Catholic Life and Mission
2026

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Our Lady of Fatima CMAT
Catholic Life and Mission Policy

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 Alban's Catholic Academy** responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Through God's love, we learn together, grow together and achieve together.

The mission statement of St Alban's Catholic Academy 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*
- It is shared with parents and the wider community *through school signage, our newsletters, email footers, school policy documents and the website.*

School Environment

Visitors to St Alban's are aware of the distinctive Catholic nature of the school through the physical environment: the prayer table in the main reception area, the large 'Love one another as I have loved you' message above the altar as you enter the hall that is the centre of the school.

[1] CSI Inspection Handbook

The presence of images and symbols of our Catholic faith are present throughout the school and the recognition of a learning environment that respects the human dignity of all persons as made in God's image and likeness.

At o*ur 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 prayer area
- All rooms have a statue of Our Lady of Fatima
- Each class has a 'liturgy' box with coloured cloths and good quality religious artefacts
- There are displays in the corridors with reflection on our Mission Statement
- The prayer tables in the front reception, central area and classrooms reflect the theme and season
- Displays in the hall reflect our Catholic Life
- Displays within each classroom reflect the 'Magister' topic being taught, the liturgical season, work produced by the pupils, key prayers and scripture
- There are child-friendly quotes from scripture around the corridors
- The school grounds have a prayer garden shared with the Church as well as a smaller prayer garden.
- There are Stations of the Cross outside leading around the playground.

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 Caritas curriculum .

At Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Multi Academy Trust education is centred around the child, the curriculum is centred around Christ. Children are taught to be the best person they can be and so realise their potential. Through Christ we value them as individuals. Every child can achieve something and our curriculum explores and encourages the children's gifts.

The Caritas Curriculum develops a Love of Self, a Love of Others and a Love of God. The Caritas Curriculum has Catholic Social Teaching at its heart and its purpose is to form young children in discipleship and stewardship.
The Caritas curriculum that allows children to develop a belief in themselves, a confidence to learn and persevere. We believe learning is to be engaging, motivating and inspiring; reflecting high expectation and challenge as through this the children will love to learn. We encourage children to ask questions, determine their own success and expect them to articulate what they need to do to achieve.
The Caritas Curriculum starts with Catholic Social Teaching (CST) themes that are planned for each year group, each term. The threads of these themes flow through the term, being woven in and revisited, reflecting cyclical learning through subject learning.
The teachers make links to these CST themes throughout subject learning and the students plan activities with the teachers on these themes.

At an age-appropriate level children are introduced to the seven 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

[2] NBRIA The Distinctive Curriculum of the Catholic School

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. Please see our RSHE Policy.
Other faiths are taught as part of the RE curriculum. 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.
Our Junior Mission Team consists of the Chaplaincy Team, Mini Vinnies, CAFOD Club, House Teams and Classes
There are various fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year co-ordinated by the Junior Mission teams, the following is not an exhaustive lest and regularly changes depending on the reflections of the children and community we serve:

- Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for local foodbanks and the school is a permanent collection point for donations throughout the year.
- At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.
- In Advent, BCCS are supported through exit donations at the Nativities, Carols and Readings. The Junior Mission Teams also write Christmas cards to the lonely of the Parish, local Care homes and Day centres and as part of our share a prayer project with Zimbabwe.
  The whole school write cards to the wards of Princess Alexandria Hosptal.
- 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 MacMillan through cake and biscuit sales and other initiatives.

Do see our website for further examples.

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 for topical areas
- Climate change activities e.g. Bike to School
- Oracy for Advocacy project
- Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness

Chaplaincy
The spirituality and prayer life of the school are an evident part of its Catholic life and mission. The Prayer and Liturgy policy details the school provision. Chaplaincy provision at St Alban's plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.
The Chaplaincy Team are guided by the Head of School who supports each member of the school community to grow in their faith and in turn, they help others encounter Christ. They do this by:

- Maintaining and developing communal prayer areas
- Writing and leading prayers during whole school acts of worship
- Offering opportunities for informal pupil led prayer during break or lunch times

- Undertaking large projects such as the Jubilee Year and developing a prayer garden
- Being a role model to others by modelling reverence and joy where applicable
- Writing and leading whole school acts of worship, such as the Stations of the Cross
- Accompanying members of the school community, especially in times of need

School Community

St Alban'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 Live Simply Award from CAFOD for which we are the first Multi Academy Trust in England to achieve the award.

St Alban's recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in the Trust, in the deanery 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 Alban'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 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.

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year, which include: class assemblies, prayer services, the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, whole school Masses and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year both in school and at Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church and events such as the Christmas Nativities and Carols and Readings; the Easter Story.

They are encouraged to participate with their children during October and May when the travelling Statue may visit homes and in Advent when the 'Travelling Cribs' are sent home, encouraging a time of sharing and reflection and also during Lent when the 'Easter Mystery' is sent home. Parents are encouraged to join our International food share event for our school community.

Parents are encouraged to share their views through questionnaires, as well as at parent curriculum meetings and parents' evenings. St Alban'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 Our Lady of Fatima (OLF) Parish and The Church of the Assumption of Our Lady. Our OLF parish priest is Fr Bogdan and Fr Leszek is the assistant priest. Fr John is the priest at The Church of the Assumption.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Fr Bogdan and Fr Leszek 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 training for altar servers. Links with the priest are strengthened as he celebrates various services in the school with the children and staff, including Mass and the commissioning of the Chaplaincy Team.

We share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

The Head of School is a founding member of the Harlow SVP and Chair of the Liturgy Committee.

The Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission
The Coordinator for Catholic life and mission is Mr Kendal.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Catholic life and mission Coordinator 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
- Use a global planner to ensure relevant days are marked in school
- 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 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. updating Rainbows training, 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 e.g. resources for Rainbows, Mini Vinnies, Catholic Social Teaching.
- Budgeting efficiently