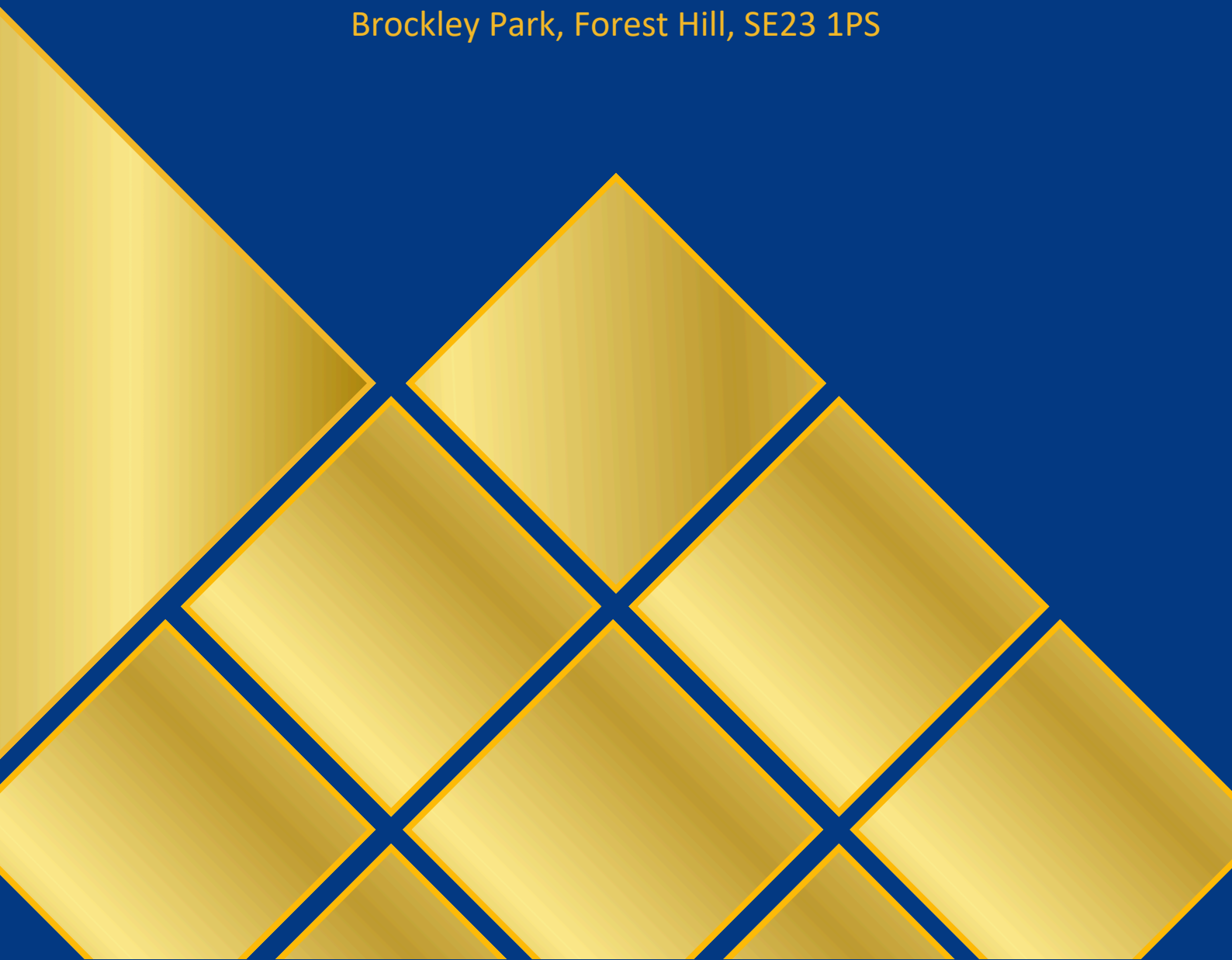


ST WILLIAM OF YORK



Catholic Primary School
Brockley Park, Forest Hill, SE23 1PS



RE Policy



OUR MISSION

The purpose of St William of York Catholic Primary School is to educate children in an atmosphere of Christian love.

We respect and rejoice in the uniqueness of each child, and aim to make learning a happy and positive experience for everyone in our community.

Policy Review			
Policy Reviewed On	June 2026	Signed:	<i>H Mayers</i>
Governing Body Ratification	July 2026	Signed:	Governors
Next Review Date	July 2028		

Religious Education Policy

Curriculum, Catholic Life and Mission

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1. Scope of this Policy

This policy sets out how St William of York Catholic Primary School teaches Religious Education as a curriculum subject, and how Religious Education contributes to the wider Catholic Life and Mission of our school community.

It does not cover the detail of our daily prayer life, liturgical calendar, collective worship, assemblies or sacramental preparation: these are set out fully in our separate Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship Policy, which should be read alongside this document. Together, the two policies give a complete picture of how faith is taught and lived at St William of York.

This policy has been written to give effect, within our own school context, to the Archdiocese of Southwark's Diocesan Policy for Religious Education (January 2026) and the Religious Education Directory for Catholic Schools, Colleges and Academies in England and Wales, To Know You More Clearly.

2. Rationale: Religious Education at the Heart of our School

Jesus Christ is present at the heart of every Catholic school, in the here and now, and that real presence shapes everything the school is and does — above all, its Religious Education. Good Religious Education remains central to the mission of Catholic schools even as the culture and society around us continue to change, and the role of those who teach it is as vital today as it has ever been.

Religious Education at St William of York is, in line with diocesan and national requirements, the core of the core curriculum: it is taught with the same academic rigour and demands as any other discipline, and it informs, and is informed by, every other subject and area of school life.

3. Aims of Religious Education

Following the Religious Education Directory, Religious Education at St William of York aims to:

1. build a systematic, age-appropriate understanding of God, the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, the teaching of the Church, and the central beliefs Catholics hold, together with the relationship between faith and life;
2. deepen pupils' religious and theological understanding as they progress through the school, and develop their ability to communicate this with growing confidence;
3. introduce pupils to an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching, giving them a sure foundation for life and the tools to engage critically with the culture and society around them;

4. help pupils understand the religions and worldviews present in the world today, and develop the skills to engage in respectful, fruitful dialogue with those whose worldview differs from their own;
5. develop pupils' critical faculties, so they can begin to make connections between faith and life, and between faith and culture;
6. stimulate pupils' imagination and curiosity, and nurture a sense of personal meaning rooted in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. enable pupils to relate what they learn in Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects across the curriculum.

4. The Status of RE within our Curriculum

Religious Education is delivered within a broad and balanced curriculum, in which it informs, and is informed by, every other subject. It is taught as an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and rigour as any other curriculum area.

In line with the Religious Education Directory and the Archdiocese of Southwark's Diocesan Policy, Religious Education is allocated at least 10% of curriculum time within each cycle of our school timetable (approximately two lessons per week, on average). This figure refers to discrete, timetabled RE lessons delivered through *Lighting the Path*. Time given to collective worship, assemblies and prayer is addressed separately within our Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship Policy and is not counted toward this figure.

All programmes of study taught at St William of York comply with the requirements of the Religious Education Directory, as set out by the Bishops' Conference.

5. Our RE Curriculum: *Lighting the Path*

From September 2026, Religious Education at St William of York will be fully embedded across every year group, EYFS to Year 6, using *Lighting the Path*: the primary religious education resource published by Oxford University Press and recommended by the Archdiocese of Southwark's Education Service.

5.1 Curriculum Framework

The Religious Education Directory, and therefore *Lighting the Path*, organises curriculum content around four knowledge lenses, with two further lenses used to study other world faiths:

Lens	Focus
Hear	Scripture and other religious texts — the text-centred heart of the curriculum.
Believe	The teaching of the Church and what Catholics believe, and why.
Celebrate	The Church's prayer, liturgy, sacraments and sacramentals, taught as curriculum content.
Live	What it means to live a Christian life, in practice and in conscience.
Dialogue	The relationship between the Catholic faith and other religious traditions.

Encounter	Different faiths, religions and worldviews present in the world today.
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The 'Celebrate' lens covers the Church's prayer, liturgy, sacraments and sacramentals as curriculum knowledge — that is, pupils learning about these things within RE lessons. The lived experience of prayer, liturgy and collective worship across our school day is the focus of our separate Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship Policy.

5.2 Ways of Knowing

Alongside this content, the Religious Education Directory identifies the skills and dispositions pupils develop as they learn: to understand the content of our faith, to discern its meaning through critical thinking and dialogue, and to respond personally and reflectively. In *Lighting the Path*, three friendly character guides bring these Ways of Knowing to life for our pupils:

Understand	Discern	Respond
Knowing and exploring the content of our faith — Scripture, Church teaching and tradition.	Thinking critically and entering into dialogue, weighing up meaning and significance.	Arriving at a personal, reflective response and relating it to one's own life and worldview.

5.3 How *Lighting the Path* is Organised and Delivered

Lighting the Path is a text-centred curriculum, with content focused predominantly on Scripture. Every classroom has ready access to a Bible (in the version chosen by the school and Diocese), and pupils are read to directly from the text of Scripture itself, rather than from a paraphrased retelling, even where the edition or translation used is a child-friendly one suited to their age. Pupils record their written and drawn responses in a dedicated RE book, which provides an integrated record of their religious education and Catholic life — see Section 10.

5.4 Teaching of World Faiths

Pupils in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 learn about and from other faith traditions during the summer term, through the Dialogue and Encounter lenses. This helps prepare pupils for life as full members of a diverse, multi-faith society, while remaining rooted in an authentically Catholic curriculum.

6. Teaching, Learning and Inclusion

No child arrives in our classrooms as a blank canvas: every pupil brings their own developing worldview. *Lighting the Path* builds on this, presenting the content of the Catholic faith through an 'encounter and dialogue' approach — 'Catholics believe...', rather than an assumed 'we believe...' — so that pupils of every background can engage authentically with what the Church teaches, reflect on it, and relate it to their own developing worldview.

Differentiation, SEND support and mixed-age planning guidance are built into every *Lighting the Path* Teaching Guide, helping staff adapt lessons confidently for the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and those for whom English is an additional language.

Pupils of other faiths and of no faith are warmly included in every RE lesson and are encouraged to contribute their own perspective, particularly within Dialogue and Encounter units, in a spirit of mutual respect.

7. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Teachers assess pupils against the outcomes and assessment focus identified for each lesson and Branch within the Lighting the Path Teaching Guides, alongside the age-related standards for Religious Education published by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA) and the Catholic Education Service (CES), and any further guidance issued by the Diocesan Education Commission.

Assessment is ongoing and formative, drawing on discussion, written and drawn responses, art, drama and music, as well as a specific assessment focus at the end of each Branch. Pupils are given regular opportunities to reflect on, articulate and celebrate what they have learned.

The RE Coordinator monitors standards and moderates work across the school. Progress in Religious Education is reported to parents annually, with the same rigour as for other core subjects.

8. Leadership and Management of Religious Education

The Governing Body and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that Religious Education has a high profile within the curriculum, and that it is properly organised, coordinated, taught and resourced.

St William of York has a named RE Coordinator who is a practising Catholic. As the post of RE Coordinator is a reserved post, the Diocesan Education Service is invited to exercise advisory rights, on behalf of the Archbishop, in the appointment process, and the school informs the Education Service of the post-holder's name. The RE Coordinator has parity of status and remuneration with the leaders of other core curriculum subjects.

The RE Coordinator is responsible for:

- a) leading and developing the RE curriculum in line with this policy and with diocesan requirements;
- b) supporting and training colleagues — including staff who are not practising Catholics — to deliver Lighting the Path with confidence and authenticity;
- c) monitoring and evaluating the standard and impact of RE provision across the school;
- d) managing RE resources and budget;
- e) liaising with the Diocesan Education Service and the wider Archdiocese;
- f) reporting regularly to the Headteacher and Governing Body on the standard and impact of Religious Education.

9. Resourcing Religious Education

Religious Education is resourced on a par with other core curriculum subjects, both in terms of budget and continuing professional development. This includes full staff access to Lighting the Path via the Oxford Owl platform, Bibles for every classroom, materials for each class's RE working wall, and dedicated time for staff CPD — particularly the Branch CPD videos and any

further Diocesan or OUP training — prioritised during the transition to full implementation in September 2026.

10. Religious Education, Catholic Life and Mission

Religious Education is not confined to discrete lessons. The Gospel values explored through Lighting the Path — love, respect, truth and justice — shape relationships, behaviour and expectations across the whole school, and inform every other subject and area of school life.

A child's formation in faith is shared between home, school, parish and the wider community. St William of York works in partnership with parents and our parish to support this shared formation, recognising the family as the first and most important community to which every child belongs.

Pupils are given opportunities to put their learning into practice through Catholic Social Teaching in action: charitable giving, partnership with organisations such as CAFOD, and projects that build pupils' understanding of justice, peace, and care for creation, in the spirit of *Laudato Si'*.

Every classroom maintains a clear RE focal point reflecting current learning, and classes take turns to lead a whole-school RE display, celebrating pupils' work and linking it to the curriculum and to the wider life of the Church.

Through the Dialogue and Encounter lenses, and through everyday school life, pupils are helped to value the uniqueness of every person and to engage confidently, respectfully and from a position of well-formed faith with the diversity of modern Britain.

To make this connection tangible for our pupils, RE books at St William of York are used as a single, integrated record of a child's whole religious education: alongside curriculum RE, they include evidence of Relationships and Health Education (RHE) and of our school's prayer life and liturgical celebrations (the planning and delivery of which remain set out in our Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship Policy). This allows children, and anyone looking through their books, to see the Catholic faith as a unified whole, and to make direct connections between the Scripture and teaching they encounter in RE lessons and the Scripture, prayer and worship they experience as part of daily school life.

Much of this mission is lived out and celebrated together through our daily prayer life, collective worship, assemblies, liturgical celebrations and sacramental preparation. These are set out in full in our separate Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship Policy, which should be read alongside this document.

11. Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education

Under section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, parents have a legal right to request that their child be wholly or partly excused from Religious Education. The Governing Body respects this right.

However, given the centrality of Religious Education to the mission, ethos and curriculum of a Catholic school, any parent considering this is warmly encouraged to discuss their request with the Headteacher first. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher, who will discuss the request, explain the nature and purpose of our RE curriculum, and consider what alternative arrangements may be appropriate.

12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The RE Coordinator monitors planning, pupils' work, pupil voice and lesson visits on a regular basis, and reports findings to the Headteacher and Governing Body. Governors receive regular reports on the standard and impact of Religious Education and of Catholic Life and Mission, and hold the school to account for these alongside other core subjects.

This policy is reviewed annually, in line with diocesan guidance, or sooner should the Religious Education Directory, the Archdiocese of Southwark's Diocesan Policy, or our curriculum scheme change significantly.