

St. Finbar's **Catholic Primary School**



St. Finbar's Catholic Primary School
& Early Years Centre

Religious Education Handbook

2024 - 2026

Our Mission Statement

In God's love we learn and grow together

Founded upon Catholic principles of; dignity, solidarity,
the common good and peace,
we aim to inspire and celebrate each child's spiritual,
intellectual, emotional,
physical and creative growth.

In our safe and caring environment, we share strong,
positive relationships with each other as well as the local
community. Learning about each other's lives locally
and the wider world teaches us the value and unique
talents of everyone.

We will achieve our goals by enhancing pupils' self-
esteem, their self-respect, respect for others
and for all of God's creation.



We will learn and grow together



Aims of a Religious Education

- To guide the children to follow Christ's teaching - 'Love God - Love one another'.
- To develop an understanding that Christianity is a way of life, highlighting the relevance of Christ's teaching in our daily lives as a Catholic community through all aspects of the curriculum and school life.
- To develop a caring attitude to people less fortunate than ourselves, involving us in various charitable activities.

Objectives

In order to achieve our aims we will:

- Provide an experience of a living and worshipping community with opportunities for celebration, prayer and reflection, in ways appropriate to the age and stage of development of our children.
- Have a systematic programme of religious teaching which is at the heart of the whole curriculum and which will enhance the Catholic identity of our school.
- Provide opportunities for our children to grow, develop their gifts, realise their potential and to celebrate their achievements.
- Foster in our children a respect and love of their own Catholic Faith and a tolerance and respect for those of other races and religions.
- Provide our children with the language of religious experience 'literacy' in religious activities, places, stories, symbols and rituals, people and objects.
- Adapt the RE programme to the unique needs of our school and include supportive and supplementary materials for sacramental preparation.
- Seek to help our children to integrate all life's experiences and all learning into an ever-deepening appreciation of faith in Jesus Christ.

The Religious Education Programme EYFS - Year 3

From September 2023, to fulfil our aims and objectives we use the 'To Know You More Clearly' programme from the new Religious Education Directory prescribed by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. This programme is currently optional but will be compulsory for all year groups from September 2026. We have chosen to start the programme as it rolled out by the Archdiocese of Liverpool for each year group.

Overview of Content - Concepts

The 'To Know You More Clearly' Programme

Ways of Knowing

Ways of Knowing		
Understand	Discern	Respond
See	Judge	Act
What will I see and hear to help me understand?	How will I discover more?	What can I do now?

The Process - Branches and Lenses

There are six branches in 'To know You More Clearly' - one per half term. The branches are:

1. Creation and Covenant
2. Prophecy and Promise
3. From Galilee to Jerusalem
4. From Desert to Garden
5. To the Ends of the Earth
6. Dialogue and Encounter

Each branch follows:

- Hear
- Believe
- Celebrate
- Live

At the end of each branch and lenses the children will:

- Understand
- Discern
- Respond

Planning

Each year six branches will be taught, two each term. With 2½ hours of RE per week, a branch should last for half a term.

Long Term Planning

The Religious Education Directory sets out the programme for the year.

Medium Term Planning

The RE Lead provides a planner which has been adapted from the suggested planning templates provided by The Archdiocese of Liverpool.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher who uses the agreed planning model.

The class teacher will: -

- Allocate time for each branch to be taught and covered
- Plan the branch to ensure achievement of the expected learning outcomes.
- Select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children.
- Evaluate and assess the children's learning at the end of each branch using the Religious Education Directory expected learning outcomes related to each branch.

The Religious Education Programme Y4-Y6

From September 2024, to fulfil our aims and objectives we use the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education prescribed by the Archdiocese of Liverpool for Years 4-6.

'Come and See' is an invitation to exploration and a promise of life for everyone." ('Come and See' p9).

Links are made with the pupils' experience and with universal experience as well as with the experience of other faith traditions. The programme is therefore both 'objective' and 'subjective'.

For all children, the programme will raise questions and provide material for reflecting on their own experience, helping them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition.

For Christians, life and faith belong together, so, in 'Come and See', universal and Christian language go hand in hand. For those children from committed families it will deepen and enrich their understanding and living of their faith.

For those children who come from a background where commitment is tenuous, religious education will be an evangelizing experience.

Overview of Content - Concepts

The 'Come and See' Programme

Foundation and Focus

Central to the programme are three basic human questions and the three Christian beliefs that are the Church's response in faith.

Where do I come from?	Life -	Creation
Who am I?	Dignity -	Incarnation
Why am I here?	Purpose -	Redemption

Implementation

Themes

The basic question of belief for each item is explored through three kinds of themes. Each theme relates to one key dimension of religious and Christian faith. They are Church, Sacrament and Christian living.

Community of Faith –

Church themes are:

Autumn	My story	Family	Domestic Church
Spring	Our story	Community	Local Church
Summer	The story	World	Universal Church

Celebration in Ritual –

Sacramental themes are:

Autumn	Belonging	Baptism/Confirmation/Ordination/Marriage
Spring	Relating	Eucharist
Summer	Inter-relating	Reconciliation/Anointing of the Sick

The Way of Life –

Christian Living themes are:

Autumn	Loving	celebrating life	Advent/ Christmas
Spring	Giving	the cost of life	Lent/Easter
Summer	Serving	feasts to celebrate	Pentecost

THE PROCESS

Explore

The teacher helps children begin to look at and focus on an aspect of life experience about themselves so that they acknowledge and become aware of it.

This may be done by: -

- Telling a story
- Looking at photographs
- Listening to poems or music
- Sharing a personal experience

To explore life experiences: -

- By meditation
- Ponder it from different angles
- To realise and raise questions
- To discover some of the answers

The teacher leads children to deeper understanding:

- By opening new horizons
- By working with problems
- By being in touch with the mystery of life
- By discovering the real meaning and value of life.

Reveal

This is at the heart of the process. Here links are made with the Christian understanding of the mystery of God and human life as expressed in the person of Jesus Christ. It involves learning about Scripture, the teachings of the Church, prayers, rites, psalms, hymns and other ways to express our faith.

Respond

Remember is the first part of this phase. Children will respond by remembering what they have learnt and celebrate it. They are helped to hold on to and make their own, what they have understood of their own experience of the wider Christian community.

Rejoice is the second phase. Children will be able to plan and take part in a celebrate of the aspect of life experience that has been recognised, reflected upon, respected and related to the experience of the Christian community.

Renew enables both children and teacher to respond to their learning, make it their own and think about how they can apply their learning to their own lives.

Planning

Each year nine topics will be taught, three each term. With 2½ hours of RE per week, a topic should last about four weeks.

Allocation of time should be:

Explore	25% of time
Reveal	50% of time
Respond	25% of time

Long Term Planning

The themes and topics framework set out the programme for the year.

Medium Term Planning

The RE coordinator provides a planner (provided by CES) for each term's work.

Indicated on this:

- The basic question - Christian doctrine for the term.
- The themes and topics change which these will be explored.
- The starting dates for each topic.

The allocation of time is shown to ensure that the learning outcomes for each topic will be achieved.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher who uses the agreed CED planning model.

The class teacher will: -

- Allocate time for each learning focus to be taught.
- Plan the topic to ensure achievement of the learning outcomes.
- Select appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children.
- Ensure coverage of all six learning focuses
- Indicate if and when the children will be assessed in that topic and, if so, the activities to be assessed.

Foundation Stage planning

RE makes an active contribution to all the areas of learning outlines in the foundation stage curriculum, but in particular to:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Literacy
- Understanding the world
- Art and design

Adaptive Teaching

Purposes for adaptive teaching in RE:

- To enable children to succeed in the set task or activity.
- To challenge children to succeed in the set task or activity
- To enable children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these.

In 'Come and See' and 'To Know You More Clearly' adaptive teaching is provided through a range of activities. It is essential to refer to the One Page Profiles of the children on the Special Educational Needs register. The level of adult support should be indicated if applicable as a strategy to assist differentiation.

Assessment

Assessment is focused by the overall aims and objectives of Religious Education.

In 'Come and See' and 'To Know You More Clearly' it is related to the concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed through the exploration of these themes and the expected learning outcomes for each topic.

Assessment establishes what children know, understand and can do. It does not assess faith or the practice of faith.

Assessment in 'Come and See' emphasizes a wide range of achievement.

Assessment is a continuous process involving the co-operation of the teacher and child.

Informal Assessment

Teachers are continually making informal professional assessments of individual pupils. They become aware of a pupil's level of understanding and growth in skills, by observing their ability to:

- Listen
- Ask relevant questions
- Respond to questions
- Interact with others
- Work with others
- Be still
- Understand
- Remember

At St Finbar's, this informal assessment is achieved by teachers observing classroom tasks, which demonstrate the extent to which pupils are achieving the intended learning outcome.

These observations will include:

- Engaging in creative play
- Planning and completing a piece of written work
- Planning, creating or mounting a display
- Creating and performing drama or 'play'.
- Discussing an issue and drawing conclusions
- Engaging in role play
- Composing a hymn, song or poem
- Planning and completing a piece of art or craft.

Informal assessment is also achieved by asking the children to assess the work they have done:

- At the end of a task
- At the end of a lesson
- At the end of a topic

Criteria for this type of assessment is agreed with the children and should include such questions as:

- Do we understand the task?
- How far have we got?
- What do we know and understand now?
- How well have we worked together?

Children are also encouraged to reflect on and share what they have learned during the lesson, either as individuals or as part of a group.

Expectations

In each Come and See topic or 'To Know You More Clearly' branch, teachers are offered brief summaries of what children can be expected to know, understand and be able to do. As for most other curriculum subjects, these are expressed in terms of 'most children' and 'some children'. They provide support for the tasks of adaptive teaching, assessment, recording and reporting.

Recording

Recording in Religious Education recognises the distinct nature of the subject.

Assessments are made and the consequent records kept will:

- Recognise a wide range of achievement;
- Be selective because not all evidence is suitable for recording or is able to be recorded;
- Be positive in order to record what pupils have done and can achieve;
- Relate to achievement in Religious Education and will not record issues which have a place in the broader profile for the pupil (general behaviour & attitudes);
- Be open and based on collaboration between teacher and the pupil wherever possible.

At St Finbar's we keep a record of the experiences offered to pupils in order to ensure continuity and progression within and across Key Stages.

This information will be found:

- In the scheme of work for Religious Education.
- In long, medium- and short-term planning.

In each class, the teacher will record the pupils' levels on an online class tracking sheet. All assessment and tracking records are then accessed by the RE Coordinator.

Recording provides evidence of, and celebrates, the individual's achievements.

This is done by:

- Making notes from observations
- Comments written on pupils' work
- Outcomes of tasks
- Portfolios containing a selection of work and achievements by pupils

At specific times in the pupil's school career, there is a need to summarise the evidence gathered from assessments in order to inform pupils, parents and teachers of progress in Religious Education.

This summary is produced by dating evidence or by writing a few sentences describing the pupil's achievements during the time covered.

Reporting

Reporting provides feedback to pupils in their achievements and progress through:

- Informal discussion with the children
- Regular and constructive marking of the children's work
- Compilation of pupil profiles

Reporting also informs teacher colleagues of the achievement of individual pupils and the areas studied by a class and a year group through sharing and passing on:

- Summative records
- Pupil profiles
- Pupil Records of Attainment in RE
- Summary records of work covered

Reporting informs the parents of the progress and achievement of their children through:

- Parent and teacher discussion;
- Written reports
- Religious education assemblies
- Displays of work
- Photographic records of dance, drama and musical presentations.

Reporting informs parents, governors, parish and external agencies of the content and quality of Religious Education being provided and the achievement of the pupils through:

- Curriculum documents;
- Head Teacher's report to Governors.
- Curriculum meetings.
- Assemblies, photographic records and displays of work.

Evaluation of Teaching

At St Finbar's we endeavour to incorporate an interesting variety of tasks such as using prayer, story, mime, writing and art activities. Children are also given opportunities to discuss the topics in groups, pairs or one to one.

This is an excellent opportunity for us to allow the children to speak and be listened to. We encourage active learning techniques such as artwork, creative writing, role-play, discussion groups, drama and music. The children are also encouraged to use the Internet to collect more information for their topics.

Timetables and planning are monitored. Every class teacher builds up a display and contributes to central displays when necessary.

Teaching and learning is monitored continually on an informal basis by:

- Observation of class assemblies.
- Observation of displays.
- Children's work

Teaching and learning is monitored formally by

- Observations of lessons
- Scrutiny of planning
- Scrutiny of work, including children's books

There is a yearly timetable of formal observations. (see RE coordinator's yearly Action Plan).

Evaluation of Learning

All children are being assessed by their class teachers in their contribution to discussions, attitudes to others, activities, picture and written work.

At the end of each topic, children will be given an opportunity to identify what they have learned, which is the culmination of a topic and a chance to reflect on their learning.

Children record their work in a specific RE exercise book.

Relationship of RE to Whole School

Time allocation for the teaching of RE:

KS1 - 2 hours 10 minutes per week

KS2 - 2 hours 30 minutes per week

Resources – Staff members 2024-2025

Head Teacher	Mrs Janet Conley	Catholic Teachers' Certificate
Deputy Head	Miss Tracey Williams (RE Lead)	Catholic Teachers' Certificate
Nursery	Mrs Kathryn Makin	
Reception	Miss Kirsty Regan	
Year 1	Mrs Clare Flynn	
Year 2	Miss Catherine Osborne	
Year 3/4	Miss Jess Melia Miss Tracey Williams	
Year 4 /5	Miss Laura Summers	
Year 6	Mrs Clare Whittaker	

Each teacher is responsible for the teaching of RE in their own class.

Resources - Teaching

As a general principal, money from the budget each year is available for whatever needs are identified in RE, in line with other core subjects. We recognise the necessity to build up RE resources with essential books, CDs, visual arts, music etc., and extra money is always made available where necessary. General classroom resources include God's Story 1, 2 or 3, (including God's Story 1 big book), Church's Story 1 or 2, Journey in Love, Good News Bible, Come and See and Come and See Music CDs (available on Staff share) Books, liturgies, other faith materials, DVDs, CDs, etc., are stored centrally.

All resources are freely available to staff.

Staff Development

The RE Lead attends INSET days and Coordinator meetings organised by the Christian Education Department. The RE coordinator reports back to the staff after INSET days.

All newly qualified staff attend the day provided by the Christian Education Department.

Courses at Margaret Clitheroe are open to all staff, who ask the RE Coordinator or Head Teacher if they wish to attend. Whole staff INSET meetings/days are organised by the Head Teacher.

Staff Communications

At the start of each term/year all staff are given a copy of the planner for the term/year ahead, and the dates for each topic. Time is always available at briefings and staff meetings for information throughout the year, and staff are able to speak to the RE Lead whenever necessary. It is school policy that all staff make themselves available to support colleagues and this is often done either on a one-to-one basis during the year or at staff meetings. The Head Teacher passes on any information from the Christian Education Department or other relevant parties to the RE Lead, or the whole staff if necessary.

Masses, whole school and class, are communicated to staff through the weekly online diary. Collective Worship, whole school and class, are timetabled.

Mass dates and Sacramental dates are given to staff during staff meetings and the weekly online diary.

Staff Induction

All new staff members are given the schools' policies on RE, Collective Worship, Spiritual and Moral Development, Relationships, Sex and Health Education, as well as a 'Come and See' planning (Staff share)

The RE Lead is responsible for explaining the delivery of the RE curriculum to all newly appointed staff.

The RE Lead will give a brief overview of the scheme and explain the structure of teaching for each topic and is available for further advice and support if necessary

Collective Worship (see separate Collective Worship policy)

Liturgy and Celebration

Throughout the year, Years 1-6 will attend services in the school hall, for example, The Feast Day of St Finbar.

Autumn Term:

Whole School and Class-led Collective Worship
Mass for the start of the new school year
St Finbar's Feast day
Advent Wreath Collective Worship
Christmas Nativity Play and Concert
Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Collective Worship

Spring Term

Whole School and Class-led Collective Worship
Receiving of Holy Ashes on Ash Wednesday (when in term time)
Holy Week Service
Good Shepherd/ Nugent Care/Cafod Activities.

Summer Term

Whole School and Y6 End of Year Collective Worship
Celebration assembly for Y4 pupils who have received
Sacraments of Holy Eucharist
Leavers' Mass
End of Year Prize Assembly.

Prayer

Some of our children will come to school having experienced prayer and worship at home. Others may have no experience of prayer at all. As Catholic teachers, we have the responsibility and opportunity to introduce and encourage right attitudes of prayer, building upon the children's natural response of wonder and awe at the beauty of God's creation all around them. The development of the children's prayer should grow from these early and natural responses, so that many prayers used in school will be informal and spontaneous. The children are encouraged in this type of prayer throughout their school life.

Children also become familiar with the more formal traditional prayers used in St Charles' worship.

Prayers that are taught: -

FS and KS1:

Sign of The Cross
Our Father
Hail Mary
Grace Before and After Meals
Morning prayer
Reflection at the end of the day

KS2:

Sign of The Cross (to include meaning of 'Amen')
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to The Father
Act of Contrition
Grace Before and After Meals
Reflection at the end of the day

Spiritual & Moral Development (see separate Spiritual & Moral Development policies)

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (see separate RSHE policy)

Links With Parents & Parish

'Any worthwhile programme for Religious Education ... must aim at bringing together, home, parish and school, into a partnership of mutual understanding and co-operation'.

The school's contribution to the religious education of the children must not be seen in isolation. Religious Education Newsletters, 'Come and See at Home', are uploaded to the school's website for parents at the start of each term (paper copy available if asked for), sharing information about the RE curriculum in the term ahead, and also information about Liturgies, feasts and celebrations

Throughout the year, opportunities are taken to support the religious education of the children by close co-operation with the parents and with the Parish.

All staff are committed to fostering this partnership by:

- Making parents welcome
- Being available to talk to parents about their children
- Providing opportunities for parents to share in a wide variety of school activities
- Inviting parents to special assemblies and Masses.
- Supporting parents whose children are being prepared to receive Sacraments of Initiation
- Encouraging the children to attend Parish Masses / liturgical celebrations.
- Preparing a liturgy for special feasts.
- Visiting the community i.e. nursing homes to sing Christmas Carols.
- Supporting Archdiocesan and other charities.

Preparation For The Sacraments

The school supports the Parish Priest and parish catechists as needed in preparing our pupils to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. This can include liaison with parents, passing on information, ensuring children learn any prayers, hymns required, providing opportunities for the celebration of the children's achievements.

Equal Opportunities

At St. Finbar's Catholic School, our goal is to offer a comprehensive education that embraces the National Curriculum, tailored to meet the needs of every student. We are committed to ensuring that both boys and girls receive equal respect and access to the full range of learning opportunities through our curriculum and school structure.

We believe that the core of Religious Education (RE) is to empower individuals, helping them realise their potential as children of God.

Our mission is to prepare our pupils with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to thrive in today's diverse, multicultural society.

Special Educational Needs

We treat each child with dignity and respect, recognizing their individuality. We acknowledge that children develop at different paces and encourage them to grow as unique individuals, progressing at their own rate and according to their abilities.

Displays

Each classroom features a display board dedicated to the current topic from 'Come and See,' or the new RED, showcasing students' work and their learning journey. When appropriate, classes also contribute to RE-themed displays around the school.

The school's Mission is prominently displayed in the foyer, while a communal display area highlights and celebrates various aspects of the school's Catholic life.

Cross Curricular Links

'Come and See' has a thematic approach, which inter-relates with all subject areas.

Cross Phase Links

Cross-phase links are actively encouraged. As a Catholic Primary School, the transition from KS1 to KS2 is a natural progression for our pupils. We maintain connections across the Key Stages; for example, Reception children participate in our Easter Service alongside Y5/Y6 pupils. When pupils move on to various secondary schools, appropriate contact is made to ensure a smooth transition, with Pupil Records of Attainment being shared with all relevant Catholic schools.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and Full Governing Body on a biennial basis. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other relevant parties.

Reviewed and ratified by: Full Governing Body

Date of review: 26th September, 2024

Date of next review: September 2026

Policy Status: Non-Statutory but recommended as good practise

Policy cycle: Biennial