



St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

299 Westferry Road, London E14 3RS



Catholic Life and Mission Policy

School Mission Statement: **Through Christ We Learn**

Commitment to equality:

We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have adopted a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, in relation to human dignity and dignity in work, become embedded into every aspect of school life, and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.

Policy approved by:	School Business Manager	Date: Sept 2025
Date of next review	September 2026	
Responsibility for Policy:	Governing Board	
Review Cycle: this Policy will be renewed by: the FGB/Curriculum/Finance Committee* Annually		

Summary of changes to this Policy

(this should only be completed for Statutory Policies)

[illegible]

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 St. Edmund's Catholic Primary School responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Mission Statement

At St Edmund's Catholic Primary School, **"...through Christ we learn..."** and grow together in faith, love and service. Christ is at the heart of our school, and our Catholic Life and Mission shape everything we do — from the way we learn and treat one another, to how we serve our community and the wider world.

We strive to create a joyful, caring and inclusive school where every child is recognised as **God's masterpiece**. Through Gospel values, prayer, worship and daily witness, we support our children to become compassionate, confident and responsible young people who live their faith with integrity.

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

¹ CSI Inspection Handbook, page 2

- Staff embrace and implement the statement across daily school life through a range of opportunities e.g. behaviour expectations, interaction between staff, displays, assemblies, and the use of Makaton for the key tag line which is done at every assembly.
- Parents and the wider community are informed about the statement through school signage, our newsletter, email footers, school policy documents, website and at parents' meetings.

School Environment

Visitors to **St Edmund's Catholic Primary School** immediately recognise our strong Catholic identity through the physical environment, which reflects that Christ is at the centre of our community. The school environment is rich in symbols of faith, Scripture, and signs of our Catholic tradition, enabling all who enter to feel welcomed into a prayerful and spiritually uplifting space.

At St Edmund's, every effort is made to provide a spiritually vibrant, aesthetically pleasing and faith-filled environment:

- **The school entrance is welcoming and reflects our Catholic identity.** Our mission, *"Through Christ we learn"*, is displayed prominently, alongside Scripture and images that reflect our faith. Seasonal liturgical displays, created by pupils, mark the rhythm of the Church's year.
- **A crucifix is displayed in every learning space**, reminding us of Christ's presence and love for us.
- **Each classroom has an attractive and well-maintained prayer focus**, reflecting the liturgical season with coloured cloths, Scripture, and high-quality religious artefacts. These are used daily to support prayer, reflection and Celebrations of the Word.
- **Every class contributes to a Catholic Life floor book**, capturing the richness of the Catholic Life of the school through pupil voice, prayer, worship, outreach, and acts of faith. Pupils take great pride in recording how they live out the Gospel in school and at home.
- **Classrooms are resourced with liturgical items**, including cloths, candles, crosses and age-appropriate prayer resources, enabling pupils to plan and lead worship confidently.
- **Displays throughout the school reflect our Mission Statement, Gospel Values, and the liturgical life of the Church.** These include Catholic Social Teaching, Laudato Si' (Care for Our Common Home), Caritas outreach, world faiths, and pupil chaplaincy teams.
- **Pupil leadership displays** celebrate the roles of our pupil groups (e.g. Peace & Justice Society, Equality & Inclusion Ambassadors, Caritas Ambassadors, and Environmental Ambassadors), showing how pupils put faith into action.
- **We have Prayer Gardens in both EYFS and the KS1/KS2 playground**, providing sacred spaces for reflection, prayer, class worship, and outdoor RE learning. These spaces are cared for by pupils and may be used throughout the school day for stillness, prayer or spiritual reflection.

Through these intentional expressions of faith, the environment of St Edmund's nurtures spirituality, belonging and a shared sense of mission, making our Catholic identity visible, lived, and deeply rooted in daily school life.

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 I.e. Caritas that our peace and justice team do every year.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught in a Catholic context, through Ten Ten, 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 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

Charitable outreach is a core expression of our Catholic mission at St Edmund’s. Rooted in the Gospel call to love our neighbour and inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, pupils are encouraged to recognise the needs of others and to respond through service, prayer, fundraising and social action. Our charitable work enables pupils to put their faith into action, develops empathy, and helps them to understand their responsibility as global citizens and disciples of Christ.

Across the liturgical year, pupils engage in a range of outreach activities, particularly during Harvest, Advent and Lent. Where possible, outreach is **pupil-led**, enabling children to take initiative, raise awareness, and evaluate the impact of their actions. Our charitable work supports both local and global needs, and is strengthened through partnerships with Catholic and community organisations.

Charities and Partnerships

Charity / Organisation	Focus of Mission	Website
CAFOD	Global justice, Harvest and Lent appeals	cafod.org.uk

Caritas Westminster	Local charity, foodbank, outreach & social action	caritaswestminster.org.uk
YoungMinds	Mental health and wellbeing	youngminds.org.uk
Guide Dogs UK	Inclusion, independence and service to others	guidedogs.org.uk
WWF / Greenpeace	Care for creation and environmental justice	wwf.org.uk / greenpeace.org.uk
St Joseph's Hospice	Compassionate care for the sick and vulnerable	stjh.org.uk
Catholic Children's Society	Supporting disadvantaged children and families	cathchild.org.uk

Impact of Charitable Outreach

St Edmund's pupils regularly demonstrate generosity and commitment to serving others. Recent charitable contributions include:

- **£60.70 raised for the Catholic Children's Society** to support disadvantaged children and families.
- **£52 raised for CAFOD** to support communities experiencing poverty across the world.
- **£409.60 donated to St Joseph's Hospice** to help provide care for vulnerable people across East London.

These acts of charity help pupils understand the real difference their actions make, and strengthen our school's commitment to dignity, solidarity and the common good. Pupils reflect on the impact of each initiative, recognising that Catholic charity is rooted not only in giving, but in love, justice and seeing Christ in every person.

Our charitable outreach is rooted in the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching, particularly the dignity of the human person, solidarity, and the preferential option for the poor.

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:

- *Celebrating Refuge Week*
- *Teach Racial Justice Equality and Diversity*
- *School assemblies follow the 'No outsiders programme' which teach children about racism, tolerance, acceptance etc.*
- *School Values 'SPIRIT' promote Social Justice*
- *Work for climate change e.g., walk to school week, water & heating saving etc.*
- *Supporting Fairtrade by teaching it through Catholic Social Teaching and our Science curriculum*
- *Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness*

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 St. Edmund's plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

Our Peace and Justice team consists of a group of year 5 pupils who deliver the gospel assemblies on Monday and work in partnership with R.E lead and senior leaders. Their 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/RE classroom prayer focal point*
- *Maintaining and developing communal prayer areas*
- *Writing and leading prayers during Gospel assemblies*
- *Undertaking large projects such as developing a prayer garden/eco-area in partnership with the science lead*
- *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*

In addition, each class has two children who lead on the collective worship, prayers and deliver news regarding R.E.

School Community

St. Edmund's 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 promote equality on all levels including LGBT community*
- *We have assemblies about religious festivals when they are celebrated in our local area.*
- *We also have an area (interfaith prayer room) that our other faith students can use during lunchtime in different religious events.*
- *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. St. Edmund's **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, we also work with our local non-Catholic schools* to ensure all school flourish.

At St. Edmund's 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: *year group meetings, whole school Masses, celebrations of the word, prayers which take place both in school and at St. Edmund's Parish Church, such as the Advent Celebration. In addition, Parent prayer workshops are held during the liturgical year.*

They are encouraged to participate with their children for example:

- During Advent the resources 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
- Parents are invited to join the parents school prayer group.
- Parents are encouraged to become class reps and/or talk to the class rep 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. St. Edmund's 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 Hoxton.

- 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, reconciliation and vocation. This is timetabled in the school's APOP.
- Children have regular opportunities for Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Links with the priest are strengthened as he celebrates various liturgies in the school with the pupils and staff, including Mass and the commissioning of the Chaplaincy Team.
- Fortnightly, pupils attend and lead mass.
- 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 Mrs Hajni Pecsí and the RE Team.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Catholic Life and Mission Senior Leader/Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every three years, 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.]