



St Paul's Catholic School

Catholic Life and Mission Policy

Approved by:

Governing Body

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Catholic Life

Our Catholic Identity

St Paul's School and Sixth Form is first and foremost a Catholic school, founded in the person of Jesus Christ and rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church. Our mission shapes all aspects of our school life. We are committed to the formation of young people who seek to live out their faith with integrity, compassion, and joy.

Christ at the Centre of All We Do

We place Christ at the heart of our school community. Prayer and worship form the heartbeat of our life together. Every person is valued as made in the image and likeness of God. Our decision-making is guided by the Gospel values of love, forgiveness, justice, service, and humility.

A Community of Love and Service

Modelled on the example of Christ the servant leader, we strive to build a culture of respect, service, and mutual care. We foster a community where each person is supported and encouraged to serve others, particularly the vulnerable and marginalised, in line with Catholic Social Teaching.

Excellence in Catholic Education

We aim to offer the best education and care by nurturing the whole person—academically, spiritually, morally, and culturally. Our curriculum is enriched with the Catholic worldview and seeks to develop students who are wise, compassionate, and ready to make a positive difference in the world.

Working in Partnership

We work closely with families, parishes, the Diocese of Nottingham, and the wider community in Leicester city. Parents are the first educators of their children, and together we ensure that our young people are rooted in faith, equipped with knowledge, and ready to lead lives of purpose.

A Mission-Led Culture

Our mission to provide the best education and care is embodied in our daily practice. We aim to form students who live out the Gospel, love one another, and serve as stewards of God's creation—fulfilling their potential as children of God.

Living Out our Ethos

At St Paul's, our ethos is not simply aspirational—it is actively lived out through the engagement of our students in a wide variety of opportunities. These activities help young people to grow in faith, leadership, and service, enabling them to put the Gospel values into practice in daily life.

Examples include:

- **Gifts of Grace team** – Students who help to promote and live out our school mission through acts of kindness, inclusion, and community spirit.
- **Ceferino's** – Students who support the spiritual life of the school through planning liturgies, supporting collective worship, and helping to lead prayer and reflection.
- **Sixth Form Senior Leadership Team and School Council** – Students regularly take part in charitable fundraising and outreach, supporting local and global causes, living out Catholic Social Teaching through action.
- **Retreats and Pilgrimages** – Opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection, helping students encounter Christ in deeper ways.
- **Student Leadership Roles** – Across the school, students take on roles that embody service, responsibility, an active contribution to school life.

Catholic Character Education

Catholic Character Education at St Paul's is a fundamental part of our ethos, supporting the development of the whole person through the lens of faith. Rooted in the virtues, our character education helps pupils to grow in compassion, perseverance, love and stewardship. It is closely aligned to our mission of providing the best education and care within a living faith community and is embedded across the curriculum and wider school life.

Through this program, students explore, and practice virtues linked to our mission statement —developing into young people of integrity who contribute positively to the common good. Catholic Character Education is brought to life through:

- Dedicated tutor time exploring the virtues how they connect to everyday life.
- Curriculum links in all subjects, allowing pupils to see how Gospel values and virtues inform knowledge and action.
- Catholic Social Teaching projects and outreach, where students act on the values of justice, dignity, and solidarity.
- Celebrations and recognition of virtue in action through celebration of the word, awards, and displays.
- Reflection and prayer that encourage students to grow in spiritual wisdom and moral discernment.

Mission Statement

As a Catholic School community, we live out our motto of Jesus' words:

"Let your light shine before others"

We believe that our light is the unique gifts and talents given to us by God, and we are called to let that light shine through our actions, learning and service, to others.

We gather as a community of faith to listen to and put into practice the teachings of Jesus Christ as part of the mission of the Church. Following the Church's Calendar, we worship together in public celebrations of the liturgy seeking to grow spiritually in faith, hope and love through the direction of the Holy Spirit.

We regularly review and revisit our vision for the community. This is to be a regular part of our dialogue when reviewing our targets for improvement as a school community. We are committed to provide our students with an **outstanding Catholic education**, rooted in our mission. This means that all members of our community should be committed to ensuring that:

- Students are **known, valued and loved**
- Staff are supported and empowered in their **vocation**
- Parents are **welcomed as partners** in learning and faith
- **Christ is at the centre** of all we do

We are united in our belief that every child is **uniquely created in the image and likeness of God**, and our shared vision is to nurture each student's **God-given potential** through:

- A **knowledge-rich curriculum** designed to inspire
- A **culture of high expectations** that motivates and challenges
- A **faith-filled, inclusive community** that promotes dignity, compassion and personal growth

Together, we strive to ensure that every young person leaves St. Paul's with a deep sense of purpose, a love of learning, and the confidence to live out their vocation in service of others - **becoming the person God is calling them to be.**

Religious Education Curriculum

Curriculum Intent

At St Paul's, Religious Education (RE) is central to our mission. Our RE curriculum aims to:

- develop and deepen students' **knowledge and understanding** of the Catholic Faith, other faith traditions and worldviews and their influence on the life of a believer.
- support students to **understand themselves** as unique and worthy which reflects the belief that we are all made in the image of God.
- encourage students to **reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically** in order to give a personal response, to questions of meaning and purpose
- enable all students to become **active and responsible citizens** in a multicultural world.

Curriculum Structure

We follow the **Religious Education Directory (2023)** "*To Know You More Clearly*", as set out by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The curriculum is structured around three key pillars:

- **To know** – deepening theological knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- **To grow** – nurturing spiritual and moral development.
- **To live** – encouraging application of faith in daily life, service and social responsibility.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9):

Programme Title: "*To Know You More Clearly*"

- Follows a three-year programme aligned with the RED's five areas of study.
- Emphasis is on systematic and rigorous study of Catholic theology, integrated with other world religions and worldviews.
- Topics include:
 - God, Jesus Christ, the Church and the human person
 - Introduction to sacraments, liturgy and moral life
 - Foundations in scripture and Catholic tradition
- Students encounter key beliefs and practices of other world religions to develop respect and understanding.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11):

Programme Title: "*To Know You More Clearly – GCSE RE*"

- All students study Eduqas/Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies course that meets the RED content requirements.

- Catholic Christianity is the core focus, covering:
 - Beliefs and teachings
 - Practices
 - Sources of authority
 - Moral and ethical issues
- A second component covers Judaism – beliefs and practices

Sixth Form (Key Stage 5):

- We offer OCR A Level Religious Studies and General RE that reflects:
 - Catholic social teaching
 - Ethical and philosophical enquiry
 - Dialogue with contemporary culture and other worldviews
- Provision is shaped by the needs of students and reflects the mission of Catholic education.

Our RE curriculum is structured to provide a coherent and comprehensive journey from Key Stage 3 through Key Stage 5. The principles underpinning the RE Curriculum are:

- Rooted in Revelation, Church Tradition, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Promotes intellectual formation, spiritual development, and personal discipleship
- Encourages students to be articulate in faith, open to the truth, and active in mission

Through Religious Education, we strive to:

- Create a welcoming and loving environment, with Christ at the centre of all we do.
- Challenge pupils to achieve their very best academically and spiritually.
- Show care, kindness and respect to every member of our community, recognising the God-given dignity and uniqueness of each person.
- Foster spiritual growth, encouraging pupils to encounter Jesus Christ and live out their faith in word and action.

Religious Education is more than a subject: it is an invitation to explore life's biggest questions through the lens of the Catholic faith, and to become the person God is calling each of us to be.

Time Allocation

In accordance with national guidelines:

At least **10% of curriculum time** is devoted to Religious Education in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. All Sixth Form students receive regular Core RE provision, spiritual development opportunities and enrichment.

Teaching and Learning Approaches

Teaching in RE is designed to be engaging, inclusive, and reflective of our Catholic ethos:

- **Knowledge-Rich Curriculum:** Lessons are carefully sequenced to build upon prior knowledge, ensuring students develop a deep understanding of theological concepts

‘Let your Light Shine Before Others’ Matthew 5

and their relevance to contemporary life.

- **Active Engagement:** Students are encouraged to participate in discussions, debates, and reflective activities that promote critical thinking and personal growth.
- **Inclusive Practices:** RE lessons are accessible to all students, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), ensuring that every student can engage meaningfully with the content.
- **Integration of Catholic Social Teaching:** Students are provided with opportunities to apply their learning through social action projects, fostering a commitment to justice, peace, and the common good.

Assessment and Progression

Assessment in RE is both formative and summative, designed to support and challenge students:

- **Formative Assessment:** Regular feedback is provided to guide students in their learning journey, helping them to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Summative Assessment:** Students' understanding is evaluated through various methods, including essays, presentations, and examinations, aligned with national standards and expectations.
- **Progress Tracking:** Student progress is monitored to ensure they are on track to achieve their potential, with interventions in place to support those who may need additional help.

Staff Development and Leadership

Our RE department is led by a dedicated team committed to excellence in Catholic education:

- **Subject Leadership:** The Head of RE provides strategic direction, ensuring the curriculum remains faithful to Church teachings and responsive to students' needs.
- **Professional Development:** Staff engage in ongoing training and development opportunities to enhance their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills.
- **Collaborative Practice:** The RE team works closely with chaplaincy, pastoral staff, and other departments to provide a holistic educational experience that integrates faith and learning.

Inclusion in Religious Education

At St Paul's, we affirm the God-given dignity of every person and are committed to ensuring that Religious Education is inclusive, accessible, and respectful of all learners.

Inclusion in RE is grounded in the Catholic understanding that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). As such, each student is valued as a unique individual, with their own gifts, background, beliefs, and learning needs.

Our approach to inclusion is not simply about access—it is about encounter, belonging, and flourishing in a faith-filled environment.

We aim to ensure that all pupils can fully engage with RE and achieve success, regardless of ability, background, or belief. This is achieved through:

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Lessons are planned with a range of learning styles and needs in mind, ensuring that all students can access core content and express their understanding meaningfully.
- **Scaffolded Resources:** Tasks are adapted and supported to meet individual needs, including for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- **Cultural and Religious Respect:** While our RE curriculum is firmly rooted in Catholic teaching, it also fosters respect for other faith traditions and worldviews, and encourages dialogue and understanding.
- **Spiritual Inclusion:** We provide space for all students to reflect on life's big questions, wherever they are on their personal faith journey. Students are invited—but never compelled—to participate in prayer and worship and are supported to develop their own conscience and values.

Supporting SEND and Vulnerable Pupils

- Teachers work closely with the inclusion and pastoral team to ensure pupils with additional needs are supported in RE.
- Classrooms are inclusive spaces where emotional, social, and academic needs are acknowledged and addressed with compassion and expertise.
- Assessment methods are adapted where needed to enable every student to demonstrate their learning and progress.

Welcoming Students of Other Faiths or No Faith

We recognise and respect the diversity of our school community. Students from other religious traditions or none, are encouraged to share their perspectives where appropriate and are included fully in the life of the RE classroom.

Respectful dialogue is fostered in all lessons, with Catholic beliefs presented clearly and with integrity, while also cultivating understanding and appreciation of religious diversity.

Promoting Belonging

Our aim is that every student feels a deep sense of belonging in RE lessons—knowing that their voice matters, their dignity is honoured, and their journey is valued. We want all young people to see RE not only as an academic subject, but as an opportunity to explore their place in the world, their relationship with God, and their responsibility to others.

Religious Education is distinct from, but deeply connected to, our school's wider Catholic life. RE lessons are designed to strengthen and support these experiences, helping pupils grow in discipleship and confidence in expressing their faith.

Prayer and Liturgy

"To love God more dearly..."

Prayer and liturgy are foundational to our mission statement. They ensure that care is spiritual as well as pastoral, that education is rooted in Christ, and that our faith community is alive, joyful, and responsive to the presence of God.

We believe every student should have the opportunity to grow closer to Christ through regular, meaningful opportunities for prayer, reflection and celebration of the sacraments, in partnership with home and parish.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37)

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of a Catholic school. As outlined in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory (2023), they are the privileged places of encounter with Christ and the source of spiritual nourishment for our school community. They express our shared faith, shape our moral vision, and strengthen our commitment to serve the common good. At St. Paul's, we provide a liturgical life that is faithful to the teachings of the Church, deeply rooted in scripture, and accessible to all.

Prayer and Liturgy aims to:

- **Encourage Encounter** – Facilitate genuine opportunities for pupils and staff to meet Christ in prayer, silence, scripture, and the Sacraments.
- **Develop Liturgical Literacy** - Enable all members of the school community, to understand and participate in Catholic liturgical life.
- **Foster Belonging and Participation** – Build an inclusive and joyful worshipping community in which everyone feels they have a role.
- **Support Spiritual Growth** – Provide formation that enables students to grow in their personal prayer life and faith journey.
- **Promote Mission and Witness** - Ensure that prayer leads to action in service of others and to the building of the Kingdom of God, in the school and beyond.
- **Strengthen the Parish-School-Home Relationship** – Collaborate actively with local parishes and engage parents as partners, in their child's spiritual development.

The core principles of our prayer and liturgy are:

- **Encounter** - Prayer and liturgy are sacred moments in which we encounter the living God. We seek to help young people experience the presence of Jesus Christ in ways that are authentic, transformative, and life-giving.
- **Formation** - Pupils are explicitly taught how to pray, why we pray, and how the liturgy functions, within the life of the Church. This is delivered through Religious Education, tutor time, assemblies, chaplaincy input, and experience.
- **Participation** - Worship is planned and led collaboratively by pupils, chaplains, staff, and clergy. Pupil leadership is encouraged, particularly through form liturgies,

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assemblies, and the chaplaincy team.

- **Mission** - Prayer flows into action. Our faith is expressed in service, charity, justice, and peace-making. Every act of liturgy ends with a renewed call to live out the Gospel in our daily lives.
- **Partnership** - We are committed to strong and visible links with our parishes and to nurturing faith at home. Prayer and liturgy extend beyond the classroom, touching parish and family life.

Daily Prayer and the Liturgical Year

All pupils and staff engage in prayer every day. The rhythm of prayer is structured according to the liturgical year, rooted in scripture, and supported by the chaplaincy team.

- Structured daily prayer is built into tutor time, using resources linked to the liturgical calendar.
- Visual prompts and prayer spaces are maintained in every form room and communal area.
- A prayer box of resources, is distributed to every form group, with weekly chaplaincy support via the Tutor Program SharePoint.
- A weekly prayer focus is shared with staff to ensure consistency across the school.

Parents are regularly encouraged to mirror this rhythm of prayer at home through newsletters, seasonal resources, and shared reflections.

Liturgical Celebrations and Sacramental Life

We mark the Church's seasons and feasts with reverence and joy:

- Each liturgical season is visibly marked in displays and prayer resources.
- Pupils are actively involved in preparing and leading seasonal liturgies.
- The Feast of St Paul is celebrated annually in our school.
- Liturgies of the Word, particularly in Advent, Lent, and during times of national need, or remembrance
- There are weekly masses for a class, so that each for experiences mass together
- We have welcome masses and celebration masses that start and end students' time within our community

Chaplaincy and Faith Leadership

- Our lay chaplains coordinate liturgical life and support staff.
- Student Chaplaincy Teams are trained to lead and support worship.
- Works in close collaboration with local clergy, especially our parish priests
- Lay Chaplains support the Chaplaincy Team to lead form prayer and liturgies, and represent the school at parish events
- Supports RE and Personal Development with prayer and reflection resources
- Staff training on prayer and liturgy is delivered during INSET and CPD.
- Liturgies are evaluated using student and staff voice.

Retreats, Pilgrimages, and Faith Enrichment

We believe that time away from the classroom supports deep reflection and encounter. This means that we encourage students to have the opportunity to take part in retreats and faith enrichment opportunities. This includes:

- Annual retreats (on-site or external) for every year group
- Sixth Form leadership
- Opportunities to attend The Briars, and diocesan events
- Pilgrimages such as Lourdes are offered where possible

Engaging Families and the Wider Parish

We recognise that parents are the first educators of their children in faith. Therefore, we:

- Share prayer resources and seasonal liturgical reflections for home use
- Publish regular updates about prayer and liturgy in newsletters and on the website and social media platforms
- Offer family-friendly services during Advent and Lent, sometimes in collaboration with local parishes
- Partner with clergy to ensure seamless connection between parish sacramental life and the school community
- We are part of a Catholic family of faith, and we actively promote participation in parish life and Sunday Mass through chaplaincy messages, notices and pastoral conversations.
- Clergy are consulted in liturgical planning and support Catholic Life governance.

Inclusion and Accessibility

We affirm the dignity and worth of every pupil, regardless of background or ability. We ensure:

- Liturgies are accessible for pupils with SEND through thoughtful planning and differentiation
- Clear explanations of Catholic traditions for pupils of other faiths or no faith
- A welcoming and respectful atmosphere where all are invited, never pressured, to participate
- A pastoral response that honours the unique spiritual journey of each young person
- Student voice group contributes to review and improvement.

Strategic Planning

As a Catholic school, we commit to embedding prayer, worship, and liturgical celebrations into the daily life of our community. We produce a Liturgical Calendar that outlines the key events and provisions for the academic year, in accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory. The Liturgical Calendar, serves as a structured plan for ensuring the spiritual development of our school community. Through prayer, liturgy, and faith-based activities, we strive to create an environment where faith is lived and celebrated.

At St Paul's, prayer and liturgy are not just events – they are expressions of who we are. Rooted in Christ and His Church, we strive to offer every child the opportunity to grow in

faith, encounter Jesus, and love God more dearly. Through worship, partnership with parents and parishes, and a culture of prayerful reverence, we joyfully live out our Catholic mission.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure that St Paul's remains vibrant, faithful, and effective in forming young people in the image of Christ. This includes the strategic oversight of **Catholic Life and Mission**, **Religious Education**, and **Prayer and Liturgy**.

Catholic Life and Mission

Monitoring of Catholic Life and Mission ensures that the Gospel values and the mission of the Church permeate all aspects of school life. This includes:

- **Governor Monitoring Visits:** A designated link governor regularly reviews Catholic Life through visits, learning walks, and pupil voice.
- **Self-Evaluation Framework:** The school uses the diocesan CSI self-evaluation toolkit to assess strengths and areas for development.
- **Annual Catholic Life Report:** A termly report is shared with governors and the Trust, highlighting key activities, outcomes, and strategic priorities.
- **Staff and Student Voice:** Feedback is collected annually to evaluate the impact of Catholic mission on culture, relationships, and student development.
- **Catholic Character Education Review:** Monitoring of tutor time resources and cross-curricular links, ensures consistency in the promotion of Catholic virtues.

Religious Education

The RE curriculum is monitored to ensure it remains faithful to the Religious Education Directory (2023), academically rigorous, and spiritually enriching.

- **Curriculum Review:** The Head of RE leads annual reviews of schemes of learning to ensure alignment with the RED and exam specifications.
- **Lesson Observations and Book Scrutiny:** Regular quality assurance of teaching and learning is undertaken by SLT and subject leaders.
- **Progress and Assessment Analysis:** RE assessment data is reviewed termly to track progress, address underachievement, and inform planning.
- **Pupil Voice and Engagement:** Learner feedback is gathered to evaluate curriculum engagement, understanding of key concepts, and spiritual growth.
- **Inspection Readiness:** Preparations for Catholic School Inspection (CSI) ensure the department remains accountable and mission-driven.

Prayer and Liturgy

Monitoring the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy ensures that worship is formative, inclusive, and faithful to the Church's liturgical life.

- **Liturgy Calendar:** This outlines all planned liturgical events, feast days, and retreat opportunities, which are then evaluated by the chaplaincy and SLT.
- **Chaplaincy Review:** The Lay Chaplain provides termly updates to governors on pupil leadership, liturgical life, and pastoral outreach.

- **Staff Formation and INSET:** CPD evaluations help assess the impact of training on staff confidence and participation in liturgical leadership.
- **Pupil and Staff Voice:** Feedback is gathered following key liturgies, retreats, and seasonal celebrations to inform future planning.
- **Governance Oversight:** The Catholic Life link governor observes liturgies and provides feedback to the full governing body.

Whole school Strategic Integration

- **Leadership Review:** SLT integrates Catholic life priorities into the school improvement plan and regularly evaluates them at leadership meetings.
- **Trust and Diocesan Engagement:** The school welcomes reviews from the Trust DPS team and diocesan advisors, ensuring that Catholic distinctiveness is reviewed in line with national and diocesan frameworks.