

Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School



Catholic Life and Mission Policy



Our Catholic School

As a Catholic school our Christian ethos is at the heart of all that we do. Our school should manifest a Catholic ethos which is evident and open to experience by all who enter the school. We promote gospel values and the teachings of Christ and the Catholic faith. We follow policies that reflect and embody the teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church and model leadership inspired by the image and life of Christ. We attend to the spiritual needs of children and young people as a constant priority. We care for the pastoral and special needs of children and young people in accordance with gospel values and the teaching of the Catholic Church. All our work will manifest the centrality of Christ and the Catholic faith.

Mission Statement

‘Living and Learning in the Light of Christ’

Vision Statement

Mary Immaculate is a Catholic school in which each individual grows and thrives whilst living and learning in the light of Christ. We encourage our pupils to be themselves and develop a love of learning and a sense of belonging within a safe, happy and caring environment. In partnership with parents and the whole community, our purpose is to successfully provide a high standard of education, giving the maximum opportunity to realise each individual’s potential and God-given talents. Within an ever-changing world, we aim to empower our pupils and ensure they are emotionally equipped to apply their learning and skills and become life-long learners. Pupil leadership drives inclusivity and inspires our learners to speak up for the good of our school, community and beyond.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The school is committed to ensuring the highest standards of Data Protection. We will treat all personal data as we would expect our own personal data to be treated, i.e. with respect, integrity and confidentiality and in accordance with the GDPR and other Data Protection laws. All our school policies will adhere to GDPR guidelines. Our Privacy Notice is published on the school website.

UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

The principles of the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) are embedded throughout all our curriculum and practices. This provides us with a framework which provides a real meaning and understanding for everything we do.

Mission Statement

‘Living and Learning in the Light of Christ’

The mission statement of Mary Immaculate 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 including class prayers, whole school prayers and displays
- It is shared with parents and the wider community through school signage, our newsletter, school policy documents, website and parents' meetings

School Environment

Visitors to Mary Immaculate 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 Mary Immaculate every effort is made to provide a spiritually uplifting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment:

- All rooms have a crucifix
- All rooms have a cared for, attractive prayer area that reflect the liturgical season
- All rooms have a statue of Our Lady
- There are displays in the corridors with reflection on our Mission Statement, information relating to the current liturgical season
- Displays in the corridor document the activities of the Faith Ambassadors, the Department of Spiritual Life, and our work related to the Jesuit Pupil Profile virtues
- Displays within each classroom reflect the ‘Come and See’ topic being taught (Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 6) or the RED branch being taught (Years 2-5)
- There are child-friendly quotes from scripture around the corridors
- The school grounds have a peaceful grotto area

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. 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 RSE 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

¹ NBRIA The Distinctive Curriculum of the Catholic School

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 work on Catholic Social Teaching and the Jesuit Pupil Profile virtues, pupils are taught to stand in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.

There are various fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year including-

- Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for local foodbanks and the school is a permanent collection point for donations throughout the year
- At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion
- In Advent, pupils collect donations for a local homeless charity and CAFOD world gifts
- During Lent we raise funds for Missio
- We also raise funds for a variety of causes through the year such as MacMillan through cake and biscuit sales
- Sending Christmas cards to elderly parishioners
- NSPCC number day

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 opportunities for pupils to engage in campaigns for social justice including:

- Climate change activities e.g. Come & See universal church
- Supporting Fairtrade Fortnight
- Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness
- Catholic Social Teaching work
- Work on half termly virtues

Department of Spiritual Life & Faith Ambassadors

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. The role of Faith Ambassador is recognised as being of high status and it is a well-respected and sought after position. The Faith Ambassadors are elected through a rigorous process, in which learners prepare and deliver a speech to the whole school and consistently demonstrate that they embody our school virtues and mission.

The Department of Spiritual Life works alongside the Faith Ambassadors to promote and enhance the Catholic life in our school. They take ownership of the religious life in their class, leading prayer and ensuring that all religious elements in the class are correct and up to date.

Department meetings are held at least once a term.

We hope to develop the Chaplaincy provision at Mary Immaculate with the introduction of our new parish priest Fr. Ramesh.

School Community

Mary Immaculate is a welcoming place for children, families and members of staff from all faiths. Recognising that Christ is at the centre of our school we strive to support and value each member, especially the most vulnerable.

Pupils are encouraged to carry out our virtues in their daily lives and are rewarded with these 'Caught Moments' being shared during a celebration assembly. This is shared with parents through the newsletter. Our behaviour policy is driven by our belief that all are unique and made in God's image and likeness. (See our Behaviour Policy). Mary Immaculate recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in clusters and across the diocese. Through our work in RE children learn about the Universal Church and how we belong to a global family.

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 discussing 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: class assemblies, class concerts, exhibition of work, whole school Masses, and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year both in school and at St David & St Patrick Parish Church and events such as the Christmas Celebration.

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 and parents' evenings. Mary Immaculate 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 St David & St Patrick. Our parish priest is Fr. Ramesh.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. We will invite Fr. Ramesh into school to support the teaching of the curriculum RE by visiting to talk about various topics such as baptism, reconciliation and vocation. Links with the priest are strengthening as we invite him to celebrate various services in the school with the children and staff, including Mass and blessing of the Advent wreaths. We also share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

The Role of the Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

- Formulating a written policy for Catholic life and mission
- Ensuring that there is an action plan for Catholic life and mission
- Ensuring that pupils are able to explain the mission statement of the school, appropriate to their age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds
- Introduction of Jesuit Pupil Profile virtues with the Dept. of Spiritual Life each half term
- Supporting staff and helping to develop confidence
- Ensuring the school foyer is a welcoming space which displays our faith to visitors and recognises changes in the liturgical year
- 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. Remembrance 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

- 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

The Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

The Coordinator for Catholic life and mission is Kelly Joseph.

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.

Written: October 2024

Presented to governors for adoption: 18th November 2024.

Shared with the staff: November 2024

To be reviewed by staff: September 2026