

Religious Education Update Dec 2025

Our Curriculum and the New Religious Education Directory (RED)

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have introduced a new national Religious Education Directory (RED), titled ***To Know You More Clearly***, which sets out what children should learn in RE from Early Years to Year 6. The RED ensures a clear progression of knowledge and skills that supports each child's spiritual, moral and religious development.

Religious Education remains central to our mission and daily life. The new RED strengthens the rich Catholic formation we already provide.

How We Are Implementing the RED

The Diocese of Salford has asked schools to phase in the RED across two years. Therefore:

- **Early Years, Key Stage 1 and some of Lower Key Stage 2** have begun introducing units aligned with the new Directory.
- **Classes 4 and 5 will continue using *Come and See*** for the remainder of this academic year, ensuring continuity while staff complete RED training.
- By **September 2026**, the full school will be teaching completely through the RED.

Children continue to benefit from:

- **10% of curriculum time** dedicated to Religious Education
- Daily opportunities for prayer and worship
- Regular liturgies, class prayer, assemblies and school/parish Masses
- Catholic Social Teaching in action through service, charity and community life

How the RED is Organised

The RED uses two main structural features to ensure high-quality learning:

1. **Curriculum Branches** – the *storyline* of salvation history, taught progressively
2. **Knowledge Lenses and Ways of Knowing** – the *perspectives* through which children explore the faith

These elements work together to provide a rich, balanced and meaningful curriculum.

1. The Six Curriculum Branches

Each half-term, children focus on one of the six branches below. These branches help pupils understand the unfolding story of God's relationship with humanity and how faith is lived today.

Branch 1. Creation & Covenant

Children explore God's love shown through creation and the early covenants (e.g., Abraham, Noah, the patriarchs).

Themes: human dignity, belonging, God's promise.

Branch 2. Prophecy & Promise

This branch focuses on the prophets, God's promises, and the hope of a Messiah (Advent).

Themes: justice, listening to God, hope.

Branch 3. Galilee to Jerusalem

Children learn about Jesus's public ministry - His parables, miracles and teachings - as He calls others to discipleship.

Themes: compassion, forgiveness, discipleship.

Branch 4. Desert to Garden

This branch covers Lent, Holy Week and the Resurrection—Jesus's journey through suffering to new life.

Themes: sacrifice, courage, resurrection hope.

Branch 5. To the Ends of the Earth

After Pentecost, the early Church grows through the mission of the apostles. Children learn how the Gospel spread and what it means to witness Christ today.

Themes: mission, courage, evangelisation.

Branch 6. Dialogue & Encounter

Children learn how Catholics enter respectful dialogue with people of other faiths and worldviews, recognising shared values and differences.

Themes: respect, understanding, unity.

The branches usually align with the **liturgical seasons** (Advent, Lent, Easter, Ordinary Time), helping school life and Church life flow naturally together.

2. Knowledge Lenses and Ways of Knowing

The RED uses **knowledge lenses** to ensure children explore the faith in a rounded, balanced way. These lenses shape the content, while the “ways of knowing” shape the skills pupils develop.

The Knowledge Lenses (Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live)

- **Hear**

This lens focuses on the stories, teachings and messages that Christians hear in the Bible. Children listen to and explore scripture, learning what Christians are told about God, Jesus and the world. It’s all about hearing God’s story and understanding its meaning.

- **Believe**

Here the children explore key beliefs that Christians hold. They learn what Christians believe about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Church, and how these beliefs shape the way Christians understand the world. This helps children think about how belief grows from what they have heard in Scripture.

- **Celebrate**

This lens helps children discover how Christians come together to worship and celebrate their faith. This includes special times in the church year (like Advent and Easter), sacraments, prayer and different forms of worship. Children explore how celebrations express what Christians believe.

- **Live**

Finally, this lens looks at how Christians live out their faith every day. This includes kindness, service, forgiveness, love and making choices that reflect Christian values. Children learn how belief influences daily life and how faith is put into action.

Ways of Knowing

These describe the *type* of learning pupils develop in RE:

- **Understand**

This is about children developing a clear understanding of the stories, teachings and beliefs they are learning about.

They ask questions like:

- What does this mean?
- What is happening in this story?

- What do Christians believe this tells them about God?

It's the foundation – making sure children really understand the content before moving further.

- **Discern**

Discernment is about thinking more deeply.

Children begin to recognise:

- The important messages within scripture
- The difference between what is essential and what is additional
- How beliefs connect big ideas like love, forgiveness and hope
- How Christians might understand things differently

This helps children develop thoughtful, reflective and balanced thinking.

- **Respond**

Here, children consider their own thoughts and feelings about what they have learned.

This may include:

- Personal reflections
- Connections to their own life
- Ideas about how we can show kindness, fairness or respect
- How learning might influence their choices or actions

What This Means for Your Child

Your child will experience:

- A clear, structured curriculum rooted in Scripture
- Strong links to the liturgical year
- Opportunities for reflection, prayer and discussion
- A deepening understanding of how faith is lived
- Engagement with Catholic Social Teaching and service
- Respectful learning about other religions

The RED strengthens what Catholic schools already do well—it does **not** replace our Catholic identity or mission but deepens it.

Assessment in Religious Education

In the new RED, teachers focus on how well children **understand** the stories, teachings and big ideas they are learning about.

Teachers look for:

- Children understanding the Scripture or story they have heard?
- Children being able to explain the key message in their own words?
- Children being able to talk about what Christians believe and why?

This “Understand” part of the RED *Ways of Knowing* is the most important area we assess, as it shows whether children have really made sense of the learning.

How do children show their learning?

Children can show understanding in many ways, including:

- talking and discussion
- art or drama
- written work
- responding to questions
- exploring symbols and celebrations

Plus many others with teachers using these everyday moments to see how well pupils are progressing.

Supporting Your Child at Home

You can support your child’s RE learning in simple ways:

- Talk about what they are learning in class
- Pray together at home
- Attend Mass or school liturgies when possible
- Ask questions—your curiosity supports their learning

Further Information

If you would like to know more, please contact:

Mr. Barnacle (RE Leader)

We are always happy to talk about our work in Religious Education and how the RED supports your child to grow in faith, understanding and love.

