking kindly, listening carefully, and respecting everyone's ideas."

### What is Encounter?

Encounter means meeting people and learning from their lives and beliefs.

In RE, this may include:

- ❖ Learning about different religions and cultures
- ❖ Hearing real-life experiences
- ❖ Visiting or exploring places of worship
- ❖ Reflecting on how people live out their faith

Encounter helps children:

- ❖ Develop empathy and compassion
- ❖ Appreciate diversity
- ❖ Recognise that we are all part of one human family

The Directory highlights that Catholic schools are places where pupils are invited to encounter others and grow through relationships and shared experiences.

👉 Child-friendly definition:

"Encounter means meeting people, learning from them, and understanding their lives."

### Why are Dialogue and Encounter important?

These strands help children to:

- ❖ Live in a diverse and respectful society
- ❖ Build positive relationships with others
- ❖ Think deeply and express their ideas clearly
- ❖ Become kind, inclusive, and thoughtful individuals

At St Mary's, we believe that through dialogue and encounter, children learn not just about the world, but how to live well within it.

If you would like any further information about the Religious Education curriculum, please take a look at our school website.