

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT DE LA SALLE

CURRICULUM BY YEAR

*“Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*

Proverbs 22:6



At De La Salle College, Religious Education is at the heart of our mission to nurture young people of compassion, integrity and faith. Rooted in Catholic tradition, our curriculum helps students deepen their understanding of God, explore the richness of Christian belief and respond to the world with wisdom and moral clarity.



Year 6

In Year 6, Religious Studies is designed to help students explore key theological concepts, biblical stories, and their relevance to modern life. The year begins with discussions on foundational topics such as the meaning of life, creation, and an introduction to the nature of God. This provides the groundwork for further exploration of the Trinity, helping students to understand the distinct roles of God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit in Christian belief. Through the story of Adam and Eve, students examine the origins of humanity and the concept of sin, which leads into discussions about why Jesus had to die for the salvation of mankind. They also delve into the Eucharist, learning about its importance in Christian worship, alongside the practices of prayer and forgiveness.

Throughout the year, students are encouraged to consider profound questions about life after death with lessons on heaven and hell, and they explore the role of the Church as both a spiritual community and a guiding institution. They reflect on the importance of faith in their personal lives with the topic of "The Rest of My Life," which encourages them to consider how Christian teachings can influence their future choices and actions.

A significant part of the curriculum is dedicated to understanding the Bible. Students learn about the structure of the Bible, develop skills in reading and interpreting biblical texts, and study key stories from the Gospels. They also explore the Church's structure and role in the world, understanding it as the Body of Christ and its historical roots in apostolic tradition.

In addition to theological studies, Year 6 students also receive Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) through the TenTen programme, which is integrated into the curriculum. This faith-based programme promotes healthy relationships, personal responsibility, and respect for others, aligned with Christian values. Through TenTen, students explore these issues in a sensitive, age-appropriate manner, ensuring they are prepared for the challenges of growing up in today's world. The integration of RSE within the broader religious framework helps students develop a well-rounded understanding of their faith, relationships, and personal identity.



Year 7

We follow the Catholic Religious Education Directory **“To Know You More Clearly.”**

In Year 7, students embark on a faith-filled journey to deepen their understanding of the Catholic tradition and the broader Christian faith. Rooted in the teachings of the Church, this course aims to nurture a personal relationship with God, promote spiritual growth, and encourage students to live out their faith through love and service.

Key Areas of Study:

God’s Revelation and Creation: Students will explore the concept of God as Creator, understanding how God reveals Himself through Scripture, the natural world, and human experience.

Jesus Christ and the Gospels: A focus on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, as well as how His message is conveyed through the Gospels. Students will reflect on how Christ is present in their own lives.

The Sacraments: An introduction to the significance of the Sacraments, especially Baptism and the Eucharist, as vital encounters with God’s grace.

The Church and Community: Understanding the Catholic Church as a community of believers, its mission, and its role in the world. Students will reflect on the call to discipleship and service.

Prayer and Spiritual Life: Developing an understanding of different forms of prayer, including personal prayer, liturgical prayer, and the importance of the Mass in daily life.

Through this course, students will engage in prayer, scripture study, and discussions that deepen their faith and guide them to live out Christian values in their daily lives.



Year 8

We follow the Catholic Religious Education Directory **“To Know You More Clearly.”**

In Year 8, students continue their journey of faith, building upon their knowledge of Catholic teachings and their relationship with God. The course aims to deepen their understanding of how faith interacts with the challenges of modern life, encouraging them to reflect on their personal role within the Church and the wider world.

Key Areas of Study:

The Mystery of the Trinity: Students will explore the mystery of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—delving into its central role in the Catholic faith and how it shapes the understanding of God’s love and presence.

Jesus, the Son of God: A closer look at the significance of Jesus Christ as both fully divine and fully human. Students will reflect on His role as Saviour and Redeemer, and the importance of His sacrifice and resurrection.

The Sacraments of Healing: Understanding the importance of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, with a focus on God’s healing power, forgiveness, and mercy.

Moral Decision Making: Introducing students to Catholic moral teaching, the concept of conscience, and how the Church’s moral guidance helps them make ethical decisions in everyday life.

The Call to Justice and Peace: Students will explore the Church’s social teaching, focusing on issues of justice, peace, and the dignity of the human person. This will include reflecting on their own responsibilities to work towards a more just world.

Year 8 Religious Education helps students to grow spiritually, deepening their understanding of Catholic doctrine while encouraging them to live out their faith through compassion, justice, and love in action.



Year 9

Year 9 provides the opportunity to Christianity and Judaism. Students will be expected to learn about the beliefs of both religions and will be expected to be able to apply these beliefs to a number of moral issues. The Year 9 modules covers 50% of the GCSE content but no external exams are attempted until the end of Year 10.

Year 9 Course content

1. Christian Beliefs

- The Trinity
- The creation of the universe
- The incarnation
- The last days of Jesus' life
- The nature of salvation
- Christian eschatology
- The problem of evil and suffering
- Solutions to the problem of evil and suffering

2. Christianity: Marriage and the family

- Marriage
- Sexual relationships
- Families
- Support for the family in the local parish
- Family planning
- Divorce and remarriage
- Equality of men and women in the family
- Gender prejudice and discrimination
- What can Christians today learn from this?

3. Jewish Beliefs

- The nature of the Almighty
- Shekinah
- Messiah
- The covenant at Sinai
- The covenant with Abraham
- Sanctity of life
- Moral principles and the mitzvot

4. Judaism- Crime and Punishment

- What do we mean by "Son of God"? Why is this title important?
- Justice
- Crime
- Jewish attitudes to good, evil and suffering
- Attitudes to punishment
- The aims of punishment
- Forgiveness
- Treatment of Criminals
- The Death Penalty



Year 10

Year 10 provides the opportunity to Christianity and Judaism. Students will be expected to learn about the lives of believers in both religions and their attitude to various moral issues. If students do not reach a satisfactory grade at the end of year ten then they will re sit the GCSE in Year 11.

Why take the GCSE early? All students will attempt this exam at the end of year 10. The exam is offered early for a number of reasons:

- Students have demonstrated that they can achieve excellent marks a year early. When we moved the GCSE from Year 11 to Year 10, the results improved.
- Students will take no other GCSE exams in Year 10 and will be able to concentrate on getting a good grade in RE.
- This will be the first opportunity to sit a GCSE for many students and it will give them valuable experience to help them prepare during Year 11.
- By finishing RE early students will have fewer exams during the Year 11 GCSE exam window which, now that GCSEs are linear, is a very congested and stressful time for students.
- Students will still have the opportunity to sit all their RS exams in Year 11, if they need to re-sit.

Year 10 Course Content

2. Living the Christian Life

- Arguments for the existence of God
- Arguments against the existence of God
- Religious experience Christian worship
- The role of the sacraments in Christian life
- The nature and purpose of prayer
- Pilgrimage
- Christian religious celebrations
- The future of the church
- The importance of the local church
- The worldwide church

2. Christianity: Matters of Life and Death

- Origins and value of the universe
- Sanctity of life
- The origins and value of human life
- The issue of abortion
- Death and the afterlife
- Non-religious arguments against life after death
- Euthanasia
- a. The natural world

3. Living the Jewish Life

- Public acts of worship
- The Tanakh and talmud
- Prayer
- Shema and amidah
- Rituals and ceremonies
- Shabbat
- Festivals
- Features of the synagogue

4. Judaism: Peace and conflict

- Jewish attitudes towards peace
- The role of Jews in peace-making
- Attitudes to conflict
- Pacifism
- Just War Theory
- Holy War
- Weapons of mass destruction
- Issues surrounding conflict



Year 11

If Year 11 students have not already gained a satisfactory grade in the Year 10 exams then they will re-sit the GCSE exams in Year 11. If their target grade is met then students will study Catholic Social Teaching.



A Level

We follow the Edexcel course in Philosophy and Ethics. The AS-level is essay based and places emphasis on the importance of the knowledge and understanding that students have of each topic as well as their ability to evaluate and reach a conclusion on the different points of view. There are three units that the students study and these are taught separately but in parallel by different teachers.

Year 12 Course Content

Philosophy

- Philosophical Issues and Questions
 - Design Argument
 - Cosmological Argument
 - Ontological Argument
- The nature and influence of religious experience
- Problems of evil and suffering

Ethics

- Significant concepts in issues or debates in religion and ethics
 - Environmental issues
 - Equality
- A study of three ethical theories
 - Utilitarianism
 - Situation Ethics
 - Natural Moral Law
- Application of ethical theories to issues of importance
 - War and Peace
 - Sexual Ethics

New Testament Studies

- Social, historical and religious context of the New Testament
- Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus
- Interpreting the text and issues of relationship, purpose and authorship

Year 13 Course Content

Philosophy

- Religious language
- Works of scholars
 - Context to critiques of religious belief and points for discussion
 - A comparison between a critic of religion, Bertrand Russell, and a religious believer, Frederick Copleston
- Influences of developments in religious belief
 - Views about life after death across a range of religious traditions
 - Points for discussion about life after death
 - Religion and science debates and their significance for philosophy of religion

Ethics

- Ethical language
- Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars
- Medical ethics: beginning and end of life issues

New Testament Studies

- Ways of interpreting the scripture
- Texts and interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus
- Scientific and historical- critical challenges, ethical living and the works of scholars

Students are assessed by three exams. One on each of the 3 units.

Each exam is 2 hours long and will be in May or June of Year 13. There is no coursework.



The Religious Education Directory

The importance of 'good Catholic schools' has not diminished over time. Whilst their educational and structural forms have had to adapt to political and social changes, the mission of Catholic schools remains unchanged. At the heart of that mission is good religious education.

Similarly, while changes in culture and society have presented new challenges for Catholic school leaders and teachers, their role as religious educators remains as vital today as ever to the mission of Catholic schools. In a Catholic school, all pupils are invited to encounter Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as the living person at the heart of their study in a way that respects their individual religious identity.

As well as seeking to assist parents with the education and religious formation of their children, Catholic schools strive also to be of service to society. Religious education plays its part in this endeavour by enabling all pupils 'to be confident and secure in their religious faith and knowledgeable and respectful of other religions,' and so play 'a crucial role in building a cohesive society' (Christ at the Centre, 2012, p.9). In these aspects of a Catholic school's mission, dialogue plays a key part. Indeed, Pope St John Paul II had affirmed that 'the need for the Catholic school becomes evidently clear when we consider what it contributes to the development of the mission of the People of God, to the dialogue between Church and the human community, and to the safeguarding of freedom of conscience.' (Address to Catholic schools, 9 March, 1985).

Just at the time this Directory was coming to completion, the Congregation for Catholic Education published its Instruction: The Identity of the Catholic school for a culture of dialogue (CCE, 2022). The Instruction emphasises that authentic dialogue requires the partners in that dialogue to have a thorough understanding of their own identity, since all we can present to the other in dialogue is ourselves. Therefore, Catholic religious education must ensure that Catholic pupils are 'initiated into the knowledge of the mystery of salvation' (Ibid., CCE, 2022, §13) and become ever more aware of the faith into which they have been baptised.

At the same time, fidelity to its mission requires a Catholic school, and the religious education it provides, to form its pupils in the virtues that will foster their life in Christ and assist them to serve the Church and society; and, to lead 'its pupils to promote efficaciously the good of the earthly city and also prepare them for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God, so that by leading an exemplary apostolic life they become, as it were, a saving leaven in the human community' (Gravissimum Educationis, Declaration on Christian Education, Second Vatican Council, 1965, §8).

This new edition of the Religious Education Directory strives to embody these inspiring objectives. Rt Rev Marcus Stock Bishop of Leeds Chairman of the Department of Education and Formation of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.