

# St Mary's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy



Catholic Life and Mission Policy

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# **Our Mission Statement**

## **St Mary's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy**

### **Mission Statement**

***We joyfully live, love and learn in the footsteps of Jesus.***

At St Mary's encourage our pupils to strive for excellence and this begins with the choices they make each day. Our school virtues underpin everything we say and do. Our pupils nurture and develop aspects of their character that ensure they will become positive, successful citizens of the future. As they live out the virtues they journey in love, showing that they too can walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

St Mary's focuses on the Catholic Virtues of Love, Faith, Courage, Joy, Resilience and Justice. Each half-term we learn about each virtue and look at how we can put them into action.

#### **Encounter**

By providing an exciting, immersive curriculum rooted in progressive knowledge and skills, we aim to provide our pupils with experiences that foster inquisitive and resilient learners who challenge themselves to excel.

#### **Discipleship**

Through their excellent learning and social behaviours, our pupils demonstrate their commitment to being role-models in all they do. By recognising, rewarding and restoring virtue-based behaviours, we aim for all pupils to work together to create an excellent learning environment where everyone is enabled and championed to succeed.

#### **Missionary Discipleship**

Through a strong commitment to 'Faith in Action', we provide our pupils with regular opportunities to serve their local community and the wider world. By fostering an understanding of sustainability, charity, and kindness to all, we nurture in our pupils a yearning to take their loving mission out into the World and truly make a difference.

## **Our Patron Saint**



Saint Mary, also known as the Blessed Virgin Mary, is the mother of Jesus Christ and holds a special place in Christian faith as a model of humility, obedience, and love. Chosen by God to bring His Son into the world, Mary is honored for her deep faith and willingness to say “yes” to God’s plan. She is often called the Mother of the Church and is a symbol of compassion and devotion for Christians everywhere.

As a school community, we celebrate our school feast day on or as close to as possible to the Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this day we celebrate Mass and join together as a school community.

## **The Impact of our Mission Statement**

Centred on Jesus Christ, rooted in our faith and hope in Him, and expressive of our love of Him, Our Mission Statement is the foundation stone on which we build the Catholic Life of the school. It is highly visible throughout the school environment. It clearly reflects the school's role in the educational Mission of the Church, promoting wholesome Gospel values, which we call our Cornerstone Values after Jesus who is the Cornerstone on which we should build our whole lives, and the timeless teachings of the Catholic Church. Its impact is felt throughout the school, advancing, promoting, and helping nurture the Catholic Life and Mission of our school by:

- Establishing, maintaining, and developing a Catholic ethos which is reflected in who we are as followers of Christ, striving to live by Christian principles and values, and our Catholic ethos permeates everything we do and is apparent to all those who enter the school;
- Developing children's knowledge and understanding that they are beautifully created in God's image and likeness, that He loves each one of them deeply, that He desires our love of Him, and His Church, His Blessed Mother and all His Angels and Saints, and that He desires that we should love one another as He loves us;
- Instructing, explaining and demonstrating the Gospel values;
- Creating a distinctively Catholic culture where all members of the school community strive to lead good and virtuous lives;
- Providing frequent opportunities for conscious and active participation in Collective Worship;
- Being an outreaching centre of God's mission on earth in promoting the virtues of faith, hope and charity;
- Developing children's understanding of vocation, that God created each person for a unique and special purpose in life;
- Supporting the Sacramental Programme within the Parish;
- Ensuring that all members of our community feel welcome, valued, and loved

## **Nurturing a Love of God through Prayer and Liturgy**

We aim to nurture a love of God within our community through prayer and liturgy offered with joy, reverence, and childlike affection. We provide spiritual development for pupils and staff alike, and invite our families to develop spiritually in connection with the school and parish. We do this by:

- Providing children with the skills to develop their own prayer life – through the reading of Holy Scripture, music, drama and prayer;
- Providing opportunities for pupil-led liturgical prayer weekly and support from our Lay Chaplain;
- Weekly groups for Chaplaincy, Mini Vinnies and activities for all children led by our Lay Chaplain;
- Providing opportunities for reflection, including the daily reading of the Bible;
- Providing opportunities for pupils to encounter Christ: whole school Masses, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, class liturgies, Celebration of the Word, class assemblies, Headteacher assemblies and hymn singing;
- Providing opportunities for parents to encounter Christ with their child(ren); whole school Masses, class assemblies and Nativity plays;
- Developing the environment – each classroom in the school has a crucifix, prayer display, including opportunity for spontaneous prayer, a focal area which reflects the liturgical year and has relevant Christian symbols and artefacts relating to the current ‘Come and See’ topic. Front entrance and corridor displays, including Chaplaincy and Faith in Action displays, and our virtues art work and Virtue displays;
- Liturgical events, including the celebration of Holy Mass each term, and special assemblies dedicated to marking important times of the year such as Harvest Festival, Advent, Christmas, Lent which includes Stations of the Cross, Easter, and Pentecost;
- Celebrating the Feast Days of Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Mary;
- Devotions to Mary, including the Rosary during the months of October and May;
- Further strengthening links with the parish through the Parish Prayer Partner Scheme;

- Fundraising opportunities, serving those in need;
- The school day is punctuated with prayer. Teachers and pupils pray at the beginning of the school day, lunchtime and end of the school day. Pupils are encouraged to pray spontaneously throughout the day by making use of class prayer areas;
- The school is in the process of developing an outdoor prayer space which will be available for class and personal prayer throughout the school day.

## **Nurturing a Love of God through the Performing Arts**

- All classes, from Reception to Year 6, perform in the Brigg Music and Poetry Festival, reading Scripture, performing poetry, and singing songs and hymns;
- The school performs two nativity plays each year. Two classes on a rota take turns to act out and perform this special story
- Our Chaplaincy Team, plan, prepare and deliver our Christmas Carol Concert in Advent and The Stations of the Cross in the Lent Term;
- The Choir prepare and perform Christmas Carols which are performed at a local nursing home and in school for adults with severe learning needs;
- All classes are involved in leading and participating in prayer and liturgy throughout the year, including whole class assemblies, Celebrations of the Word and class Celebrations of the Word.

## **Nurturing a Love of Neighbour through Acts of Virtue and Outreach**

- We aim to bring about an awareness of the needs of others in accordance with Catholic Social Teaching and a loving compassion for those less fortunate than ourselves;
- A timetable of charitable outreach for the year is created in September after consultation with the Chaplaincy Team, Mini Vinnies and School Council members. The school supports a number of local, national, and global charities, such as local hospices and food banks, and CAFOD;
- Pupils are also taught the importance of standing up for justice and peace as an important aspect of Christian life;
- We encourage all children to make a difference to our school by becoming involved in a variety of pupil leadership roles. These include: The Chaplaincy Team, The Mini Vinnies, The School Council, Wellbeing Ambassadors, and Playleaders. These groups are led and supported by different staff;
- Our aim is for the children to know that when they volunteer for these groups, they are acting as Missionary Disciples and living out our school mission of 'Following in the footsteps of Jesus'.
- We have 6 virtues in school. These are ;
  - Love
  - Justice
  - Courage
  - Thankfulness
  - Faith
  - Resilience
- Each virtue is celebrated and focused on. We have a specific focus on each one ever half-term. We teach the children how they can live out these virtues in school and at home.



## **Parental Involvement**

We greatly value the partnership between home and school and see it as our privilege to support parents who we recognise as the first educators of their children. From staff undertaking a home visit prior to the children commencing in Reception, and a new starters' information evening held in school, we understand that clear communication from the very start is vital. The school aims for parents to feel included, supported, and well-informed at every stage of their child's school journey;

Parents are encouraged to support Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete any homework tasks and discuss with their children work being completed when preparing to receive the Sacraments;

We provide parents with information on the Ten:Ten programme Life to the Full (Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum) for all year groups, including details of the content taught and the right to withdraw from the more sensitive aspects of RSE. Parents are informed by letter when these lessons will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning;

The school provides numerous ongoing opportunities for parents to engage in their child's educational journey, including phase transition meetings, parents' evenings, Mass, class assemblies, concert performances, and other popular community events, such as the Christmas Fair, Macmillan Coffee Morning and Sports Day;

Parents can volunteer to attend school trips, and join our Friends of St. Mary's Parent / Teacher Association, which help to organise and host a range of events for our school community. All funds raised help to support and enhance the provision we offer for our pupils and families.

## **Leadership, Monitoring and Review**

The coordination and planning of Catholic Life and Mission is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Lay Chaplain, who support colleagues in their efforts towards developing the spiritual life of everyone within our community. Both will provide CPD opportunities for all staff where necessary, and will lead Catholic Life staff meetings to ensure staff are aware of expectations within school and Diocesan initiatives. This academic year, we have appointed a Prayer and Liturgy Lead and they will support in raising standards of prayer and liturgy across the school;

Termly monitoring is conducted to gather and collate a range of monitoring evidence to identify strengths and drive standards forward. Such evidence is gathered through: learning walks, pupil voice, staff voice, parent voice, and governor monitoring;

The RE Governor and Chair of Governors are kept informed regularly regarding Catholic Life and Mission initiatives in school at Local Governing Body meetings;

This policy is reviewed by the Headteacher and the Local Governing Body every two years or more regularly as required.

## **Supporting documents**

The following school documents should be consulted to support the Catholic Life and Mission Policy:

- ❖ Religious Education Policy;
- ❖ Collective Worship Policy;
- ❖ RSE Policy;
- ❖ Marking and feedback policy;

- ❖ SEND Policy;
- ❖ Equal Opportunities Policy;
- ❖ Safeguarding Policy;

## **Policy review**

The Catholic Life and Mission Policy should be reviewed and updated every two years.

Next Review: Advent Term 2027.

This policy is monitored by the Catholic Life and Mission Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole staff and Governors. As a Catholic Voluntary Academy, responsibility for Catholic Life and Mission rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.