St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Catholic Life and Mission Policy

September 2026
Review date: September 2027

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Mission Statement

St. Joseph's family
Learn together
With love and faith in Jesus,
To become the people
God calls us to be.

Motto

We Work, We Care, We Pray, We Share

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 all their 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 St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Mission Statement

The mission statement of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School 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
- It is shared with parents and the wider community

School Environment

Visitors to St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School 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 St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School 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 focus area

[1] CSI Inspection Handbook

- The school has Collective Worship resources with coloured cloths and good quality religious artefacts
- Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season
- Displays within each classroom reflect the RE topic being taught, the liturgical season, work produced by the pupils, key prayers and scripture
- The school grounds celebrate the wild natural beauty of nature

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 nine principles of Catholic Social Teaching, using the CAFOD resources. 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. See our RSHE Policy.

Other faiths are taught as part of the RE curriculum. See our RE handbook. 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. Our curriculum has been carefully designed to support Catholic Social Teaching and pupils are taught to stand in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.

There are various fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year:

- Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for local foodbanks
- At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.
- In Advent, funds are raised for the local homeless
- During Lent we raise funds for the Good Shepherd Appeal (Nugent Care)
- We also raise funds for a variety of causes through the year, such as Rainbow Hub, a local children's charity, by undertaking sponsored events

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:

- Writing to our MP
- Climate change activities e.g. Switch off fortnight
- Supporting Fairtrade Fortnight
- Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness
- Debt Aware Crisis

[2] NBRIA The Distinctive Curriculum of the Catholic School

School Community

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School 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. 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 Live Simply, Eco-schools, etc.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in clusters and across the diocese. Through our work in RE children learn about the Universal Church and how we belong to a global family.

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School 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.

Parents

Parents are the first educators 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.

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year, which include: class assemblies, whole school Masses and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year both in school and at Church and events such as the Advent Service.

They are encouraged to participate with their children during Advent when the 'Travelling Cribs' are sent home, encouraging a time of sharing and reflection and also during Lent when the 'Easter pack' is sent home. Parents are encouraged to join the PTA to help organise and host a range of events for our school community. All funds raised support and enhance the provision we offer for our pupils and families.

Parents are encouraged to share their views through questionnaires, as well as at parent information meetings and parents' evenings.

Parish Links

Links with the local parish are a vital part of Catholic life in school. The parish which serves our school is St Joseph's. Our parish priest is Fr Peter Crowther.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Fr Peter also supports the teaching of curriculum RE in school by visiting to talk about various topics such as baptism, reconciliation and vocation. Links with the priest are strengthened as he celebrates Mass with us as a school. We also share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

The Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

The Headteacher, Katie Cunliffe, leads Catholic life and Mission at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, in collaboration with the Deputy Head/RE Coordinator, Amy Wilkinson.

A job description is included in Appendix 1.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Catholic life and mission Coordinators 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 in-service training and ongoing formation on the Catholic life and mission of the school
- Attending appropriate in-service courses e.g. CAFOD CPD, 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
- Budgeting efficiently