



Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School



Catholic Life and Mission Policy



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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 synoptic Gospels: *'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 our Catholic school.

It is a mission that is clearly echoed in the Second Vatican Council and Gravissimum Educationis which teaches that the purpose of an education that is distinctively Catholic is threefold -

- 'Firstly, to ensure that all pupils understand the faith that gives the school its identity as a Catholic school.
- Secondly, it 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.
- Thirdly, 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 school's 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 Blessed Dominic school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Mission Statement

*Love one another,
Learn together,
Believe in God our Father.*

Our mission statement is the foundation of school life so all:

- Pupils have a clear understanding of its meaning and can articulate this at an age-appropriate level
- Staff embrace and implement the statement across daily school life through a range of opportunities e.g. by living out our school values, promoting behaviour expectations, playing a vital role in the Catholic Life of our school.
- Parents and the wider community are informed about the statement through school signage, our newsletter, our school app, school policy documents, our website and at parents' meetings and via termly curriculum newsletters.

School Environment

Visitors to Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School are aware of the distinctive Catholic nature of the school through the physical environment, including the presence of images, symbols and statues in all areas of the school.

¹ CSI Inspection Handbook, page 2



At Blessed Dominic every effort is made to provide a spiritually uplifting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment:

- The entrance of our school is welcoming reflects our Catholic identity e.g., *we have a picture of Blessed Dominic Barberi, a picture of the Pope, our Bishop and our Parish Priest. Alongside our staff list we also have our pupil leadership teams who help to promote the Catholic Life and Mission of our school.*
- All rooms have a *crucifix/cross on the door and around the prayer spaces.*
- All *classrooms have an attractive, well maintained prayer focal point.*
- Each classroom *has a 'liturgy' box with liturgical coloured cloths and good quality religious artefacts*
- There are displays in our hall which reflect our *Mission Statement and the current liturgical season. Displays in our main corridor promote racial justice, equality and diversity and the six areas of Catholic Social Teaching.*
- Displays around the school celebrate our pupil groups for example: *the School Council, the Fairtrade committee, the environmental group, our work with the local community etc...*
- The school has designated prayer areas in which the pupils can spend time in prayer. In our Key Stage 2 playground we have the Dandelion Room and our Peace Garden, both designated spaces that the pupils can spend time in prayer during break and lunchtime. In Early Years and Key Stage 1 we have our prayer sheds which contain artefacts that pupils can access to support them when in prayer. Inside, we have our designated prayer areas in corridors which link closely to the liturgical year and are areas for pupils to pause to take a moment out of their day to spend time in prayer.

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 principles of Catholic Social Teaching, using resources designed for schools such as the Rooted in Love or CAFOD resources. We use age-appropriate resources to explore the teaching of the Magisterium in this area, including encyclicals such as Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti, as well as the DoCat, a condensed version of the Social Doctrine of the Church. In this way we are building our pupils' character (virtues) and moral compass, enabling them to respond to social and ethical issues in the world.

Pupils 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, Eco schools award and our Fairtrade award.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught in a Catholic context recognising we are all made in God's image and likeness and fulfils the Department of Education, CES and Diocesan requirements. See our RSE Policy.

Other World 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

² CSI Framework



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. In *assemblies, RE, PSHE and RSE* pupils learn about Catholic Social Teaching and Fratelli Tutti. Pupils learn that they must look after the environment and stand in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable. As a result, there are various *projects, fundraising events and charitable outreach activities* throughout the year co-ordinated by our various pupil leadership teams *such as:*

- *Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for Colindale Foodbank and the school arranges collections throughout key points of the year. We also hold an annual grandparents afternoon tea as we recognise the key role our grandparents play in our pupils lives.*
- *To mark Remembrance, we sell poppies to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.*
- *In Advent, we support the Catholic Childrens' Society and a local baby bank. Some year groups send Christmas cards to elderly or isolated parishioners.*
- *During Lent we raise funds for CAFOD through activities chosen by the pupils.*
- *We also raise funds for a variety of causes throughout the year e.g MacMillan cake sale, Just One Tree day and the NSPCC.*
- *Other charities could include - Caritas, CAFOD, Catholic's Children Society, Mini Vinnies, SVP, Missio, Pax Christi for these we do....*
- *The Eco Council group have enhanced the way we recycle in the school and have planted more trees and flowers around the green areas of our school. They also run pre loved uniform sales and have ran many initiatives to promote care for creation such as litter picking and reusing materials to create recycled gift wrap at our Christmas fayre.*

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 Catholic life. There are planned opportunities for pupils to engage in campaigns for social justice: include specific examples from your school e.g.

- Work for climate change e.g. walk to school week.
- Supporting Fairtrade Fortnight
- Oracy For Advocacy project
- Our School TED Talks

Chaplaincy

The spirituality and prayer life of the school are an evident part of its Catholic life and mission policy. The Prayer and Liturgy policy details the school provision. Chaplaincy provision at Blessed Dominic plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

Our Prayer Leader Team play a vital role in the Catholic Life and Mission of our school. Their role is to support each member of the school community to grow in their faith. They do this by

- Maintaining and developing class prayer areas
- Maintaining and developing communal prayer areas
- Writing and leading prayers during whole school Celebration of the Word.
- Offering opportunities for informal pupil led prayer during break or lunch times
- Organising retreat days



- Keeping the pupils updated with information about donations to charity, such as for foodbanks and CAFOD
- Supporting and organising campaigns for social justice
- Being a role model to others by modelling reverence and joy where applicable
- Leading whole school acts of worship, such as the Remembrance Service
- Leading prayer at key liturgical times of the Year such as during the Months of October and May and during November for Remembrance.

School Community

Blessed Dominic is a welcoming place for children, families, and members of staff from all faiths and none. We value everyone as precious and unique creations made in God's image. We therefore go the extra mile to understand each person's needs and enable them to live and pray in fidelity to their own beliefs and commitments, for example:

- We actively work to make our school anti-racist and have a RJED policy
- We have assemblies about religious festivals when they are celebrated in our local area.
- We ensure our pupils are provided with food that meets their (religious) requirements.

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.

Through our work in RE children learn about the Universal Church and how we belong to a global family. Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in our Deanery and across the diocese, we also work with our local non-Catholic schools to ensure all school flourish.

At Blessed Dominic 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 training such as CCRS and Foundation Stones. New teachers are enrolled on the Diocesan New to Catholic Education or ECT training as part of their induction to teaching in a Catholic school.

Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their pupils, and we work in partnership with them.

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year which include: curriculum meetings, weekly Mass at the Parish Church, celebrations of the word, prayers, Our Advent and Lenten services, they are also welcomed to say the Rosary with the pupils during the months of October and May.

They are encouraged to participate with their children for example:

- Primary - During Advent the 'Travelling Cribs' are sent home, encouraging a time of sharing and reflection and during October and May 'Rosary bags' are sent home to encourage families to spend time praying together.
- During October and May, parents are encouraged to join our Rosary Club at the end of the day.
- Parents are welcomed to our Lenten Retreat Day.
- 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 enhanced 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. Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School 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 Saint Margaret Clitherow, Grahame Park.

- Pupils visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church.
- The priest also supports the teaching of curriculum RE in school by visiting to talk about various topics such as baptism.
- Links with the priest are strengthened as he celebrates various liturgies in the school with the pupils and staff, including Mass and Reconciliation.
- We support the Parish by our weekly attendance at Mass, where pupils lead the readings and write prayers of the faithful to share with the parishioners.
- We also share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church, participation in the sacraments and involvement in church events.

The Coordinator/Lead for Catholic Life and Mission

The Coordinator for Catholic life and mission is Angela Healy

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every year, with the Foundation Governors playing an important role in this process.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Senior Leader/Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

Responsibility:

- Formulating a written policy for the school's Catholic life and mission
- Ensuring that there is a strategic development plan for Catholic life and mission included in the school development plan
- Developing staff confidence and expertise and enabling them to articulate the mission of the school and its impact on life
- Ensuring that pupils can explain the Catholic life and mission of the school, appropriate to their age, aptitudes, and faith backgrounds
- Ensuring pupils understand Catholic Social Teachings and are given the opportunity to pro-actively respond to their demands locally, nationally, and globally
- Organising a timetable of charitable support and involvement in social justice campaigns that are linked to the strategic development plan.

Planning, recording, monitoring, and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Ensuring relevant non-liturgical days are marked in school e.g. mental health week, Holocaust Memorial Day, Black History Month...



- Monitoring and evaluating the school's Catholic life and mission; making judgements on outcomes, provision and leadership of Catholic life and mission to inform the ongoing work on the school Catholic Self Evaluation Document (CSED)

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
- Liaising with the school chaplain/Chaplaincy team
- Liaising with the Diocesan Education Service

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation on the Catholic life and mission of the school
- Attending appropriate CPD courses, 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

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group for Catholic life and mission, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, the deputy, staff, pupils, governors, and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]