

Religious Education - Position Statement Context

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

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 Years 10 and 11, there are five groups (mixed ability within two ability-based bands) with a total number of 147 pupils in year 11 and 150 pupils in year 10. At KS4 a transition to a new exam board (Eduqas) has taken place to help further strengthen outcomes and make course content more accessible for pupils (first exam 2027). There are two additional groups of ten pupils in both year groups who are following the ELC for Religious Studies.

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

- 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 and Menevia.

Curriculum Intent

At Key Stage 3, our Religious Education curriculum places the Gospel at the absolute centre of our learning community. In line with the **RED**, our core purpose is to develop religiously literate and consciously engaged young people. We provide students with the knowledge, understanding, and skills to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically, and recognize the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Our curriculum intends to:

- **Deepen Theological Literacy:** Give students a firm foundation in scripture, tradition, and contemporary theology.

- **Promote Critical Thinking:** Encourage an analytical view that seeks truth, develops goodness, and appreciates beauty.
- **Encourage Inclusive Dialogue:** Foster respect and understanding for people of all faiths and none within our pluralistic society.

Curriculum Implementation

Our KS3 framework is structured around the **six core curriculum branches** specified by the RED, mapped out across the six half-terms of the academic year:

Term	RED Branch	Key Themes & Focus
Autumn 1	Branch 1: Creation & Covenant	The nature of God, creation accounts, and the foundations of the covenant.
Autumn 2	Branch 2: Prophecy & Promise	The prophetic voice, expectation, and the journey toward the Incarnation.
Winter 1	Branch 3: Galilee to Jerusalem	The ministry, teachings, parables, and the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ.
Winter 2	Branch 4: Desert to Garden	Lent, repentance, suffering, and the transformative power of the Resurrection.
Spring 1	Branch 5: To the Ends of the Earth	The acts of the Apostles, the growth of the early Church, and modern-day mission.
Spring 2	Branch 6: Dialogue & Encounter	Inter-faith dialogue, exploring world religions (including Islam and Judaism).

The Three Ways of Knowing

To ensure depth of learning, every lesson incorporates the RED's three disciplinary lenses:

1. **Understand:** Comprehending texts, beliefs, teachings, and practices.
2. **Discern:** Evaluating, analysing, and thinking critically about ultimate questions.
3. **Respond:** Making personal, ethical, and spiritual connections to the material.

Curriculum Impact

We measure the impact of our RE curriculum using a robust assessment framework mapped directly to the **RED Standard Indicators**.

- **Continuous Monitoring:** Teachers use ongoing formative assessment, class discussions, and written reflections to track progress through each branch.
- **Spiritual and Moral Growth:** Beyond academic metrics, impact is seen in how students live out Gospel values, demonstrate empathy, and engage meaningfully with moral issues in their wider community.

- **Formal Moderation:** Student work and termly formal assessments are regularly moderated to ensure we maintain high expectations and challenge for all learners.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum Statement: GCSE Religious Studies (Eduqas Route B)

Curriculum Intent

At Key Stage 4, our Religious Education curriculum follows the WJEC Eduqas GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Route B specification. This qualification is specifically chosen to provide a distinctive, issues-based approach to Catholic Christianity, helping students grow into religiously literate, reflective, and empathetic young adults.

The curriculum is designed to help students discover the rich foundations of **Catholic Theology**, see how faith is applied to complex modern ethical issues, and cultivate a deep respect for diversity through a dedicated study of **Judaism**. Students learn to construct well-informed, critical, and structured balanced arguments, using biblical sources, Church authority (the Magisterium), and theological perspectives.

Course Overview & Structure

The Eduqas Route B course is a **100% linear qualification** assessed entirely through external examinations at the end of Year 11. The curriculum consists of three distinct components:

Component	Assessment Weighting & Structure	Core Topics Covered
Component 1: Foundational Catholic Theology	37.5% of GCSE Written Exam: 1 hour 30 mins (120 marks + 6 SPaG)	Theme 1: Origins and Meaning (Creation ex nihilo, Genesis, the sanctity of life, stewardship, and Catholic responses to scientific/humanist viewpoints). Theme 2: Good and Evil (The Trinity, Incarnation, the problem of evil and suffering, and the origin of moral authority).
Component 2: Applied Catholic Theology	37.5% of GCSE Written Exam: 1 hour 30 mins (120 marks + 6 SPaG)	Theme 3: Life and Death (The Catholic Church's teachings on eschatology, resurrection, dying well, and responses to euthanasia). Theme 4: Sin and Forgiveness (Crime and punishment, capital punishment, the sacraments, and the concepts of redemption and salvation).

Component 3: Study of a World Faith	25% of GCSE Written Exam: 1 hour (60 marks)	Judaism: Beliefs, Teachings, and Practices (The nature of God, the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants, the Mitzvot, synagogue worship, and Shabbat).
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Core Skills Developed

Throughout the two-year course, students will develop vital analytical and communication skills, which are highly valued by employers and further education providers:

- **Theological Literacy (AO1):** Demonstrating a deep knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and practices, alongside the ability to cite scriptural and authoritative texts accurately.
- **Critical Evaluation (AO2):** Analysing and evaluating varying points of view, including different Christian traditions, Jewish perspectives, and non-religious worldviews (such as Humanism and Secularism).
- **Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar (SPaG):** 5% of the total marks across Components 1 and 2 directly reward precision in written communication and the accurate use of specialist religious vocabulary.

Other key documents to support the content of this Position Statement:

RE Department Development Plan 2024-25

RE Department Review Report 2024-25

Cultural Capital Audit