

ST. CHAD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Catholic Life and Mission Policy

'Christ in our heads, our hearts, our hands'

January 2024

Achieving our Mission

Christ in our heads, our hearts and our hands - This mission statement is the foundation stone on which we build The Catholic Life of the School and we aim to achieve our mission by:

- Establishing, maintaining and developing a Catholic ethos which is permeated in everything we do and is apparent to all those who enter our school.
- Modelling the image of Christ in the way we lead and manage the school.
- Creating a place of learning where Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church are evident in everything we do.
- Providing an enriched curriculum, which is creative, inspiring and inclusive for all pupils, which is fundamentally based on the teachings of Jesus and his Holy Church.
- Engendering the culture of vocation by educating pupils to be active in their faith, living out the principles of Catholic Social teaching and by reaching out to those in our community and beyond.
- Ensuring that the Gospel values, Catholic School Profile Values and Catholic Social Teachings are permeated through all policies, which include inclusion, behaviour, curriculum etc.
- To be an outreaching centre of God's mission on earth in promoting the virtues of faith, hope and charity.
- Providing frequent opportunities for conscious and active participation in collective worship through Holy Mass and other services/celebrations in accordance with the rites of the Catholic Church to all in the community.
- Providing a supportive Sacramental Programme in collaboration with the Parish in accordance with the rites of the Catholic Church and diocesan policy.
- Developing the prayer and spiritual life of all members of our school and the community it serves. Caring and meeting the pastoral, spiritual, moral and social needs of the children:
- Providing good Catholic role models for the younger citizens of the future so that they may follow in Jesus' footsteps.
- Maintaining, working with and developing successful links with the home, parish, diocese, community and the wider world. It is our hope that by working towards the above we play our part in the mission of Christ and his Holy Church on Earth.
- To provide opportunities for daily collective worship.
- To provide a caring, inspiring and creative environment

The Spiritual Life of the School

Prayer occupies an important role in our Religious Education as a means of expressing, fostering and nurturing faith. Children have a natural aptitude for prayer, they are open to God. They respond in joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world round them. We, at St Chad's Catholic School, aim to create and maintain an environment where this is fostered and developed. Our classrooms, work areas and school entrance are welcoming, bright, colourful and creative so that our Mission Statement is being lived out through our surroundings.

Christ is at the centre of our school and as followers of Christ we want to become closer in our journey through life.

As a Catholic Primary School we aim to develop and nurture the children as they start their journey in their faith. As a governing body we have use "Christ at the Centre" to further develop and enhance the spiritual life of the school.

We as a school aim to:

- Provide children with the skills to reflect upon their faith
- Celebrate are uniqueness as followers of Christ
- Provide an environment in which children can learn how to pray and learn how to reflect
- Provide an environment in which Christ is at the centre of the school and through all aspects of the school life where the spiritual, cultural and personal worlds which grow our children`s values, motivation, aspirations and the moral imperatives that inform our choices and actions as persons
- Assist parents with developing children`s faith journeys
- Develop and nurture children`s awe and wonder about life of Christ

Children are encouraged and helped to discover the many different ways in which to pray, formally and informally, privately and communally. They are encouraged to be still and listen to God. We aim to teach and develop a variety of prayer methods to the children such as:

- Teaching the traditional prayers of the church alongside new prayers.
- Allowing the children to develop their spiritual awareness by giving them the skills to create asking, thanksgiving, praising and sorry prayers.
- Through the reading of the Gospels and the Holy Bible (liturgical prayer).
- Through the teaching of traditional hymns alongside new style hymns.
- Through the teaching of drama, sacred music and prayer.
- Meditating and reflecting in silence whilst being inspired by liturgical music and religious art.

Prayer in the classroom

Each classroom in the school creates a prayerful environment by each having a prayer focus/area.

- It is required that this focus is dressed in the liturgical colours of the year as a visual sign to the children to show the change and the mood of the liturgical calendar.
- This prayer focus should have a bible, which shows a scripture reading relative to the unit of work/weekly gospel.
- Teachers are encouraged to be creative when creating an interactive display on this focus this could include using objects, images, candles which reflect the liturgical year and feasts.
- Each room in the school has a crucifix which reminds us all of Christ's sacrifice for all of humanity; it reminds us that Christ is at the centre at everything we do.

Providing class collective worship on a daily basis:

It is required to provide daily worship in the classroom. Teacher and pupils pray at least four times a day:

- At the beginning of the school day (morning prayer)
- At Lunchtime (Grace before meals)
- After lunch (Grace after meals)
- At Home time (End of the day prayer)

We also explore traditional prayers that are designated to each year group, saying these daily.

Our School Prayer Room

The Prayer Room provides an opportunity for reflection and a quiet space for children and staff to talk to God.

Providing opportunities for Holy Mass to be celebrated:

The celebration of the Eucharist is at the centre of the spiritual life of the School. We aim to provide a variety of opportunities and experiences attuned to the different stages of development of our faith.

Masses are carefully planned in advance by class teachers, so that all children have the opportunity to lead and celebrate. Mass is celebrated weekly, (Reception children attend Mass in the spring term). Members of other denominations are welcomed at Mass and contribute as far as their individual consciences and the norms of the Catholic Church allow. Those who wish to receive a blessing at the Eucharist are invited to come forward. We firmly believe in the importance of celebrating the Mass by:

- Encouraging all our school members to go to Mass on a weekly basis.
- Attending the parish mass on a Friday morning at Holy Trinity Church
- Providing opportunities for School and Parish throughout the academic year.
- Celebrating Holy Mass on Feast Days and Holy days of Obligation.
- Celebrating Masses as part of the Sacramental Programme.
- Celebrating Mass at the key times of the school year each new term and a Leavers' Mass for Year 6.

- By teaching the structure of the Mass to the children within RE lessons.
- By basing all of our assemblies, meetings and gatherings on the four part model of the Mass.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

We aim to nurture a growing appreciation of the joy of forgiving and being forgiven, the gradual formation of conscience and the infinite mercy of God.

Our children should encounter and seek to live in accordance with the ideals of this Sacrament and the quality of relationships within the School should bear witness to this.

Our children are given the opportunity of receiving the Sacrament in school during Advent and Lent. Special arrangements are made during Lent with the assistance of visiting Clergy.

We strive to provide children with quality preparation and meaningful celebration of the Sacrament, fostering a relationship of trust, enabling them to discuss difficult areas of their lives in complete confidence and encounter Christ's redemptive love.

Sacramental Preparation

At St St Chad's Catholic Primary School, children in Year 3 are prepared for and received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Holy Communion and children in Year 6 the Sacrament of Confirmation. These are very special and important times for the children and we endeavour to make this as memorable as we can.

We enjoy close links with our Parish Churches and there is a Parish Confirmation/Communion Programme provided by Catechists for children in Year 6 and Year 3. All children are asked to attend these classes plus make a commitment to attending Mass on a regular basis to ensure they are ready to receive their Sacraments.

Giving to Others

We aim to bring about an awareness of the needs of others. This is an on-going process and those less fortunate than us are remembered in daily prayer.

During the autumn season, children and the community are encouraged to bring in food for those less fortunate during the Harvest Festival celebrations. The food is taken to a local food bank. There is also a fundraising day where the children donate money and the proceeds are sent to CAFOD for Fast Day. Each class also selects their own personal charity to raise money for and such projects are driven by the children.

During the seasons of Lent and Advent, we raise funds for various charities at home and overseas e.g. Father Hudson Homes and CAFOD. Children are always encouraged to help each other as well as their parents, teachers and other people in our community. It is our aim that our whole school ethos is one that will foster and nurture a generous giving of self, an appreciation and respect for one's own property and that of others.

Parental Involvement

We believe that if our Religious Programme is to be effective, we must at each stage seek to involve parents and give them the confidence to play their part in the Spiritual formation of their children. The school supports and develops the primary task of parents as the first teachers of their children in the ways of Faith. We aim to involve parents by:

- Inviting them to celebrate Mass and Reconciliation services at different times during the school year.
- Parents are invited to acts of Collect Worship on a whole school and class level.
- They are invited to parent meetings and workshops, Religious Education is discussed e.g. as their children enter school in Reception, and continues to Year 6.
- Inviting them to special celebrations e.g. Nativity, Carol Service and Leavers' Mass and Assembly.
- They are encouraged to bring their children to the Mass on either Saturday evening or Sunday, especially when receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- They are encouraged to support Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and discuss the work being completed with their children when preparing to receive the Sacraments.
- Providing information evenings on the Sacramental Programme meetings.
- Inviting them to share their views through curriculum evenings, Sacrament meetings, Life to the Full.
- Communication to parents and parishioners through our class newsletters.
- Prayer bags taken home during key liturgical times such as Advent and Lent.

Responsibility of all stakeholders

The development of Catholic Life for our school community is the responsibility of all, including:

- School Leaders to provide the vision and opportunities for the flourishing of each child's involvement in creating and living out the school mission so as to develop personally and spiritually. To support learners in understanding their own vocation and how this will support the Catholic ethos and the school community.
- Learners by taking full advantage of the opportunities which the school provides for their personal and spiritual support and in supporting and developing the school community as a whole.
- Teachers to be a role models of living out the Catholic values of the school in how they implement school policies and develop the curriculum and in how they offer support to the local parish and school families.
- Chaplaincy to develop learner's spirituality so that they are prayerful and reflective.
- Student Leadership Team to support the school leaders in implementing changes to develop the Catholic Ethos of the school.
- The MAC Directors and The Governing Body to ensure that policies reflect the Catholic Ethos of the school.
- Parents to support the spiritual and personal development of their child's spirituality in mirroring the messages of the school community.