



OUR LADY OF LOURDES

CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

British Values & Our Catholic Ethos



Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Statement:

We are a partnership of Catholic schools.

Our aim is to provide the very best Catholic education for all in our community and so improve life chances through spiritual, academic and social development.

By placing the person and teachings of Jesus Christ at the centre of all that we do, we will:

- Follow the example of Our Lady of Lourdes by nurturing everyone in a spirit of compassion, service and healing
- Work together so that we can all achieve our full potential, deepen our faith and realise our God-given talents
- Make the world a better place, especially for the most vulnerable in our society, by doing **'little things with great love'** St Thérèse of Lisieux

Policy details

We are a Catholic Multi Academy Trust whose priority it is to ensure the very best Catholic Education for all young people in our community, whatever their circumstances. We promote these values by our words and deeds, and Catholic doctrine and practice therefore permeates every aspect of the Academy Trust's activities. We provide a Catholic curriculum, which is broad and balanced, recognising that every pupil is unique and is created in the image of God (Gen 1:27). The curriculums at all our academies are designed to enable every pupil to find their vocation and to be well-equipped to follow it as active citizens in service to the world. Catholic Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" (Pope St John Paul II) and the foundation of the entire educational process.

The government set out its definition of 'British Values' in the 'Prevent Strategy' (2011), and the prevent duty guidance (Sep 2023 updated) which aims to address extremism and religious radicalisation of young people. British values are considered to be democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. The promotion of 'British values' is central to Catholic education because British values have their origin in the Christian values of our nation.

"We are proud that Catholic schools promote values that are both Catholic and British, including: respect for the individual, democracy, individual liberty, respect, tolerance and inclusiveness. Our schools promote cohesion by serving more ethnically diverse and poorer communities. Catholic schools provide high standards of education which are popular with parents from all social, economic and faith backgrounds."

Paul Barber (Catholic Education Service 15 December 2014).

Within our Trust we recognise, not only the importance of helping students to flourish academically but also spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, so they are fully prepared for life in British society and for their role as citizens, able to make the strongest possible contribution to the Common Good of all. We teach the importance of British values by going much deeper into the meaning of what it means to live a good life, within a framework of Catholic Christian Values. This provides the context and meaning for understanding why British values are important. Our framework for understanding British values draws on the example of Jesus and his welcome and inclusion of all, which is developed in Catholic Social Teaching. The examples that follow are an indication of some of the many ways we seek to embed British values within our Academy Trust and should be seen as an indication of our approach rather than an exhaustive list. Each academy will set out specific examples in the headings below.

1. Democracy

The Church values the democratic system inasmuch as it ensures the participation of citizens in making political choices, guarantees to the governed the possibility both of electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and of replacing them through peaceful means when appropriate - Centesimus Annus – Saint Pope John Paul II

Democratic values are an explicit part of the ethos at Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT. Pupils are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and with concern to each other, respecting the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. Pupils have further opportunity to have their views, ideas and opinions heard through surveys and key responsibilities in school.

2. The Rule of Law

It is true that the pursuit of justice must be a fundamental norm of the State and that the aim of a just social order is to guarantee to each person, according to the principle of subsidiarity, his share of the community's goods. This has always been emphasized by Christian teaching on the State and by the Church's social doctrine. - Deus Caritas Est - Benedict XVI

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the class, the academy, the Trust, or the country, is consistently reinforced throughout every day, as well as when dealing with behavior and through Acts of Worship. The curriculum is designed to ensure students are taught the values and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.

3. Individual Liberty

To recognize that our choices are not necessarily the only legitimate ones is a healthy exercise in humility. In acknowledging the goodness inherent in others, even with their limitations, we see the richness present in diversity and the value of complementarity. Individuals and groups have the right to go their own way, even though they may sometimes make mistakes. In full respect for that freedom, civil society is called to help each person and social organization to take up its specific role and thus contribute to the common good Pope Francis – Meeting With Political, Economic And Civic Leaders - 2015

Students are actively encouraged to make independent choices knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. We educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. We encourage students to see themselves as unique individuals able to make a unique contribution to building community. Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights, responsibilities and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely.

4. Mutual Respect

And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples. John 13: 34-35

Respect is a core value for each of our academies and is modelled by pupils and staff alike. We promote respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments as well as extra-curricular activities such as sport. In line with our commitment to democracy, students are always able to voice their opinions as we foster an environment where pupils can debate ideas and are safe to disagree with each other. We encourage students to substantiate opinions and to realise the value of co-operation and consensus as well as decision making through voting. Our emphasis on ethics, fairness and justice means that we ask our students to ensure that they look out for those who might be marginalised and disadvantaged. We take a strong stance on social inclusion and anti-bullying through an explicit focus on strategies to enable respect for difference.

5. Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

The Church, therefore, exhorts... that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among [them]. - Pope Paul VI - Nostra Aetate

This is achieved through equipping students with the ability to develop positive values, understand their own beliefs and their place in a culturally diverse society. We give our students opportunities to experience such diversity within the Academy Trust community and within the wider community. All students experience a connection with other cultures and beliefs through our Religious Education programme. Our Religious Studies curriculum follows the teaching of the Church in providing a broad and balanced education, which includes an understanding of and respect for people of other faiths or none and other religions, cultures and lifestyles.

Supporting documents

Link to government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published>

Glossary of terms and abbreviations in this policy

The term "Trust" refers throughout to the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi Academy Trust and any Academy within the Trust.

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| Date Issued | September 2023 |
| Date of Review | Review every 3 years (September 2026) |
| Reviewer | Trust Standards Committee / OLoL Trust Board |