**Our Lady Queen of Peace**

**Catholic Primary School**



**Catholic Life and Mission Policy**

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| Created / Updated: | **September 2024**  Philip Wheelan  Interim Head of School |
| To be reviewed: | September 2026 |

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT IS**

To love and to share, believe and achieve

At Our Lady Queen of Peace, we: LOVE each other as God has told us to do.

SHARE our Catholic faith and love everyone.

BELIEVE that we can grow in God's love.

Take pride and celebrate all that we ACHIEVE together

**We are committed to**:

❖ develop the children’s spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical well-being;

❖ treat all people with justice, respect and equality, as Children of God;

❖ encourage, as Children of God, a spirit of community and cooperation based on Gospel Values, embracing Forgiveness and Reconciliation in all our relationships;

❖ live out our faith in accordance with the CST principles.

This mission statement is the foundation stone on which we build The Catholic Life of OLQP, and we aim to achieve our mission by:

➢ Establishing, maintaining and developing a Catholic ethos which permeates through everything we do and is apparent to all those who enter the school.

➢ Providing frequent opportunities for conscious and active participation in collective worship through Holy Mass and other services and celebrations in accordance with the rites of the Catholic Church to all in the community.

➢ Creating a place of learning where Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church are evident in everything we do.

➢ Provide an enriched curriculum which is creative, inspiring and inclusive for all pupils which is fundamentally based on the teachings of Jesus and his Holy Church. ➢ Developing the prayer and spiritual life of all members of our school and the community it serves.

➢ Being an outreaching centre of God’s mission on earth in promoting the values of faith, hope and charity.

➢ Engendering the culture of vocation by educating pupils to be active in their faith and by reaching out to those in our community and beyond.

➢ Ensuring that the Gospel values are permeated through all relevant policies.

➢ Aiming to bring about an awareness of the needs of others.

➢ Developing links with the parish, diocese and wider community.

**Aims and objectives**.

➢ That every member of our school community feels that they are valued as an individual in the name of Jesus the Christ.

➢ To deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Church, Christian Living and The Sacraments.

➢ That children are also taught about other Faiths. (Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism on a rolling programme).

➢ To provide an experience of Church through school.

➢ To develop the spirituality of pupils and staff.

➢ To ensure the mission statement is understood (by all) and lived out in all aspects of school life at OLQP.

➢ To ensure all teachers have access to high standard training and resources.

➢ To be involved in diocesan initiatives.

➢ To allow pupils and staff to develop individually through prayer/spiritual experiences by offering opportunities for:

• Mass on Holy Days of obligation and other occasions

• Opportunities to attend fortnightly Mass in Church

• Opportunities for acts of reconciliation

• Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

• Adults and children to take the lead in acts of worship

• To have the opportunity to take an active part in the Mass

• To have the opportunity to evaluate liturgies

• To learn from one another

• Support from the Parish Priests, Canon John and Father James, and our Deacons, Deacon Tony and Deacon Reg.

**The Spiritual Life of the School**

Prayer occupies a vital role in our Religious Education as a means of expressing, fostering and nurturing faith. Children have a natural aptitude for prayer, they are open to God. They respond in joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world around them. We, at OLQP aim to create and maintain an environment where this is fostered and developed. Opportunities are provided to enable the pupils to ENCOUNTER; discover, or discover more deeply, the importance of a personal relationship with Christ; so that they can become convinced that they are each loved by God and are invited to grow in their relationship with him. They are encouraged to be still and listen to God. We aim to teach and develop a variety of prayer methods for the children to have such an encounter through:

➢ Teaching the traditional prayers of the Church alongside new prayers.

➢ The day is punctuated with prayer. Teachers and pupils pray at the beginning of the school day, grace before lunch, grace after lunch and end of the school day.

Pupils are encouraged to pray spontaneously throughout the day by making use of class prayer areas, prayer areas around school, and using the Prayer Garden.

➢ Allowing the children to develop their spiritual awareness by giving them the skills to create asking, thanksgiving, praising and sorry prayers.

➢ Through the readings of the Gospels and the Holy Bible (Liturgical prayer).

➢ Through the teaching of hymns.

➢ Through the teaching of drama, sacred music and prayer.

➢ Meditating and reflecting in silence whilst being inspired by liturgical music and religious art.

➢ Pupils are encouraged to pray at home with their families and share in school using the class Prayer Bag.

**The celebration of Mass**

The celebration of the Eucharist is at the centre of the spiritual life of the school. We aim to provide a variety of opportunities and experiences attend to the various stages of development of our faith.

Masses are carefully planned so that all children have the opportunity to lead and celebrate. Children are involved in preparing prayers of the faithful and the penitential rite. By using the ancient tradition of the Liturgical year as a framework, we draw on the wealth of the whole church to teach our children who God is and what they are. We introduce children to the lives of saints, to the changes of the season and the mood and colour expressing these changes. Children are given the associated language, signs and symbols. This involves progression, some repetition and deepening of understanding.

Marian prayers and songs are nurtured in May, having a procession and celebration of the crowning of Mary. Prayers for the dead are encouraged in November. Advent and the Christmas season is observed and celebrated through the Come and See programme of study and through a variety of collective worship gatherings such as Advent liturgies, KS1 Nativities, carol service and Mass. Holy week preparations take place in school and during Lent we have Lent liturgies and the term ends with a Passion Play.

**Giving to others**

We aim to develop and harness an awareness of the needs of others: locally, nationally and globally, and foster a spirit of generosity and compassion. There are various fundraising events throughout the year

:  Harvest – children are encouraged to bring in food for local foodbanks and the school is a permanent collection point for donations throughout the year promoted by the Mini Vinnies.

 At Remembrance, we sell poppies and related merchandise to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.

 In Advent, we support the Save the Children Fund with a Christmas jumper day

 During Lent we raise funds for CAFOD through activities chosen by the pupils

.  We support the work of the Diocesan fund for Father Hudson Care

 We also raise funds for a variety of causes through the year such as Macmillan Cancer Support through cake and biscuit sales and other initiatives.

 The Mini Vinnies spend time with the Forget – me – not parish group providing fellowship to those in need.

Children 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.

We aim to bring about an awareness of the needs of others. This is an on-going process and those less fortunate than us are remembered in daily prayer.

**Prayer in the classroom**.

Each classroom in the school creates a prayerful environment by each having a prayer focus. It is required that this focus is dressed in the liturgical colours of the year as a visual sign to the children to show the change and the mood of the liturgical calendar. Each class has a box containing artefacts to support prayer and acts of worship, both teacher and child led.

**School Environment**

Visitors to OLQP 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 OLQP 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

 Each class has a ‘liturgy’ box with coloured cloths and has access to a range of good quality religious artefacts

 There are displays in the corridors with reflection on our Mission Statement, information relating to the current liturgical season and Catholic Social Teaching

 Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season

 The school grounds have a peaceful prayer garden

 Access to Religious literature in the entrance hall

**Policy for development of worship**

Our Catholic Faith is central to day-to-day life of our school and all aspects of the curriculum, and pupils are encouraged to recognise the importance of their faith and they respond to all forms of liturgy and collective worship with respect and reverence. (Please see Prayer and Liturgy Policy)

**Parental Involvement**

Parents are the first teachers of their children and we work in partnership with them. They are encouraged to support Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and discuss 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 Prayer and Liturgies, curriculum meetings, whole school Masses and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year and events such as the Nativity and Passion Play. They are encouraged to participate with their children when using the Prayer Bag, encouraging a time of sharing and reflection.

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 parent curriculum meetings and parents’ evenings. OLQP operates an open-door policy.

**Class Saints**

As a reminder that we are called to be saints and live a life of holiness, each class has a class saint to inspire them on their journey in faith.

The children learn about their class saint's life, why they are a good role model and how, through their example, we might become closer to Christ ourselves.  This gives our children the opportunity to know about the life and work of a variety of saints during their time at OLQP.

Reception – St Mary

Year 1 – St Joseph

Year 2 – St John Bosco

Year 3 - St Teresa of Calcutta

Year 4 – St Josephine Bakhita

Year 5 – Blessed Carlo Acutis

Year 6 – St Maximillian Kolbe

**Links with other policies**

This Catholic Life policy is linked to the following policies:

Religious Education Policy

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

**Policy, monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored by the headteacher 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.