



L A L E H A M L E A

A Catholic Independent Primary School for boys and girls aged 3 to 11

Headteacher: Mrs. Maria Reece

LALEHAM LEA SCHOOL & NURSERY

CATHOLIC LIFE AND MISSION POLICY

This is a whole school policy which applies to all sections of the school, including Early Years Foundation Stage, Out of School Care and Clubs.

	Date	Signed
Date reviewed	September 2025	<i>M Reece</i> Headteacher
Ratified by the Board of Governors	September 2025	<i>M Ryan</i> Chair of Governors
Date of next review	September 2027	



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Introduction

This policy is a statement of the Mission, aims, principles and strategies for the Catholic Life and Mission at Laleham Lea School.

Catholic Life and Mission

‘When Jesus is asked which is the greatest commandment, the answer is the same in all three of the Gospels in which the question is asked: 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 every Catholic school. It is a mission that is clearly echoed in the Second Vatican Council which teaches that the purpose of an education that is distinctively Christian is threefold (Gravissimum Educationis 2). Its first purpose is to ensure that all pupils understand the faith that gives the school its identity as a Catholic school. The second, 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. The third, is the formation of all to live in conformity with the pattern of human goodness, truth and justice that we find in Jesus Christ.’ (Catholic School Inspection Handbook)

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 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 Laleham Lea School responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church’s educational mission. Our Catholic ethos is not an addition to our curriculum, but the very heartbeat of our school, guiding our pupils and staff to live out the Gospel values in all aspects of their lives.

Mission Statement

Our Mission statement is a vision of a Christ-centred community which recognises we are all God’s children ‘made in the likeness of God’. At Laleham Lea School, we aim to develop children’s spiritual thirst and accompany them on a journey of faith in a rich, positive learning environment with Jesus’ teaching and values at the core of our curriculum.

Recognising that Gospel values are central to the life of the school, we at Laleham Lea aim to create a loving, welcoming environment in which our children may grow intellectually, socially and emotionally; an environment in which their talents are recognised and fostered and their weaknesses treated with compassion; an environment which provides quality teaching and learning within a balanced curriculum framework and which helps every child to reach their true potential.



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Together with parents, who are the first educators, we aim to lead our children towards tolerance, understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others so that they may grow up as well-balanced individuals with a strong sense of personal identity and an awareness of God's love.

Infant Child's Mission Statement:

Please help us to be happy and kind, to always try our best and help others do the same, as we are all special.

Junior Child's Mission Statement:

We know in our school that we are all part of God's family. We all work together to make a safe, happy environment, where we can learn and develop our talents to the full.

The mission statement of Laleham Lea 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 e.g. class prayers, whole school liturgical prayers, displays
- It is shared with parents and the wider community through school signage, our newsletters, school policy documents, website and parents' meetings

School Environment

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

- All rooms have a crucifix / a cross
- All rooms have a cared for, attractive prayer area
- Each prayer area has a coloured cloth reflecting the liturgical season and good quality artefacts
- All rooms have a religious statue, rosary beads and battery-operated candles
- Displays around the school reflect our Mission statement and information relating to the current liturgical season. These displays are often interactive, encouraging pupils to respond in some way.
- Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season
- Displays in public areas reflect the work of our Pupil Chaplains, School Council, Mini Vinnies, Eco Council and our work with the local community



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- Displays within each classroom reflect the 'The Way, The Truth, The Life' topic being taught, the liturgical season, work produced by the pupils, key vocabulary and scripture

Catholic Curriculum

The Catholic vision of education is distinctive and the beliefs it holds, the values and aspirations it has must inspire the whole curriculum. 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 curriculum, this philosophy permeates all our curriculum and activities as we recognise the needs of each individual member of the community.

Catholic Social Teaching:

At an age-appropriate level, children are introduced to the nine principles of Catholic Social Teaching: care for creation, human dignity, solidarity and peace, options for the poor and vulnerable, community and participation and dignity of workers using the CAFOD resources. Each year group at Laleham Lea is assigned a principle to focus on. Pupils will therefore have an in-depth exposure to each principle throughout their journey at Laleham Lea. We use child friendly resources to explore the writings of Pope Francis, such as *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*. 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 and Sex Education:

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught in a Catholic context recognising we are all made in God's image and likeness. Please refer to our RSHE Policy for more detail.

Other Faiths:

Other faiths are taught as part of the RE curriculum. Learning about the religion and cultures of those who do not share the Catholic faith is one of the ways in which Laleham Lea embodies 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 Service

We aim to foster and develop awareness of the needs of others: locally, nationally and globally, and promote a spirit of generosity and compassion as taught by Jesus Christ. Through the school's charity work, pupils are explicitly taught to stand in solidarity with the poor, vulnerable and those in need.

There are various other fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year, coordinated by the pupil house captains.

- Harvest – families donate to the local foodbank
- During Lent we raise funds for CAFOD through activities e.g. The Big Lent Walk



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- Raising money for water aid
- In Advent, we support different charities e.g. The Catholic Children's Society
- Pupils sing Christmas carols at a local care home
- Christmas gifts are donated for local young mothers and their families – Samaritans Purse – Operation Christmas Child
- Visiting local care homes
- We also raise funds for a variety of causes through the year such as Children in Need
- We have a partnership with Empowering Vulnerable Children (EVC) in Uganda. Through fundraising, pupils help provide resources for a nursery school in Uganda.

Our school's Parent Teacher Association support the school's charitable works and raise further funds through their own activities e.g. Summer and Christmas Fair.

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 at Laleham Lea are also taught the importance of standing up for social justice as an important aspect of Christian life. There are planned opportunities for pupils to engage in campaigns for social justice:

- Writing to the local MP regarding relevant issues
- Climate change activities e.g. Eco Day
- Supporting Fairtrade Fortnight
- Anti-bullying awareness
- More sustainable living - Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness – Bags4Schools campaign
- Our Mini Vinnies are the youngest members of the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), an international Christian voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty in all its forms by providing practical assistance to people in need. They live out their mission of see, think, do, supporting their school community and beyond alongside the SVP.

Chaplaincy

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. Chaplaincy provision at Laleham Lea plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

Our Little Disciples, comprising of a pupil from each year group, meet fortnightly and are led by our Pupil Chaplains from Year 6 under the guidance of a staff member and our RE lead. Their role is to discuss, plan and implement new initiatives in line with the school's Mission Statement and ethos. Our Pupil Chaplains and Little Disciples support and



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develop the faith journey and collective worship throughout the school, whilst recognising those who are living out our Gospel Values.

They do this by:

- Being a role model to others by modelling reverence, joy and service
- Maintaining and developing class prayer areas
- Maintaining and developing communal prayer areas, e.g. our Prayer Tree
- Writing and leading prayers during whole school acts of worship
- Supporting SLT members with their Monday whole school collective worship e.g. reading the Gospel, acting scenarios, writing Gospel reflections
- Undertaking large projects such as developing a prayer garden
- Keeping the pupils updated with information about donations to charity, such as for foodbanks and CAFOD
- Representing the school community at local events e.g. Woodcote Memorial Service
- Representing the school community and Diocesan events e.g. The Beginning of Year Mass

An early morning Prayer Group for parents and pupils, meets weekly in the Long Room lead by our RE leader.

Pupils at Laleham Lea volunteer and apply to represent the school as a Little Disciple and Year 6 Pupils formally apply for the position of Pupil Chaplain.

School Community

Laleham Lea is a welcoming place for children, families and members of staff from all faiths and none. 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.

Children and staff are encouraged to engage with a range of awards that recognise the work that we do to implement Catholic social teaching. This includes Oscar Romero Developer Award and Oscar Romero Participator Award.

Laleham Lea recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in the Croydon Catholic Schools cluster group and across the Southwark Diocese. Through our work in RE our pupils learn about the Universal church and how we belong to one global family. Links with the diocese are strengthened through attendance at school Masses and activities.

At Laleham Lea all are encouraged to live life to the full and reach their full potential. Members of staff have opportunities to take part in continuing professional development through the Diocese and the Catholic Independent School Conference (CISC) group who provide a developing Catholic head teacher programme. New teachers are enrolled on the Diocesan courses as part of their induction to teaching in a Catholic school.



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Some members of staff play active roles in their local parishes as Eucharist ministers and catechists, while others actively support charities.

Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their children and we work in partnership with them. They are encouraged to support RE lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and 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 liturgies, curriculum meetings, whole school Masses and services, and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year. They are encouraged to participate with their children during Advent and Lent encouraging a time of sharing and reflection.

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year, which include: class assemblies, curriculum meetings, whole school Masses and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year both in school and at The John Fisher School Chapel and events such as the Christmas Carol Concert at our local Church.

They are encouraged to participate with their children during Advent and Lent encouraging a time of sharing and reflection, for example, during Advent when the 'Travelling Cribs' are sent home. 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. Laleham Lea School operates an open-door policy at all times.

Parish Links

Links with the local parish are a vital part of Catholic life in school.

The parish which serves our school is St John the Baptist Church, Purley.

Pupils visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Pupils at Laleham Lea attend Mass with the parishioners each week on a rota basis.

We share communications from the parish with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events and we invite parishioners to many of our liturgical events e.g. our May Procession.

Both our parish priest and our Governor – Fr Peter, celebrate Masses, reconciliation, blessings and provide spiritual direction to our school community. They are known and approachable members of the school community.



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Our Mini Vinnie's group invite the members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society from St. John the Baptist Church into the school regularly for tea and coffee. This provides an opportunity for our pupils to discuss the work they are currently doing to support SVP and promote collaboration e.g. being judges for our Pilgrims of Hope poster competition.