Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Catholic Life and Mission

Date reviewed	Next review
November 2025	November 2026
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Margaret McAleese	

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School
Catholic Life and Mission Policy

'Make disciples of all nations.'
Mark 16:15

Catholic Life and Mission

'When Jesus is asked which is the greatest commandment, the answer is the same in all three of the Gospels in which the question is asked: to love God with all your mind, heart, soul and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself. This call to love is at the heart of the educational mission of every Catholic school. It is a mission that is clearly echoed in the Second Vatican Council, which teaches that the purpose of an education that is distinctively Christian is threefold (*Gravissimum Educationis* 2). Its first purpose is to ensure that all pupils understand the faith that gives the school its identity as a Catholic school. The second is to ensure that all are invited to learn how to worship God in spirit and truth through the prayer and liturgy of the Church. The third is the formation of all to live in conformity with the pattern of human goodness, truth and justice that we find in Jesus Christ.' [1]

This threefold mission is reflected in the three perspectives of the Catholic School Inspection process. Through religious education, pupils are invited to love God with their entire mind, through collective worship with all their heart, soul and strength and through the Catholic life and mission of the school to love their neighbour as themselves.

This policy on Catholic life and mission complements the Religious Education policy, the Prayer and Liturgy policy and the Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy.

The aim of this policy is to show how faithfully Our Lady's responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Mission Statement

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is founded on faith in Jesus Christ and the life of the school community is centred in His presence.

This is our mission.

Our faith and love for God is cherished and developed by opening our hearts to God's love through worship, prayer and forgiveness.
Understand how to guide others to have a more active relationship with Jesus, celebrating us as Mission Makers and Servant Leaders, so that we can love God.
Respect and involve our parents showing them how we learn, how we use our Multiple Intelligences and how we become Learning Champions.
Live, learn and love one another by, creating a caring, safe and friendly environment where all are welcome.
Always represent the school by being a great role model.
Develop our community by working in partnership with everyone to become active global citizens. (School, Home, Church and surrounding Community)
Yearn to show others empathy and compassion by listening to others and by understanding their feelings.
Strive to be the best that we can be by being independent and resilient and by encouraging others to do the same.

[1] CSI Inspection Handbook

The mission statement of Our Lady's is highly visible throughout the school environment. It clearly reflects the school's role in the educational mission of the Church, promoting Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.
Our mission statement is a touch stone of school life so that:

- Pupils have a clear understanding of its meaning and can articulate this at an age-appropriate level
- All staff embrace and implement the statement across daily school life through a range of opportunities e.g. class prayers, whole school liturgical prayers, displays, school values, class mission statements, assemblies, whole school Masses
- It is shared with parents and the wider community through our newsletters, school policy documents, website and parents' meetings

School Environment
Visitors to Our Lady's are aware of the distinctive Catholic nature of the school through the physical environment, the presence of images and symbols and the recognition of a learning environment that respects the human dignity of all persons as made in God's image and likeness.

At Our Lady's every effort is made to provide a spiritually uplifting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment:

- All rooms have a crucifix
- All rooms have a cared for, attractive prayer area
- All rooms have a statue of Our Lady
- Each class has a 'liturgy' box with coloured cloths and good quality religious artefacts which are used to create a focal table for RE topics and Collective Worship celebrations
- There are displays in the corridors with reflection on our Mission Statement, each class has their own mission statement, school values are displayed in classrooms as well as class saints and inspirational people
- Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season
- Displays in the school document the activities of the School Council, RE Pupil leaders, our work with the local community
- Displays within each classroom reflect the 'Come and See' topic being taught, the liturgical season, work produced by the pupils, key prayers and scripture
- The school grounds have a peaceful prayer garden, (under development) and a school allotment

Catholic Curriculum
'The Catholic vision of education is distinctive and the beliefs it holds, the values and aspirations it has must inspire the whole of the curriculum.'[2]

Our school is a community of learning with a distinctive educational philosophy, which is based on the Gospels. Whilst Religious Education is at the core of the core curriculum, this philosophy permeates all our curriculum and activities as we recognise the needs of each individual member of the community.

At an age-appropriate level, children are introduced to the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching, and each class focuses on a strand. Reception – Care for the world, Year 1 – Family and Community, Year 2 – Rights and Responsibilities, Year 3 – Helping the poor and vulnerable, Year 4 – Solidarity, Year 5 – The rights of workers and Year 6 – The dignity of the

[2] NBRIA The Distinctive Curriculum of the Catholic School

Human Person. For every RE topic, we try to encompass work based around Catholic Social Teaching. We use child friendly resources to explore the writings of Pope Francis, such as Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti. In this way, we are building their moral compass and enabling them to respond to social, moral and ethical issues in the world. Our Catholic curriculum leads our charitable outreach and work for social justice.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught in a Catholic context recognising we are all made in God's image and likeness. We use Ten Ten – Life to the Full to support our RSHE curriculum. (See our RSHE Policy.)

Other faiths are taught as part of the RE curriculum. We study Judaism, Sikhism and Islam. (See our RE policy.) Learning about the religion and cultures of those who do not share the Catholic faith is one of the ways in which Catholic schools embody the call to love one's neighbour. It prepares our children for life in modern Britain, giving them an understanding of the beliefs of others.

Charitable outreach

We aim to foster and develop an awareness of the needs of others: locally, nationally and globally, and promote a spirit of generosity and compassion as taught by Jesus Christ. Through timetabled work on Catholic Social Teaching and Fratelli Tutti pupils are taught to stand in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.

There are various fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year co-ordinated by the RE pupil leadership team and the School Council:

- Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for local foodbanks and parishioners.
- At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.
- During Lent, we raise funds for CAFOD through activities chosen by the pupils.
- We also raise funds for a variety of causes through the year such as Fr Henry's School Initiative, Cancer Research through cake and biscuit sales and other initiatives.
- Sending Christmas and Birthday cards to the local care home residents and inviting them in to watch the Nativity performances.

Pupils are always encouraged to help each other as well as their parents, teachers and other people in the community. It is our aim that our whole school ethos is one that will foster and nurture a generous giving of self, and an appreciation and respect for others.

Working for Social Justice

Pupils are also taught the importance of standing up for social justice as an important aspect of Christian life. There are planned opportunities for pupils to engage in campaigns for social justice:

- Climate change activities during creative curriculum
- Studying Fundamental British Values
- Supporting Fairtrade Fortnight
- Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness
- Writing to the local council/ national government on key issues that concern them

Chaplaincy

The spirituality and prayer life of the school are an evident part of its Catholic life and mission. The Collective Worship, Prayer and Liturgy policy details the school provision. Chaplaincy

provision at Our Lady's plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

Our Chaplaincy Team, known as the RE pupil leadership team, consists of the headteacher working with pupils from Years 3-6 who have successfully applied for their roles.

Their role is to support each member of the school community to grow in their faith and to be part of the pastoral care system in school. They do this by:

- Writing and leading assemblies during whole school acts of worship
- Offering opportunities for informal pupil led prayer during break or lunch times
- Organising retreat days, days of recollection
- Undertaking large projects such as developing a prayer garden
- Keeping the pupils updated with information about donations to charity, such as for foodbanks and CAFOD
- Being a role model to others by modelling reverence and joy where applicable
- Completing monitoring with the Governing Board
- Accompanying members of the school community, especially in times of need

School Community

Our Lady's is a welcoming place for children, families and members of staff from all faiths and none. Recognising that Christ is at the centre of our school, we strive to support and value each member, especially the most vulnerable.

Our behaviour policy is driven by our belief that all are unique and made in God's image and likeness. (See our Behaviour Policy.)

Children and staff are encouraged to engage with a range of awards that recognise the work that we do to implement Catholic Social Teaching. This includes the Oscar Romero Award and Eco-Schools.

Our Lady's recognise that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools across the diocese. Through our work in RE children, learn about the Universal Church and how we belong to a global family.

At Our Lady's all are encouraged to live life to the full and reach their full potential. Members of staff have opportunities to take part in the diocesan continuing professional development and formation programme. New teachers to the profession are enrolled on the Diocesan Early Careers Programme as part of their induction to teaching in a Catholic school.

Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their children and we work in partnership with them. They are encouraged to support Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and discuss with their children work being completed when preparing to receive the Sacraments (This is taught by the Parish Priest and his team.)

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year, which include: class assemblies, curriculum meetings, whole school Masses and liturgical prayers, which take place throughout the year both in school and at St Anselm's Parish Church and events such as the Christmas Celebration and Stations of the Cross.

Parents are encouraged to share their views through questionnaires, as well as at parent curriculum meetings and parents' evenings. Our Lady's operates an open-door policy.

Parish Links
Links with the local parish are a vital part of Catholic life in school. The parish, which serves our school, is St Anselm's Church. Our parish priest is Fr Stephen Boyle and the assistant priest is Fr Henry.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Fr Stephen also supports the teaching of curriculum RE in school by visiting to talk about various topics such as baptism, reconciliation and vocation as well as a weekly assembly. Links with the priest are strengthened as he celebrates various services with the children and staff, including Mass and other liturgical services. We support the work of the parish Knights of St Columba through their work during Advent and Lent. We also share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

Equality Statement
We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The curriculum is inclusive and facilitates the needs of all children regardless of their age, size, mobility, gender, ethnicity and ability. Our planning aims to foster an appreciation of each other's cultures and beliefs along with the promotion of a healthy and positive self-mage. This is linked to the school's role as a Christian community, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Inclusion.

The Co-ordinator for Catholic Life and Mission
The Co-ordinator for Catholic life and mission is the headteacher, Miss Isabel Quinn and is supported by the RE subject leader, Mrs Georgina Lang. (See Appendix 1)

Policy Monitoring and Review
This policy is monitored by the Catholic life and mission co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

- Formulating a written policy for Catholic life and mission
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Catholic life and mission included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that pupils are able to explain the Catholic life and mission of the school, appropriate to their age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds
- Organising themes for outreach, timetable of charitable support, involvement in campaigns
- Developing staff confidence and expertise and enabling them to articulate the mission of the school and its impact on life

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Planning school involvement in national and local projects e.g. the environment
- Use a global planner to ensure relevant days are marked in school e.g. Holocaust Memorial Day,
- Making judgements on outcomes, provision and leadership of Catholic life and mission to inform the ongoing work on the school Catholic Self Evaluation Document

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance of Catholic life and mission in the life of a Catholic school
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Catholic life and mission
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Catholic life and mission
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain/Chaplaincy team
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising Inset training and ongoing formation on the Catholic life and mission of the school
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources and contacts
- Ensuring resources are available to promote the Catholic life and mission of the school e.g. resources for Rainbows, Mini Vinnies, Catholic Social Teaching, Faith in Action
- Budgeting efficiently