

Catholic Life and Mission Policy



"We learn, love and grow with God at the centre."

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Our Vision and Values

At St. Joseph's, we believe that each person is created and loved by God. As a Passionist Catholic school, we are rooted in the love of Christ Crucified and inspired by the charism of compassion, justice, presence and hope. Our mission statement, ***"We learn, love and grow with God at the centre"***, reflects the heart of our Passionist identity and reminds us that every aspect of school life is grounded in faith. By placing God at the centre, we follow the example of St. Paul of the Cross, nurturing respect and love for all and fostering a deep engagement with communal and personal prayer.

In Catholic Life, Religious Education (RE) and through school prayer and liturgy, this mission guides us to deepen our understanding of the Gospel, live out our Christian values, and grow together as a community where each child is valued, supported and encouraged to flourish in faith and life. Prayer, liturgical celebrations and reflective worship provide opportunities for pupils to encounter God, express gratitude, explore Scripture and participate in the rhythms of the Church year, supporting both personal and communal spiritual growth.

We aim to:

- Live compassionately, following Christ's example of love and mercy, expressed through prayers of intercession, service, and compassionate action.
- Be present to others, especially those who suffer, through communal prayer, reflection and liturgical participation.
- Act justly, promoting human dignity and peace, guided by the themes of liturgical seasons and Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principles explored in prayer and worship.
- Hold onto hope through all challenges, strengthened by regular engagement with Scripture, prayer and liturgy.

Through these values, lived out in daily prayer, classroom reflection and whole-school liturgical celebrations, we grow together in faith, wisdom and service, shaping a vibrant Catholic Life across our school community.

Foundations and Purpose

Jesus teaches that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul and mind—and to love our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39). These two guiding principles underpin the threefold mission of every Catholic school, as recognised by Vatican II (*Gravissimum Educationis* 2):

1. To know and understand the Catholic faith.
 2. To worship and pray in the life of the Church.
 3. To live justly, responsibly, and lovingly.
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The Catholic Life of the School

Mission in Action

- Our mission statement, ***“We learn, love and grow with God at the centre”***, is visible and lived across the school.
- It is understood by pupils, referenced in displays, assemblies and classrooms.
- Parents, staff, governors and parishioners are regularly reminded of its importance.
- It shapes our behaviour policy, curriculum and relationships.

Spiritual Environment

Visitors to St. Joseph’s quickly recognise our Catholic identity through:

- A cross in every classroom.
 - Reflective, well-maintained prayer areas.
 - Displays showing key liturgical seasons and Gospel values.
 - Dedicated spaces indoors and outdoors for quiet prayer.
 - School displays reflecting liturgical celebrations, CST and outreach.
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The Catholic Curriculum

At St. Joseph's, our entire curriculum is shaped by the Gospel message. RE is central, but our Catholic values permeate all subjects, including PSHE, Science, English as well as Humanities.

We follow the Religious Education Directory (RED) and Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principles, supported by *Rooted in Love* and Caritas resources. Our half-termly CST themes are:

Half-Term	CST Theme
Autumn 1	Care for Creation
Autumn 2	Preferential Option for the Poor
Spring 1	Solidarity and Peace
Spring 2	Community and Participation
Summer 1	Dignity of Workers
Summer 2	Human Dignity

Pupils explore these through:

- Scriptural reflection
- Practical outreach initiatives
- Linking CST to local and global issues
- Celebrating CAFOD and Laudato Si' values
- Interfaith learning and understanding

Charitable Outreach

Inspired by Jesus and guided by Pope Francis' *Fratelli Tutti*, our pupils are taught to act with compassion and justice. Examples include:

- Harvest donations to local foodbanks.
- Support for the Whittington Hospital at Christmas.
- Lenten almsgiving, led by Chaplaincy Team.

- 'Change for Change Day' fundraising event for Fairtrade led by pupil chaplains and other leadership groups, inspired by St. Joseph and the CST principle 'Dignity of Workers'.
 - Clothing drives, eco-projects, and pupil-led justice campaigns such as 'Care for Creation Eco Day'.
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Working for Social Justice

Social justice is not just taught but practised. Pupils actively participate in:

- Climate awareness campaigns (e.g. lights-off, tree planting).
 - Promoting Fairtrade values.
 - Recycling and sustainability projects led by our Eco-Warriors.
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Chaplaincy and Pupil Leadership

Our Pupil Chaplains, drawn from Year 5 and 6 pupils and supported by staff, play a vital role in the spiritual life of St. Joseph's. Their responsibilities include:

- Leading whole-school acts of worship.
- Supporting seasonal liturgies and fundraising.
- Maintaining and refreshing class and communal prayer areas.
- Offering informal lunchtime prayer opportunities.
- Modelling Christian witness and compassion.

At St. Joseph's, children are strongly encouraged to apply for leadership roles, and for Pupil Chaplains, this involves a child-friendly group interview led by the RE Lead, Assistant Head and Parish Priest. Pupils are then informed if they have been successful, and all children who apply receive a certificate recognising their effort and commitment to the Catholic Life of the school. At the start-of-year Mass in September, successful Pupil Chaplains are officially announced and introduced to rest of the school, receiving a special green school jumper that sets them apart from other pupils in blue. This jumper is to be worn with a sense of duty to God and the school's mission.

Inclusive Community Life

St. Joseph's is a welcoming, inclusive community where:

- Every child and adult is valued as made in the image of God.
- Pupils of all backgrounds are supported in faith and learning.
- Behaviour expectations are rooted in love and forgiveness.
- Vulnerable pupils and families are accompanied with dignity and care.

We celebrate our links with other Catholic schools and contribute to diocesan events and deanery partnerships.

Parent Partnership

Parents are the first educators of their children. We work in partnership with them by:

- Sharing RE and Catholic Life through newsletters, website updates and communal displays.
- Inviting them to class liturgies, curriculum events such as open RE lessons and parent forums.
- Encouraging participation in seasonal projects (e.g. Advent reflection, praying the Rosary, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament).
- Providing opportunities to support fundraising and school events via the PTA.

We operate an open-door policy and actively seek parent feedback through feedback slips, surveys and face-to-face discussions.

Parish Partnership

Our parish is St. Joseph's Church, Highgate, where we enjoy a close relationship with our parish priest, Father George. We also have a strong relationship with Father Moses, who is the parish priest at St. Gabriel's of Our Lady of Sorrows, where some of our children also attend Mass. Links include:

- Class visits to both churches.

- Parish support for sacramental preparation.
 - Parish-led class or school Masses, including First Friday Mass at both churches.
 - Communication of church events and holy days via the school.
 - Joint celebration of major feasts and spiritual moments.
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Leadership and Coordination

The RE Team maintains and evaluates a Catholic Life Action Plan which:

- Supports staff with resources and training
- Coordinates CST and charity timetables
- Ensures Catholic identity is celebrated and lived
- Liaises with governors, the parish, and the diocese

Governors monitor Catholic Life as part of their link responsibilities and review this policy biennially.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is closely monitored by the RE Team and the Governing Body to ensure it remains effective and up to date. It undergoes a full review every two years, or sooner if required by changes in school practice, diocesan guidance or national educational policy.

The effectiveness of the policy is evaluated through a variety of measures, including pupil voice, parental feedback and observations of school life. Feedback from these stakeholders helps identify strengths and areas for development. Evaluation also takes account of updates to inspection frameworks and best practice guidance.

The policy is informed and shaped by structured self-evaluation tools, particularly the Catholic School Inspection Framework. These tools help the school assess its provision for RE, Collective Worship, and the Catholic Life of the School, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with diocesan and national expectations.

Policy adopted: November 2024

Signed:

Review due: November 2026