

Catholic Life and Mission Policy

Person responsible:	Co – Ordinator for Catholic Life & Mission Cherith Baxter-Steele
Date approved by governing body:	July 2025
Review cycle:	Every 2 years
Date of policy review:	July 2027

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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):

- to ensure that all pupils understand the faith that gives the school its identity as a Catholic school
- 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 formation of all to live in conformity with the pattern of human goodness, truth and justice that we find in Jesus Christ.

That is, all pupils in Catholic schools are called to know God more clearly, to love him more dearly and to follow him more nearly every day.’ This threefold mission is reflected in the three perspectives of the Catholic School framework. 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, Health and Sex Education policy of St Rose’s.

The aim of this policy is to show how faithfully St Rose’s responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church’s educational mission.

Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

***Working together to flourish in education and life,
as children of God with unique individual worth.***

The mission statement of St Rose’s 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:

- Students 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. whole school prayers and praise, class prayers, displays, support of students to set up prayer areas and chapel, support of students to complete charitable activities, support of each other through wellbeing activities and an 'open door' policy.*
- It is shared with parents and the wider community *through school signage, classroom posters, Newsletters, email footers, school policy and planning documents, website and St Rose's community Mission and Vision review meeting every 3 years.*

Vision Statement

We aspire to be an exceptional Catholic specialist school, delivering the highest quality of education, therapy and care, to enable students to achieve their maximum independence as valued members of society.

LWCET Mission and Vision

St Rose's has been welcomed and supported by the LWCET - [Little Way Catholic Educational Trust](#) and we therefore share in their Mission and Vision –

'Our Trust family is united in its shared mission to develop our Catholic ethos in order to transform the lives of every child, family and community we serve, in Jesus' name. Our vision is to empower every child to excel academically, socially, morally, culturally and spirituality in order that they may flourish as individuals. Assured of the love of God, we strive to educate children within an inclusive and compassionate community which celebrates the gifts and talents of our pupils and removes barriers to learning. We strive to be a community of life-long learners, contributing to a just and loving society. Our Trust family is a partnership of equals who work collaboratively so that everyone can grow and learn together. We celebrate the diversity of our schools, retaining our individual characteristics, whilst working together for the greater good of our whole community. Through honesty, respect, service and solidarity we value each other as one family. All are welcome.

School Environment

Visitors to St Rose's are aware of the distinctive Catholic nature of the school 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.

At St Roses every effort is made to provide a spiritually uplifting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment. The colours and symbols of our Dominican Heritage are obvious as all come into the grounds with the Dominican cross displayed on the wall of the first building at the gates. We are blessed with statues of St Martin in the gardens and a beautiful sculpture of Our Lady and the infant Jesus in the foyer as you come into the main Reception.

- A Chapel for Mass, class, group and individual prayer and reflection
- All rooms have a crucifix
- All rooms have an appropriately accessible prayer area or resource and display.
- Each class has a 'liturgy' bag with coloured cloths and good quality religious artefacts

- There are displays in the corridor leading up to the dining room linked to our Core Values and a display of the term Core Value and scripture quote in the Hall
- There is information relating to the current liturgical season, Praise and Mission in the area by the Principles office
- Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season
- Displays in the corridors document the activities of the School Council, and environmental activities as well as work with the local community
- Displays within each classroom reflect the topic being taught, the liturgical season, work produced by the pupils, key prayers and scripture
- There are child-friendly quotes from scripture in the reception area with photos of students representing the Core Values.
- The school grounds are a peaceful place for all to experience meditation and reflectiveness, with a remembrance garden, and eco-friendly aspects such as bird feeders and wild areas, with beds for growing items for the Young Marketeers project in the summer.

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.'¹

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 nine 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 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. 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* students are taught to stand in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.

There are various fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year all linked with activities being encountered as a part of the RE learning: Crazy Hair Day organised by SR3 raised money for the Diocese Charity WaterHarvest, The Big Roll organised by Post 16 to raise money for CAFOD. There is also

- Harvest – students are encouraged to bring in food for local foodbanks and raise funds for a charity agreed through the Student Council.

- At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.
- In Advent, the Advent Service is an opportunity to ask for Donations for the Charity supported by Our Dominican Order and a charity of the students' choosing is supported, linked with gifts for the elderly
- 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 through cake and biscuit sales and other initiatives.

Students 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

Students 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: Donations of items for Ukraine are brought in including items linked with feeding and medication that were donated by one of our families after the loss of their daughter who had been a student at St Roses as well as -

- Climate change activities e.g. Switch off fortnight
- Supporting Fairtrade
- 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 Roses plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

This 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 Celebration of the Word.
- 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
- Choosing readings, prayers and songs for and leading whole school Celebration events, such as the Easter Celebration

School Community

St Roses 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.

St Roses recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in clusters, 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 Roses 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 New to Teaching in a Catholic School Course as a part of their introduction 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 informing them of Topics and reporting back on sessions so these can be discussed with their children.

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year, which include: Celebration events such as Harvest and Holy Week Event, whole school Masses and Celebration of the Word which take place throughout the year both in school and at the Church of the Immaculate Conception and events such as the Advent Celebration and Holy Days of Obligation.

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 meetings and parents' evenings. St Roses 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 Church of the Immaculate Conception, Stroud. Our parish priest is Father Eugene Campbell.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Fr Eugene also supports the teaching of curriculum RE in school by visiting to talk about various topics such as baptism, and vocation. Links with the priest are strengthened as he is our Chaplain and celebrates various services in the school with the children and staff, including Mass, Chapel Mass and joins us for celebrations such as Harvest and Easter Assembly when possible. We also share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

The Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

The Coordinator for Catholic life and mission is the RE Lead Teacher, Cherith Baxter-Steele with support from the Principle Sheila Talwar and Deputy Lead of School Louise Harper. A job description for this role can be found at Appendix A. Pro-formas for monitoring Catholic Life and Mission and to support the coordinator in carrying out their role can also be found at Appendix B.

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.

This Policy was written with the support and guidance from the LWCET and the use of a Model Policy from the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

This Policy Statement is considered part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment for all staff at St Rose's

..... **Chair of Governors** **Date:**

..... **Principal** **Date:**

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 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 school chaplain/Chaplaincy team
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice 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, Faith in Action
- Budgeting efficiently

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

See pg 7 – 18 of LWCET Catholic Life and Mission Policy for Appendix B & Monitoring documents.