Love Learning. Love Each Other.

Policy for Religious Education

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.
James 3:17

Approved by: IEB	**Date:** 13 March 2026
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St Mary's School Vision

One family: school, church, home and community.

At St Mary's we believe in a culture where:

- Everyone is special, unique and valued: diversity and difference are celebrated. We are all God's treasure.
- Education is holistic; spiritual and moral growth is nurtured. *Life in all its fullness* – John 10:10.
- Inspirational and reflective worship enables all in the school community to encounter the risen Christ.
- Wisdom, knowledge and skills are a focus in everything.
- Everyone does their best at all times with a culture of the highest expectations, respect and consideration for all.
- Everyone can succeed and achieve. Aspiration and inspiration are central to all that we do. *I know the plans I have for you. Plans to make you prosper* – Jeremiah 29:11.
- Creativity and joy in learning is valued.
- The spiritual and emotional well-being of all members of our school community is a priority. Resilience and perseverance are developed in all.
- A community of global citizens of God is created.
- Social action is at the core of our community – on local, national and global levels.

All of these are underpinned our spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and experiences; respect of our British values and through our core Christian values of endurance, peace, trust, forgiveness, compassion and hope.

School Vision

One family: school, church, home and community.

At St Mary's we believe that every child is special, unique and valued – God's treasure. Our vision is rooted in the call for all to live *"life in all its fullness"* (John 10:10). We nurture spiritual and moral growth, celebrate diversity, and cultivate wisdom, knowledge and skills. Through inspirational worship and high-quality Religious Education, we enable every child to flourish, develop resilience, grow in hope, and become compassionate global citizens of God.

Religious Education (RE) is central to this vision. It is a core academic subject through which pupils encounter Christianity as a diverse, global, living faith, and engage meaningfully with a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out how St Mary's CE Primary School fulfils the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education (January 2026) and meets statutory requirements for a voluntary aided Church of England school.

It replaces all previous versions and is written to ensure full compliance with SIAMS expectations (IQ6 and IQ7), the National Content Standard for RE (2023), and the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education syllabus.

Legal and Statutory Framework

As a voluntary aided Church of England school:

- The Governing Body is responsible for determining the nature and content of RE.
- RE is taught in accordance with the Trust Deed and the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England.
- Parents retain the legal right to withdraw their child from RE.
- RE is distinct from collective worship and must be timetabled separately.
- All pupils in statutory year groups (Reception–Year 6) are entitled to RE, however our Nursery children also receive a RE lessons.

St Mary's follows the Manchester Diocese Syllabus, enhanced by Understanding Christianity, adapted to meet the expectations of the 2026 Statement of Entitlement and the National Content Standard.

Our Intent for Religious Education

RE at St Mary's enables pupils to:

Know about and understand Christianity

"Know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith…" (Statement of Entitlement 2026)
Pupils explore core Christian beliefs, biblical texts, practices, festivals, and the lived experience of Christians locally and globally.

Understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews

Pupils learn about the diversity, complexity and change within worldviews including Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and non-religious worldviews.

Develop disciplinary knowledge

RE is taught through the disciplinary lenses of:

- **Theology** – thinking about God
- **Philosophy** – thinking about questions of meaning and truth
- **Human/Social Sciences** – thinking about lived experience and practice

Explore personal worldviews

Pupils are supported to articulate their own developing religious, spiritual or philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Engage with questions of meaning and purpose

Pupils grapple with ultimate questions raised by human existence, experience and morality.

Become religiously literate

Pupils learn to interpret, analyse, evaluate and reflect, enabling them to navigate a multi-religious and multi-secular world with confidence and respect.

Curriculum Structure and Time Allocation

Curriculum time

In line with the 2026 Statement of Entitlement:

- RE receives close to 10% of curriculum time.
- It is never less than 5% in any key stage.
- Collective worship is not counted as RE time.

Christianity as the majority study

"Christianity… equating to at least 50% of curriculum time." (Statement of Entitlement 2026)

Christianity is the main religious worldview studied in every year group.

Curriculum model

St Mary's uses:

- Manchester Diocese Syllabus
- Understanding Christianity
- Learning opportunities are adapted to local context
- Curriculum mapping aligned with the National Content Standard (2023)

Sequencing

The curriculum is:

- coherent
- progressive
- ambitious
- adapted to the needs of St Mary's pupils
- designed to build secure knowledge over time

Teaching and Learning

Teachers at St Mary's will:

- Engage critically with biblical texts and other religious/non-religious sources.
- Use theological, philosophical and human/social science approaches.
- Teach disciplinary knowledge explicitly.
- Challenge misconceptions with secure subject knowledge.
- Provide safe, supportive classrooms where pupils can explore personal worldviews.
- Enable meaningful, respectful dialogue.
- Provide for all pupils, including those with SEND, through adaptive teaching.
- Use accurate and inclusive assessment to support progress.

Assessment

Assessment follows Manchester Diocese guidance and:

- identifies progress in substantive and disciplinary knowledge
- informs teaching
- supports pupils to deepen understanding

- ensures all pupils make appropriate progress

Where progress is a concern, teachers review teaching strategies, resources, organisation and support.

SEND and Religious Education

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, access a high-quality Religious Education curriculum that enables them to flourish and make meaningful progress. Our approach aligns with the 2026 Church of England Statement of Entitlement, which states that RE must:

"Enable pupils to achieve highly in RE, irrespective of educational need or disadvantage."
"Provide for the needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities."

Principles

RE for pupils with SEND at St Mary's is grounded in the following principles:

- **Equity of entitlement**: All pupils study RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- **High expectations for all**: Every pupil is supported to achieve ambitious outcomes appropriate to their stage of development.
- **Adaptive teaching**: Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure pupils can access substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
- **Respect for personal worldviews**: Pupils' own experiences, beliefs and ways of making meaning are valued and incorporated into learning.
- **Safe, supportive classrooms**: Pupils are enabled to explore ideas without fear of ridicule, with emotional and cognitive needs carefully considered.

Curriculum Access

Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND can access the RE curriculum through:

- adapted texts, visuals and resources
- pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- scaffolded enquiry and structured discussion
- multi-sensory approaches
- chunked tasks and clear modelling
- opportunities for oral rather than written responses
- use of assistive technology where appropriate
- targeted adult support that promotes independence

Where necessary, learning is personalised to ensure pupils can engage meaningfully with theological, philosophical and human/social science lenses.

Assessment for Pupils with SEND

Assessment for pupils with SEND:

- focuses on individual progress over time
- recognises small-step gains in understanding
- uses a range of evidence (oral responses, practical work, discussion, observation)
- avoids over-reliance on written outcomes
- informs adaptive teaching and intervention planning

Teachers work closely with the SENDCo to ensure assessment is appropriate, inclusive and supportive of each pupil's learning journey.

Inclusion and Belonging

RE plays a vital role in supporting pupils with SEND to:

- develop a sense of identity, value and belonging
- explore spiritual, moral and emotional questions safely
- engage in respectful dialogue with peers
- understand diverse worldviews and experiences
- participate fully in the life of the school community

Our commitment is that every child, regardless of need, is enabled to flourish and encounter RE as a subject that nurtures dignity, respect and life in all its fullness.

RE, SMSC and British Values

RE contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- exploring beliefs, values and identity
- engaging with moral issues and social justice
- learning about charity, service and community action
- developing respect and tolerance for those with different beliefs

British Values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance) are embedded through RE, collective worship, PSHE and wider school life.

Leadership and Governance

Senior leaders and IEB ensure that:

- RE is a high-priority academic subject
- RE is clearly distinct from collective worship
- Curriculum time meets entitlement expectations
- Staff receive high-quality professional development
- Subject knowledge is strengthened across the staff team
- Monitoring systems evaluate standards in RE
- The school engages with diocesan advisers in curriculum development
- RE provision reflects the Trust Deed and VA status

Partnership with Parents

Parents can expect:

- RE to reflect the school's Christian vision
- RE to be non-confessional, academically rigorous and high-profile
- Christianity to be the majority study
- A range of worldviews to be taught
- RE to be taught in all statutory year groups

Right to Withdraw

The school aims to provide an open, inclusive curriculum accessible to all.
Our Christian teachings and principles are like a golden thread that is woven through every aspect of life at St Mary's, it is understood that staff, IEB, parents and pupils will endorse and support such beliefs and so participate enthusiastically in this valued element of school life.

We expect all children to engage in Religious Education. Parents may withdraw their child from RE. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

At present no parents at St Mary's withdraw their children.

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed in **March 2028**, in line with the Church of England's planned review of the Statement of Entitlement (no earlier than July 2028).