

Religious Education - Position Statement

Context

The department is made up of Head of Department, two full-time colleagues and a number of part-time non-specialists

The aim of the curriculum within the department at St Mary's is to:

- *Serve the needs of students from the Catholic tradition, from other faith traditions and those with no faith. In doing so ensure all of our pupils have the knowledge and understanding to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and to be aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life*
- *To ensure that pupils develop spiritually and morally, understanding the school's mission to serve each other through the teachings of Christ.*
- *Provide every pupil with high quality Religious Education that meets the needs of every pupil as fully as possible.*
- *Enable pupils to engage in learning that helps develop their faith as well as acquire the knowledge necessary to make academic progress.*
- *Provide a curriculum that presents opportunities to explore values and virtues that support the ethos of the school.*

Pupils at KS3 and KS4 have five hours of curriculum time across a two-week timetable. In Year 10 there are six groups (of set ability in A Band and mixed ability in B Band) with a total number of 150 pupils. In the current Year 11 there are also six sets and a total number of 147 pupils.

As a Catholic school, the Religious Education department curriculum follows the Religious Education Curriculum Directory syllabus as set out by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales. This curriculum has recently been revised and will be implemented for all year 7 students in September 2023, the remainder of KS3 will follow in 2024 and 2025.

- The KS3 RE curriculum is agreed by the Bishops of England and Wales as presented in the RE Curriculum Directory (2022). Students will follow the Source to Summit syllabus which links directly to, and builds on, the curriculum used in Catholic primary schools in the Archdiocese of Cardiff. There is a logically agreed sequence to the topics studied and each one builds on prior learning, and work becomes more challenging as terms progress. There is flexibility within the topics to allow for students in our school to develop their own skills and to explore topics of interest to our students, there is also the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge that tie in with the AQA Religious Studies GCSE syllabus. The curriculum is differentiated allowing for equality of access for all students and the sequencing of units is regularly reviewed to match ambition and to ensure a clear rationale for learning and teaching. As a Catholic Christian community, the focus is on Church and Gospel values in our modern world but students will also explore other World Religions, namely Hinduism, Judaism and Islam, in recognition of the UK as a multi-faith and multicultural society and of a Church which looks outwards and not inwards. Regular revision coupled with mid and end of unit assessments, encourage students to know and remember more, whilst reflecting on their own faith journeys.

- The curriculum at Key Stage 4 builds on the work started at KS3 and, once again, it follows the guidelines laid down by the Bishops of England and Wales. At St Mary's, pupils will start the GCSE in the January of Year 9, thereby allowing enough time for students to explore units in greater depth and to allow for the development of SMSC across the learning experiences. Regular revision coupled with mid and end of unit assessments, encourage students to know and remember more, whilst reflecting on their own faith journeys. The curriculum is differentiated allowing for equality of access for all pupils and the sequencing of units is regularly reviewed to match ambition and to ensure a clear rationale for learning and teaching. As a Catholic Christian community, the key focus is on Church and Gospel values but within a modern world; students will also explore Judaism and how this has influenced Christianity today.
- A wide range of assessment data is used to identify those pupils in need of support to achieve their potential and this in turn is used to inform planning. Pupil progress is closely monitored through an on-going intervention programme which targets the entire GCSE cohort through close monitoring, tutorial sessions and parental involvement.

Marking and Assessment

Homework is set on a fortnightly basis for years 7 and 8, and on a weekly basis for years 9-11 in line with the school homework policy. Pupils are assessed during each unit through keyword tests, end of unit-graded pieces of work and formal exams.

Key Principles of marking and assessment

- To ensure that feedback results to student progress
- To ensure that students experience feedback in various ways, including: teacher feedback, personal response, peer-feedback, group feedback.

Forms of feedback

- **Teacher marking:** Teacher will formatively mark End of Term Assessments.
- **Peer-marking:** Students will peer-mark written work in order to train students as exam markers, spot for errors and give feedback.
- **Self-marking:** Students will do self-marking in order to make corrections and improvement.

Enrichment

Extra support is regularly available at lunch and after school from teachers for pupils who want extra help or advice. There are also targeted revision and catch up sessions. All Key Stage 4 teachers provide after school revision sessions for GCSE classes in preparation for Mock and GCSE examinations.

In addition to the academic content delivered in lessons, pupils will be encouraged to observe the liturgical year with special lessons and services. There are also opportunities for prayer and the Sacraments, as well as time for reflection during retreats or visits from outside speakers.

There are numerous opportunities for pupils to develop their faith outside of the classroom, including by undertaking pilgrimages to *Rome or Lourdes* and residential retreats within England. In March 2022 St Mary's hosted a week-long exhibition on the *Shroud of Turin*, pupils were given the opportunity to visit a replica of the Shroud and the exhibition during RE lessons. In November 2022 our school launched a *Youth SVP* group at St Mary's. The aim of this group is to help young people turn concern into action and engage with the community to make a positive difference, as well as learning new skills and developing faith. The Youth group meets weekly and is planning ways to provide support and assistance in practical ways that utilise each of the pupils' gifts and talents.

Other key documents to support the content of this [Position Statement](#):

- I. *RE Department Development Plan 2022-23*
- II. *RE Department Review Report 2022-23*
- III. *Cultural Capital Audit*