

***Diocese of Nottingham***  
**...working in partnership with**  
**The Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Trust**

**St Philip Neri with St Bede Catholic Voluntary Academy**  
**Policy Document**



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**Catholic Life & Mission**

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***"You are all one in Christ."***  
***Galatians 3:28***

Written by:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Review Date:
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## 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.'<sup>1</sup>

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. Philip Neri with St. Bede Catholic Voluntary Academy responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

## School Mission Statement:

*"We put Christ at the centre of our lives: Think. Speak. Act."*

The mission statement of St. Philip Neri with St. Bede 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, Celebrations of the word, classroom displays, within each RE lesson, and identifying when behaviour is thoughtful or virtuous in line with God's vision.
- It is shared with parents and the wider community through signage, our weekly Newsletter, email footers, website and on school policy documents.

## School Environment

The distinctive Catholic nature of St. Philip Neri with St. Bede can be seen as soon as visitors step foot in our school. This is 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.

Communal social spaces share our mission and virtues and are open to all in school. We have a Sacred Space for reflection and prayer, a Liturgical Lounge for gathering in prayer, and a reception area that shares our virtues through colour and photographs.

At St. Philip Neri with St. Bede, every effort is made to provide a spiritually uplifting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment. Some examples of how we achieve this include:

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<sup>1</sup> CSI Inspection Handbook

- Communal and classroom doors have an image of our mission statement.
- All rooms have a crucifix and images of our church leaders.
- All classrooms have a cared for, attractive prayer area
- All classrooms have a statue of Our Lady (during October and May)
- All classrooms and 'Let us Pray 2Gether' resources
- We have a Sacred Space which contains good quality religious artefacts
- Each class has a 'liturgy' box with coloured cloths and regularly-used religious artefacts
- There are displays in the corridors which reflect on our Mission Statement, Bishop's themes, CST, Year of prayer, or with information relating to the current liturgical season
- Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season
- Displays in the Liturgical Lounge document the activities of the School Council, the Fairtrade committee, the environmental group, 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
- There are child-friendly quotes from scripture on relevant displays
- The school grounds have a peaceful prayer garden, and eco-friendly Forest Schools area and a school herb garden that is under development.

### **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.'<sup>2</sup>

St. Philip Neri with St. Bede 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 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 (RSHE) 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 Religious Education 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 each class (for their own class charity), the Chaplaincy Team and our Mini Vinnies. Specific examples of charitable outreach activities include:

- Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for a local foodbank – Sherwood Forest Foodbank. Further to this, our school is a permanent collection point for donations throughout the year.

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<sup>2</sup> NBRIA The Distinctive Curriculum of the Catholic School

- At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.
- In Advent, a charity of the pupils' choosing is supported, as well as collecting gifts for the elderly
- During Lent we raise funds for CAFOD through activities chosen by the pupils.
- Throughout the year, we raise awareness and funds for each class' ~~class~~ charity.
- We send Christmas cards to elderly and lonely parishioners.

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:

- Supporting Fairtrade Fortnight
- Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness
- Climate change activities, e.g. switch off fortnight
- OPAL lunchtimes allow pupils to have a say in rules that are made in areas of play and are able to work with each other to achieve harmonious play with anyone, once following these rules.

### **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. Philip Neri with St. Bede plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

Our Chaplaincy Team consists of Mrs Shivley, our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Wood, one of our Teaching Assistants and two pupils from each class in Years 1 – Year 6. 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:

- Maintaining and developing class prayer areas
- Maintaining and developing communal prayer areas
- Writing and leading prayers during whole school Masses
- Taking a leading role on Ash Wednesday by distributing ashes to all in school
- Delivering a Stations of the Cross service for parents, parishioners and the school community
- Offering opportunities for informal pupil led prayer during break or lunch times
- Organising retreat days and special days of prayer
- 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
- Writing and leading whole school assemblies, such as the Remembrance Service
- Accompanying members of the school community, especially in times of need

- Representing school, for example attending Trust events or visiting retreat days in our other Trust schools or reading at Mass at the weekend or for special events such as Education Sunday.

### **School Community**

St. Philip Neri with St. Bede Catholic Voluntary Academy 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 LiveSimply, Eco-schools, Wellbeing Ambassadors.

St. Philip Neri with St. Bede recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in our Hub, in the Trust 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. Philip Neri with St. Bede, 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: Come & See Assemblies, Whole School Masses, Year Group Masses and Liturgy of the Word and liturgical prayers and events which take place throughout the year both in school and at St. Philip Neri Parish Church and events such as the Harvest Festival, Christmas Carol Concert and Stations of the Cross Service.

They are encouraged to participate with their children during Advent when 'Travelling Cribs' are sent home, encouraging a time of sharing and reflection. 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 curriculum meetings and parents' evenings. St. Philip Neri with St. Bede 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 and All Saints'. Our Parish Church is St. Philip Neri. Our parish priest is Canon John Kyne.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Canon John 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 various services in the school with the children and staff, including Mass and services of reconciliation. We support the work of the parish by promoting their campaigns and act as a collection point for donations. We also share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

Staff of St. Philip Neri with St Bede are catechists that lead the Children's Liturgy in our church on a Sunday. Many pupils attend these Masses and serve or join the liturgy group, then present their Gospel message to the congregation.

### **The Leader for Catholic Life and Mission**

The Leader for Catholic Life and Mission is Daniel Steele, Headteacher. Details of this role can be found in Appendix 1.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Catholic Life and Mission Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.

## 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 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 e.g. resources for Mini Vinnies, Catholic Social Teaching, LiveSimply etc
- Budgeting efficiently