



St Matthew's Religious Education Handbook

Subject leader handbook and school practice 2026–27

Love, Learn and Shine Together with Jesus

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School | Queens Drive, Liverpool L4 8UA

Working edition • September 2026

Based on the Archdiocese of Liverpool Primary Religious Education Subject Leader Handbook, February 2026, and the St Matthew's RED overview for 2026–27.

This handbook describes the school's current practice. Formal approval details, current inspection priorities and staff RE qualifications can be added when confirmed.

Document information

Role or item	Details
Headteacher	Mrs Sime
Deputy Headteachers	Mrs Evans and Mr Mark Edwards
RE Lead and Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator	Mr Mark Edwards
Co Chairs of Governors	Cathy Sargent and Maria Murphy
RE link governor	Mrs Tsang
Parish and priest	St Matthew's; Rev Canon Conor Stainton-Polland
School year	2026–27
Approval date	To be completed following governing body approval
Next review	Annual review by the senior leadership team; date to be confirmed

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1 Mission and purpose

Religious Education is at the heart of St Matthew's Catholic Primary School. Our mission, "Love, Learn and Shine Together with Jesus," guides what children learn, how adults teach and how the community lives its faith. This handbook explains the provision and the responsibilities that support a coherent RE curriculum, prayer and liturgy, and the wider Catholic life of the school.

Our aim is for pupils to know and understand the Catholic faith, encounter the person of Jesus Christ, develop a language for thinking and speaking about religion, and consider how faith shapes their lives and relationships. RE contributes to pupils' spiritual and moral development while remaining a rigorous curriculum subject with planned knowledge and expected outcomes.

Love	Learn	Shine
Encounter God's love and learn to show it to others.	Deepen knowledge of Scripture, Catholic belief and Church teaching.	Put faith into action through kindness, service and care for creation.

This handbook supports staff, leaders and governors in evaluating the quality of RE. The national Religious Education Directory and the Archdiocese of Liverpool Scheme of Work remain the authoritative curriculum sources; this document records St Matthew's local arrangements.

2 Leadership and responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the Catholic character of the school and works with the RE Lead to secure time, training and resources. The governing body oversees the school's Catholic mission; Mrs Tsang is the named RE link governor. The arrangements for reporting to governors should be recorded alongside the next approved review.

Mr Mark Edwards leads RE and coordinates prayer and liturgy. He supports teachers in planning and assessment; organises moderation, monitoring and induction; maintains resources; shares weekly information; attends Archdiocesan RE Lead meetings and cluster moderation; and reports priorities to senior leaders. Class teachers plan, teach and assess RE, lead prayer and liturgy, and adapt provision for their pupils. Support staff and apprentice teachers contribute under the direction of class teachers.

Staffing in 2026–27

Year group or role	Staff
EYFS	Mrs McDonald; Mrs Earl
Year 1	Miss Duffield; Miss Gill
Year 2	Miss Tidmore; Miss McWilliams
Year 3	Miss Milner; Miss Patterson
Year 4	Miss Connor; Miss Watts
Year 5	Miss Dunbar; Mr Wall
Year 6	Miss Sweeney; Mr White
SENDCo	Mrs Mosaid
PPA staff	Mrs O'Hanlon; Mrs King; Mrs Walsh
Learning support assistants	Mrs Griffiths; Mrs Finnan; Miss McGuire; Mr Barlow; Mrs Peiris; Mrs Jones; Mr Mitchell; Mrs Coleman; Mr Collins; Miss Rodgeron
Apprentice teachers	Mr Bland; Miss Thomas

Staff CCRS or equivalent qualifications: to be added when confirmed. This list records roles and names only and does not imply a qualification or teaching status.

3 Curriculum and timetable

All classes from Reception to Year 6 follow the Religious Education Directory, To Know You More Clearly, during 2026–27. Reception to Year 5 follow their corresponding year group material. During the transition to the RED, Year 6 teaches the Year 5 branches, with teachers adapting the learning and level of challenge for the oldest pupils. This should be reviewed for the following academic year.

RE occupies approximately 10% of curriculum time, around two and a half hours each week in every class. Each branch is normally taught across approximately six weeks, with three lessons each week. Prayer and liturgy are planned separately from this RE curriculum allocation.

Half term	Branch	Main focus
Autumn 1	Creation and Covenant	God as creator, covenant and care for creation
Autumn 2	Prophecy and Promise	God's promises, prophets, Mary and the coming of Jesus
Spring 1	Galilee to Jerusalem	The life, ministry, teaching and encounters of Jesus
Spring 2	Desert to Garden	Lent, Holy Week, death and Resurrection
Summer 1	To the Ends of the Earth	Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost and Church mission
Summer 2	Dialogue and Encounter	Religions, worldviews, dialogue and shared humanity

Knowledge and progression

The knowledge lenses Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live organise the study of Catholic religion. Dialogue and Encounter support the study of other religions and worldviews. The Ways of Knowing—Understand, Discern and Respond—describe how pupils develop and demonstrate their learning. Teachers choose age appropriate driver words and questions so that pupils can recall and explain, explore different interpretations and viewpoints, and reflect on implications for life.

The curriculum revisits central ideas in a spiral, deepening knowledge and vocabulary as children move through school. Learning about the sacraments is woven through the branches. The long term plans and the relevant RED expected outcomes guide what is taught and assessed in each year group.

4 Planning and teaching

Teachers plan from the Archdiocese of Liverpool Scheme of Work, using the recommended resources together with the RED and St Matthew's long term plans. They adapt plans to the class, incorporate appropriate progressive skills words and check that activities lead towards the branch's expected outcomes. Resources and plans are available on the staff shared drive.

Lessons use Scripture and Catholic teaching accurately, introduce and revisit key vocabulary, connect new learning with prior knowledge and provide time for discussion, reflection and an appropriate response. Teachers use varied ways for children to show understanding, including talk, writing, art and other purposeful work. Written tasks should make learning visible without substituting activity for the expected knowledge.

Inclusion and access

Teachers plan access for all pupils, including those with SEND and pupils learning English as an additional language. Adaptations may include visuals and artefacts, pre teaching vocabulary, shorter or chunked texts, supported talk, scaffolded recording, adult support and alternative ways to communicate. Teachers retain the intended religious knowledge and use assessment to decide when additional explanation or challenge is needed. The SENDCo, Mrs Mosaid, supports staff where individual provision requires it.

5 Assessment, moderation and reporting

Teachers assess learning continuously through questions, discussion, work and other evidence. At the end of each branch or topic, they make a professional judgement against the relevant objectives and expected outcomes, recording whether each child has MET or NOT MET them. This is a judgement about the taught curriculum, informed by evidence accumulated during the branch rather than a separate test requirement.

RE is recorded and tracked in Insight in the same way as other core subjects. Teachers use the results to identify gaps, revisit learning and plan support or greater challenge. The RE Lead considers patterns by class, year group and pupil groups with senior leaders, and connects the findings to monitoring and school improvement actions.

Internal moderation takes place each term. Teachers compare work and discussion evidence against the expected outcomes, agree standards and note any changes needed in teaching or assessment. St Matthew's also moderates with other schools through cluster meetings. The RE Lead attends Archdiocesan RE Lead meetings and shares relevant updates with staff.

Families receive a termly RE newsletter. Parents also see children's learning through class assemblies, Class Dojo and the school website. The precise wording and format for RE in annual written pupil reports and parents' meetings should be confirmed before this section is used as a reporting policy.

6 Monitoring and improvement

Monitoring tests whether planned learning is being taught, understood and remembered. The RE Lead discusses findings with staff and leaders, identifies strengths and specific next steps, and checks the effect of those actions in the next cycle. Evidence from Insight, planning, lessons, books and pupil voice should be considered together; no single source is treated as a complete picture.

Activity	St Matthew's frequency	Purpose
Book looks	Half termly	Review sequence, progress, vocabulary and evidence of expected outcomes.
Pupil voice	Termly	Explore pupils' knowledge, experience and ability to explain their learning.
Learning environment checks	Half termly	Review prayer areas, RE displays, current branch and useful learning prompts.
Internal moderation	Termly	Agree judgements and identify teaching implications.
Cluster moderation	Through cluster meetings	Compare standards with other Catholic schools.
Insight review	After branch assessments and as part of school review	Identify gaps and trends for responsive planning.

Monitoring priorities and outcomes inform the school's Catholic self evaluation and improvement planning. The latest CSI report, CSED priorities and any current RE action plan should be inserted or referenced once available. Monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy also inform future provision.

7 Staff development and resources

Induction and continuing development

New staff receive an induction to Religious Education, prayer and liturgy, and the Catholic life of St Matthew's. The RE Lead introduces the RED, the Archdiocesan Scheme of Work, long term plans, planning and assessment expectations, Insight, weekly resource communications and the school's prayer pattern. Support is adjusted to the role, including supply staff, LSAs, students and apprentice teachers. Staff have access to Archdiocesan updates, cluster collaboration and school training; completed and planned CPD should be logged in the school's development records.

Resources and budget

Digital plans, teaching materials and weekly prayer resources are held on the staff shared drive. The RE Lead sends relevant information and resources to staff by email each week. Physical RE resources are kept in the

RE cupboards in the hall; the RE Lead oversees their organisation and maintenance. The Headteacher sets the budget. The resource inventory, replacement needs and specific budget amount can be recorded in the annual subject review.

8 Prayer and liturgy

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of St Matthew's and provide pupils with opportunities to pray, reflect, participate and encounter God. They are distinct from the two and a half hours of curriculum RE. The Headteacher and governors oversee the provision, while Mr Edwards coordinates planning, resources, induction, staff support and review in partnership with the parish.

Daily and weekly pattern

When	Provision
Every school day	Prayer at the beginning of the day, before lunch, after lunch and before going home.
Three times each week	Planned class prayer and liturgy sessions, with varied forms of prayer suited to the children.
Monday morning	Whole school prayer assembly based on the preceding Sunday Gospel and a related weekly theme.
Wednesday at 10 am	One class each week attends parish Mass.
Each term	School Mass and an RE assembly led by each class.

The Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator shares weekly resources linked to the Gospel theme. These include Celebration of the Word, Bible journaling, prayer through news relevant to children, prayer stations and philosophy stimuli. Classes may adapt these to age and context. In a Celebration of the Word, staff support children to gather, listen to Scripture, respond in prayer and go forth; song, silence, symbol and pupil participation are used thoughtfully.

Provision through the year

Season or occasion	St Matthew's provision
St Matthew's Feast Day	School Mass celebrating the patron saint.
Advent and Christmas	KS1 Nativity and KS2 Carol Service.
Lent and Holy Week	KS1 and KS2 Stations of the Cross.
Throughout the year	Termly Mass; weekly parish Mass attendance by one class; termly class RE assemblies.
Staff formation	Staff reflections at important points in the year.
Year 4 sacraments	Preparation for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion with teachers and parish community members.

Pupils are supported to take an increasing part in preparing and leading prayer and liturgy, according to age and capacity. Staff create a prayerful setting and help pupils evaluate what helped them participate. The school works with the parish priest, Rev Canon Conor Stainton-Polland, and the St Matthew's parish community. Dates, leaders, venues and invited families should be entered in the annual plan of provision; Appendix B provides a record.

The RE Lead reviews prayer and liturgy through discussion with pupils and staff and by observing provision. Themes for development are shared with the Headteacher and governors through the school's agreed reporting arrangements. The senior leadership team reviews this handbook annually; formal adoption and next review dates are recorded after approval.

9 Parish, Catholic life and families

St Matthew's school and parish share prayer, sacramental preparation and the celebration of Mass. One class attends the 10 am Wednesday parish Mass each week. Year 4 children prepare for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion with teachers and members of the parish community. Families receive information about the sacramental programme and are invited to participate in relevant celebrations.

Catholic Social Teaching and service are visible in the life of the school. Pupils and families raise funds for CAFOD during the year, including CAFOD World Gifts. St Matthew's is working towards the CAFOD LiveSimply Award. Children visit local care homes to read and sing. These opportunities help pupils connect their RE learning with care for neighbours and the wider world.

Parents and carers are kept informed through Class Dojo, termly RE newsletters, assemblies, sacramental communication and the school website. Class assemblies give pupils a termly opportunity to share religious learning. The RE Lead checks that published information stays aligned with current teaching, parish links and the school's Catholic mission.

10 Review and information to complete

The senior leadership team reviews school policies annually. This handbook should also be reviewed when the RED implementation changes, when Archdiocesan guidance is updated or when monitoring identifies a significant change in practice. Formal approval by governors should be recorded below.

Item	To complete
CCRS or equivalent qualifications	Confirm for the current staff list.
CSI report and CSED priorities	Insert current findings and the agreed improvement actions.
Governor reporting cycle	Record how and when RE and prayer and liturgy are reported to governors.
Annual pupil reporting	Confirm the exact RE statement or attainment information given to parents.
Resource inventory and budget	Attach current inventory and record annual allocation if required.
Approval and review	Insert governing body approval date, signatures and next review date.

Approved by the governing body on: _____ Next review: _____

Signed, Co Chair of Governors: _____ Signed, Headteacher: _____

Appendix A Monitoring prompts

Book look and planning review

- Can the sequence of work be traced to the current branch and year group expected outcomes?
- What evidence shows that pupils remember key Scripture, beliefs and vocabulary and can explain connections?
- Where have assessment findings changed planning, support or challenge?
- How do adaptations enable pupils to reach the intended learning?

Pupil voice and environment

- Ask pupils what they have learnt in the current branch and what they remember from earlier learning.
- Invite pupils to explain a Scripture story, Catholic belief or practice using their own words.
- Ask how they have explored, questioned or responded to the learning.
- Check that the prayer area is cared for and that displays support current learning and reflect the liturgical season.

Recording findings

For each review, record date, classes sampled, strengths, the one or two most useful actions, person responsible and a date to check impact. Share feedback with staff and use the findings in school evaluation and improvement planning.

Appendix B Annual prayer and liturgy planning record

The Coordinator can update this record each term. It records the detailed annual plan alongside the overview in Section 8.

Term or date	Celebration or provision	Lead and participants	Venue and family or parish links
Autumn	St Matthew's Feast Day Mass; Advent; KS1 Nativity; KS2 Carol Service		
Spring	Lent; KS1 and KS2 Stations of the Cross; termly Mass		
Summer	Easter and Pentecost; termly Mass; Year 4 sacraments as scheduled		
Weekly	Monday Gospel assembly; three class sessions; Wednesday 10 am parish Mass for one class		
Daily	Morning, before lunch, after lunch and end of day prayer		

Appendix C Source documents

- Archdiocese of Liverpool, Primary Religious Education Subject Leader Handbook, February 2026. This handbook follows its sections on mission, curriculum, planning, assessment, staff development, monitoring, prayer and liturgy, resources and school evaluation.
- St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, Religious Education at St Matthew's, RED overview, 2026–27.
- Religious Education Directory, To Know You More Clearly, and the Archdiocese of Liverpool Scheme of Work, used for the detailed age phase content and expected outcomes.
- Parish priest's full name checked against the Archdiocese of Liverpool St Matthew, Clubmoor parish listing (accessed 29 September 2026).