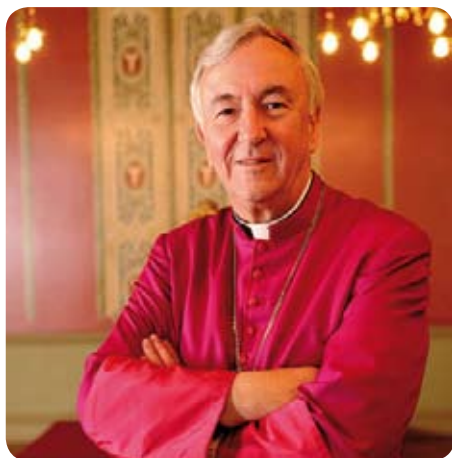


Our Catholic Schools

Their identity and their purpose

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Foreword



Much has changed in education in this country since the first edition of *Our Catholic Schools* was published in 1988 and a revised edition in 1996. In particular, schools and colleges have become increasingly accountable - to parents, local communities, administrators and politicians – for the education they provide. I welcome this third edition of what has become known as the ‘Red Book’, because it gives the Catholic community the opportunity to set out clearly what we mean when we say that Catholic education is at the heart of the Church’s mission in the Diocese of Westminster.

Catholic schools and colleges, the principles on which they are based and the ethos they seek to engender, are an expression of what is true about the human person and about life lived in community. Education must be based on an understanding and expression of truth. True education, therefore, cannot be value free, as some would argue, because human beings feel a deep need for clear values held in common. Likewise, education cannot be purely utilitarian, because every person has some recognition that there is more to life than work and more to the person than the expedient. If it is not to sell itself short, education must be based on the whole truth about the human person. That truth is fully expressed in the person of Jesus Christ. It is explored and presented in the living faith of the Church.

That conviction of faith, and the desire to witness to it specifically in the world of education, is the ultimate rationale for our Catholic schools and colleges. It is this shared vision which is set out in the third edition of *Our Catholic Schools*. I hope it will unite all those involved in the common and crucial task of educating the children and young people in our Catholic schools and colleges across the Diocese of Westminster.

I am grateful to the members of the Inspection Committee of the Diocesan Education Commission who have revised the ‘Red Book’ and to the Commission itself for publishing it. This revised edition offers challenge, support and a measure by which our schools and colleges may be judged by all who, in their various ways, help us to maintain the valued tradition of Catholic education in this country and our commitment to the common good of society.

+ Vincent Nichols

The Most Reverend Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster

Welcome

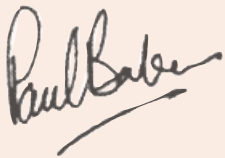
In these days of constant change and educational initiatives, it is always good to identify and hold on to what remains constant and firm. That is true of this revision of the original 'Red Book' about Catholic schools and colleges in our Diocese.

This new edition of *Our Catholic Schools* sets out for us, as did the earlier ones, a clear and inspiring vision of what we are about in Catholic Education in the Diocese of Westminster.

It offers to those directly engaged in the education of our young people an overview of what constitutes our distinctiveness. To those who work alongside us, in Local Authorities, in inspection, in other agencies, it gives an insight into Catholic education.

I want to thank the Diocesan Inspection Committee for their work, for the energy they have put into this and the consultation they enabled with schools and advisers in the Diocese.

What we have is the result of reflection and discussion and is a document which we hope schools will use for in-service training with their staff; that governors will reflect on together and which will provide an excellent introduction for all those with an interest in and commitment to Catholic education.



Paul Barber
Director of Education



Introduction



This Document is addressed principally to governors, teachers, parents, inspectors and local authority officers to help their understanding and appreciation of the distinctiveness of Catholic education in schools and colleges (throughout this document ‘schools’ refers to both schools and colleges).

It sets Catholic schools in the Diocese of Westminster within the context of the Church’s mission of education. In the second century St. Irenaeus wrote:

“The glory of God is a human being fully alive.”

This is the goal of Catholic education: to draw out the potential in each person to the full, in a community which recognises the centrality of Christ as our guide and inspiration. Christ speaks to us in human terms of God, by what he is, says and does...”¹

The Diocese comprises the London Boroughs north of the Thames and west of Waltham Forest and Newham, Spelthorne Borough in the County of Surrey and the whole of the County of Hertfordshire.

The Archbishop is assisted in his role as leader of the Diocese by his auxiliary Bishops and in matters of education through the Education Commission and the Director and staff of the Westminster Education Service.

The Diocese of Westminster has over 215 schools, including 155 Primary; 39 Secondary; 2 Colleges, 17 independent and 2 special schools. Of these schools, 196 are in the Trusteeship² of the Diocese. The

historical cost of this Trusteeship from providing land and the required 50% contribution towards buildings and maintenance (1944-1959) to the present 10%, allows Catholic schools to ensure a Catholic religious education curriculum; that worship is according to the traditions of the faith; the appointment of Catholic heads, deputies and religious education specialists and, that governors are the employers of all staff. Parents, parishes and dioceses have maintained their financial commitment to Catholic education over more than 150 years.

This document does not offer procedural guidance for schools and colleges which may be received from the Diocese of Westminster Education Service, The Catholic Education Service, Local Authority, the Government and other agencies. The Diocese of Westminster, through its Education Service, offers guidelines which are available on its website and guidance through its officers.

End Notes

¹ The Church’s Mission in Education, Cardinal Basil Hume, OSB. (Catholic Education Service, 1997)

² **Trusteeship**: the legal responsibilities belonging to the Church body which owns the school or college as part of its charitable trusts.



What Makes a Catholic School Distinctive?

Part B



The Mission of the Church

In and through Jesus Christ, the Church understands her mission to make Him known and loved. Catholic schools are an essential part of that mission of the Church, to place Christ and the teaching of the Church at the centre of people's lives and to form and develop in young people the inspiration to live their lives fully as Christians.

Catholic schools are guided in all that they do by a coherent vision of education. This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour centred on the person of Jesus Christ who is our Way, Truth and Life.³

In support of parents, who are the primary educators of their children, Catholic schools assist parents in forming their children for life, especially in their understanding of their faith. This dynamic between home, school and Church is vital in the religious, spiritual and moral development of young people and is at the heart of the Catholic school's distinctiveness.

In communion with its Bishop and

diocese, and as a key part of the mission of the Church, the Catholic school expresses its ecclesial⁴ character and its participation in its universal mission.

The Common Good

The further expression of its engagement in the mission of the Church is the school's contribution to the 'common good'⁵ of society and its culture. Community cohesion is a core value of this expression, as ethnic and cultural diversity are, and always have been, a rich feature of the Catholic identity of the schools.

"In Catholic education, we are challenged by Christ 'to see his presence in our neighbour, especially the neighbour who suffers or who lacks what is essential to human flourishing'. That is why the poor and the disadvantaged—in financial, social, academic or spiritual terms—must be our primary concern, so that they can live their lives to the full!"^{6,7}

A Rich Tradition

Catholic schools are established by the Church for Catholic children and young people, who, through baptism, have a right to an education in the Catholic faith. Catholic

schools in their various forms – voluntary aided; independent; within the Trusteeship of a diocese or religious congregation – are built on the foundations laid by previous generations of parents and clergy. We have inherited this rich tradition of Catholic schools from them and are committed to handing it on to future generations.

Catholic schools and colleges have a distinctive educational philosophy and purpose based on a specific religious understanding of the nature of the human person and the role of the Catholic Church in society.⁸

"It is from its Catholic identity that the school derives its original characteristics and its 'structure' as a genuine instrument of the Church."⁹

This religious understanding is experienced through everything that happens in the daily life of a Catholic school and is, in short, a way of living, behaving, doing things, a way of learning and teaching that is inspired by Jesus' words: "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

Communion and Community

This task is not done alone. Catholic schools are called to, and identified

through, effective and positive relationships and partnerships through being both a 'community' within the Diocesan family of schools and 'in communion' ¹⁰ with the Bishop.

Communion and community in our schools are characterised by the following:

Effective relationships with parents and carers who are recognised and supported as the first teachers of their children. ¹¹

Identity through relationship to the Diocese. The Bishop, as first teacher in the Diocese, is the only person who has the authority to call a school Catholic; he is responsible for ensuring that its Catholic character is in keeping with the Church's mission. In this way, the Catholic school is an ecclesial reality – it is an integral part of the Church - and communion with the Bishop is at the heart of its identity as a Catholic school. In communion with its Bishop and in promoting the experience of education as a truly religious endeavour, the Catholic school/college is most fully engaged in the mission of the Church. ¹² The Bishop appoints Diocesan officers to assist him in carrying out his

responsibilities relating to Catholic education. These are Diocesan Education Officers, Advisers and Inspectors. ¹³

Links with the local parish(es). The parish is the main experience of Church for Catholics. While it is recognised that there are parents and families who do not attend Mass regularly, the parish remains the central place for the experience of worship as a faith community, the preparation and celebration of the sacraments and the experience whereby the Catholic community proclaims the centrality of the Eucharist in their lives.

A life of prayer and worship. God is not a stranger in the Catholic school and prayer is seen as an essential part of each school day, with the celebration of the Eucharist being the most important occasion for the whole school community to express its belief as a faith community.

A commitment to charitable outreach and social justice. Catholic social teaching and action are the living fruits of the Gospel values of love, truth and freedom. They emphasise the obligation to promote social justice, peace, love for the poor, solidarity among nations and respect for creation. ¹⁴

A commitment to community cohesion, equality, diversity. The Catholic school prepares pupils for life in a multi-cultural, multi-faith society, interconnected through globalisation and technology which calls forth challenges of involvement, service and citizenship. The Church calls every person to contribute to the common good of society.

Other aspects of the distinctiveness of Catholic schools are:

- "The search for excellence, as an integral part of the spiritual quest;
 - the uniqueness of the individual, made in God's image and loved by Him;
 - the education of the whole person, based on the belief that the human and the divine are inseparable;
 - the education of all, with the particular duty to care for the poor and disadvantaged;
- moral principles, put into practice within a Christian community". ¹⁵

Catholic schools express this distinctiveness through their Mission Statement.

Each school is rooted in the mission of the Church. It expresses this in a visible and lived mission statement, which puts Christ at the centre of all the work within the school. This mission should be obvious to all and evident in the day to day experience of education in the school, lived by members of the school community at all levels of its systems and structures. It should be open to regular review by the school community and remain a focus for the school in its self-evaluation. The mission statement is the expression of the school's understanding and appreciation of its particular contribution towards bringing its members to 'fullness of life'.



KEY IMPLICATIONS*

In order to live out its distinctiveness, the Catholic school will:

1. review its Mission Statement on a regular basis ensuring governors, staff, pupils and parents contribute to its development and its implementation in the daily life of the school;
2. develop ways to ensure parents and carers are valued and engaged as partners in the education of their children;
3. actively engage with the Diocesan Education Service to deepen the school's understanding and experience of its ecclesial character;
4. regularly review the extent to which the Catholic philosophy of education influences all aspects of the school's mission and ministry;
5. work together with parishes and clergy to provide liturgical experiences for pupils as well as enabling them to identify with, and contribute to, parish life;
6. through its policies and procedures, demonstrate its commitment to charitable outreach, social justice and its contribution to community cohesion;
7. ensure that its policies comply with Diocesan directives, policy and the spirit of its guidance.

End Notes

³ Pastoral Letter on Catholic Schools. (Bishops' Conference 2007)

⁴ **ecclesial**: of the congregation/body/community of believers of the Church; pertaining to or of the Church.

⁵ **common good**: the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either in groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily.

⁶ The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium. (Congregation for Catholic Education 1997)

⁷ The Common Good in Education. (Catholic Education Service [CES] 1997)

⁸ Christ at the Centre. (M. Stock, Archdiocese of Birmingham 2005)

⁹ The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium.

¹⁰ **In communion**: An expression of our identity as Catholics in relationship with the Bishop, the local and universal Church.

¹¹ Canon Law.

¹² Christ at the Centre.

¹³ **Education Officers, Advisers and Inspectors**: Diocesan officers with responsibility for informing and supporting the Bishop's vision for Catholic education.

^{14,15} The Common Good in Education. (CES 1997)

**Throughout the document Key Implications identify only some of the significant issues and questions arising from the text.*

Partners and Participants in Catholic Education

Part C



Governors

All governors – be they foundation, local authority, parent, staff or associate members - have the responsibility to uphold the distinctive ethos of the Catholic school.

Foundation Governors have the particular responsibility of representing the Bishop in his role as teacher and leader of the Diocese. They should be practising Catholics, in agreement with the Church's teaching and fully committed to the Bishop's vision for education across the Diocese.

Under Charity and Education Law it is the responsibility of Governing Bodies to run their schools in accordance with the terms of the Trust Deed ¹⁶ under which they were established as spelt out in the school's Instrument of Government. ¹⁷

The Diocese of Westminster Education Service provides induction, support and in-service training for governing bodies on a regular basis. Participation in these services is crucial to a proper understanding of the role of the governor in a Catholic school.

End Notes

¹⁶ **Trust Deed:** A legal document which sets out the aims and purposes of the Charity.

¹⁷ **Instrument of Government:** A legal document under Education Law, which provides a framework under which schools operate.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. All Governors in Catholic schools have a commitment to the wider context of the needs of Catholic education in the Diocese and not only to the needs of an individual school.

2. Governors are called to be active members of the Governing Body, through attendance at meetings and participation in sub-committees. They must be conversant with Diocesan documents on Catholic education and key national initiatives.

3. Active membership includes not only attending Governor events, meetings and sub-committees, but also agreed involvement in various aspects of school life including the appointment of key staff and as link Governors in religious education and the religious life of the school.

4. The full Governing Body is responsible for the strategic direction of the school and is actively involved in school improvement. Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility in safeguarding and promoting the Catholic ethos of the school.

5. Governors are called to fulfil their role in setting targets in the Head's Performance Management, relating to the Catholic character of the school.

6. All Governors are responsible for ensuring that the school is conducted in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government particularly in relation to its admission policies, the appointment of staff and the religious education curriculum.

7. Governors should regularly attend Diocesan in-service and implement Diocesan guidance.

Parents

The Rite of Baptism recognises that parents ‘will be the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith’ and, while the Church honours and values that, she also recognises that parents and families need assistance with their duty in educating their children in the faith.¹⁸ The Catholic school is the Church’s principal means of providing that assistance to parents.¹⁹

A close partnership between parents and school enables all parties to create the community of those who work together to ensure ‘life in all its fullness’ for its young people.

The complexities of modern day living and of the family structures from which so many of our children and young people come, call both school and parish to deal sensitively and non-judgmentally with parents and carers while, at the same time, fostering the vision of family relationships which enhances the dignity and worth of parent and child, each in relation to the other.

We acknowledge the diversity of parental and social challenges facing our schools. We recognise the diversity of children’s backgrounds within our schools. In our Westminster schools we have over 90,000 pupils of different nationalities reflecting the membership of the universal Church and, for many of whom, English is an additional language. Together, we make the community of Catholic schools in the Diocese.

Parents contribute to the Catholic schools in a wide variety of ways: through providing support for children’s learning and out of school activities; prayer; involvement as governors; as fundraisers; as well as membership and support of parent teacher associations.

Parents contribute financially through their contribution to the 10% required for school buildings which enables Catholic education to maintain its distinctive character. Their sacrifice down through the years is a testimony to the value and importance of Catholic education to parents.

There are parents who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to get their children into Catholic schools. Some parishes provide religious education for these children as well as programmes which prepare all children and young people for the reception of the sacraments.



KEY IMPLICATIONS

In order to develop the partnership between parents and schools:

1. the school will work with parents to develop a shared understanding of its partnership with them to develop the faith of their child(ren) and their knowledge of religious education;
2. parents will be encouraged to support and work with the school in developing this partnership through open and honest communication;
3. the school will seek to welcome parental participation particularly in worship and celebrations.

End Notes

¹⁸ Christ at the Centre.

¹⁹ The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997)

Pupils

Young people in our schools, whether as infants, early teenagers or sixth formers, are not simply the receivers of all that Catholic education has to offer, but are also the active participants in an education built on the belief that each one is loved by God. In a Catholic school, a young person's journey into adulthood will also be an opportunity for a journey of faith.

In the course of their school years, young people will learn not only the history and message of Christianity expressed and experienced through the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church, but also have many opportunities of developing their spiritual, moral and social skills to enable them to become fully responsible members of society. Fully alive young people, confident in their own abilities, with open minds and aware of their duty to care for others, society and the world, are witnesses to the value of Catholic education.

"In this way, Catholic schools and colleges are truly places of formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people...pupils will become increasingly aware of education at the service of human flourishing, as an inclusive and distinctive endeavour, not simply as a utilitarian means to employment." ²⁰

While a significant number of pupils attending Catholic schools come from other faiths and different Christian traditions, their place and importance within the school community are recognised and respected. Indeed the Church's own guidance reflects a proactive approach to inclusion and diversity.

"When a school admits a proportion of pupils from other faith communities, it should recognise that it is taking on a commitment and a relationship to those communities which calls for a higher degree of openness and dialogue." ²¹

It is the responsibility of the Catholic school to promote each pupil's human growth in such a way that he or she can integrate their particular faith with every aspect of their lives.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. The school will provide opportunities for young people to reflect on the meaning and value of their lives from within the Catholic tradition and for those of other faiths, from within their tradition.
2. The school will provide opportunities for pupils to participate and engage with others in assuming responsibilities appropriate to their age and ability.
3. Pupils of all faiths are encouraged to make a significant contribution to school life.
4. Pupils will be actively involved in developing the social justice dimension of life both within and outside school.

End Notes

²⁰ Faith and Science, Church and State, Religious Diversity and Dialogue. (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales). The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium 1998

²¹ Catholic Education: A CES position Paper in Schools and Sixth Form Colleges.



Leadership Team

“The task of leadership in a Catholic school is one of great distinction. It involves holding together the functions of leadership with the insights and practice of faith. It also demands of the leader great personal honesty and integrity. It is a noble service in the life of the Church.”²²

“...the leadership you offer is inseparable from the quality of life you lead and from witness of that life. Yours is a profession plus! It is, in fact, a vocation with your sense of purpose coming from God and your work being carried out in the service of God.”²³

Catholic schools are shaped by the vision and personal faith commitment of those who lead and manage them. It is out of a lived faith that the head and leadership team best exercise their ministry. While all who educate lead, the head, deputy and members of the leadership team have a special responsibility to provide clarity of vision and its translation into the everyday life of the school, which promotes and safeguards its Catholic identity. Shared, distributive leadership is a feature of the quality of ‘service leadership’²⁴ to which the team is called.

Therefore a Headteacher in a Catholic school :

- is the spiritual and temporal leader of the school community;
- is a committed, practising Catholic, in full communion with the Church;
- is a witness to the Gospel in word and deed;
- is a co-operator with the Bishop and an active participant in the Diocesan community of schools.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

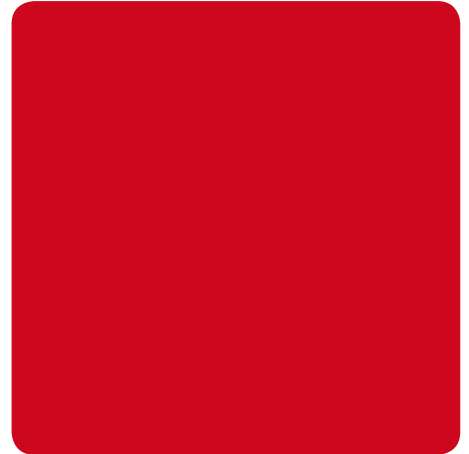
The Headteacher, together with members of the Leadership Team:

1. is responsible for the quality of Catholic education provided;
2. witnesses to the Gospel in word and deed through the exercise of leadership in a spirit of service, collaboration and encouragement of all staff;
3. builds an educative community, based on the Gospel values of love, freedom and truth, which celebrates the uniqueness of staff and pupils, enables all to fulfil their potential and actively supports a working partnership with parents, governors and Diocese;
4. ensures that all school policies reflect the distinctive nature of the Catholic school;
5. has a particular duty to safeguard and promote classroom religious education ensuring it receives 10% of curriculum time in accordance with the requirements of the Bishops’ Conference;
6. ensures that spiritual and religious opportunities are provided and celebrated according to the rites and traditions of the Church;
7. provides opportunities for moral development that include action for social justice.

End Notes

^{22/23} Archbishop Nichols: Address to Headteachers, Westminster. (Nov 2009) <http://tinyurl.com/33lp2xa>

²⁴ **Service leadership:** A term which illustrates/describes the quality of leadership that places Christ’s example of service at the centre of all actions.



Subject Leader / Head of Department of Religious Education

Catholic education is a religious education in the Catholic faith, leading pupils to both theological literacy and a lived experience of the richness of the Church's prayer and liturgy.



“Religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire education process.”²⁵

The role of Head/Subject Leader in religious education is vital to this breadth of religious education in its widest sense.

This post is reserved for practising Catholics who bring to their teaching a vision of a lived faith, a sound theological background and appreciation of the importance of religious life and practice in our multi-faith society.

The importance and centrality of this post to the life of the Catholic school should be reflected in its position and remuneration within its structure of leadership. The appointment of a Head of Department/ Subject Leader in religious education should only be made in consultation with the Diocese of Westminster Education Service.

End Notes

²⁵ R.E. in Catholic Schools – Statement from the Catholic Education Service, May 2000.

²⁶ Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools: A document from the Bishops' Conference for England and Wales which defines the approach and content for classroom religious education in Catholic Schools.

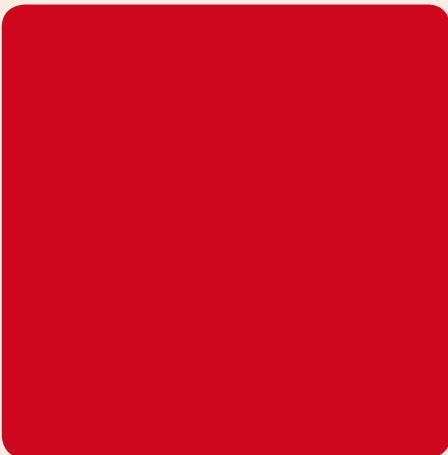
KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. Vision and leadership in religious education provide clarity of intention as well as enabling and inspiring teachers in their contribution to the religious and faith development of their pupils.

2. The Head/ Subject Leader in religious education contributes significantly to the spiritual and religious life of the school community.

3. The Head/Subject leader works in close partnership with Diocesan advisers and:

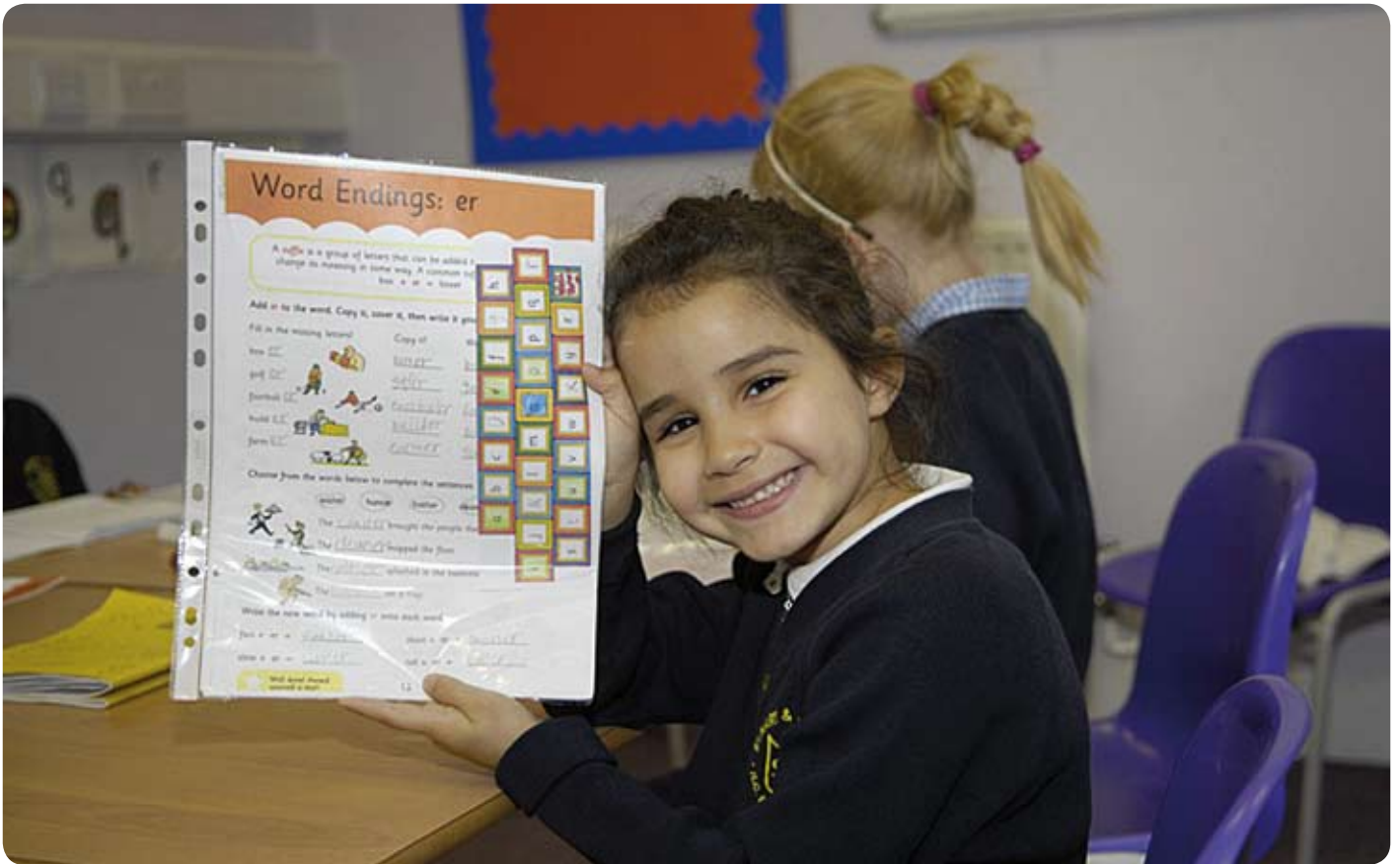
- attends and participates in Diocesan inservice in religious education;
- is responsible for establishing systems and structures to develop teaching and learning; enhance achievement; monitor assessment in religious education across the school and deliver a curriculum based on the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools;²⁶
- is responsible for classroom religious education with all the rigour essential for ensuring that pupils become religiously literate and confident in knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and respectful of the faith traditions of others, at levels appropriate to their age and ability.





“ Religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire education process. ”





“In a Catholic school, a young person’s journey into adulthood will also be an opportunity for a journey of faith.”





All Staff

The success of the Catholic school depends on the quality and dedication of all the staff who teach and work there, whatever their role. All staff are witnesses to the vision and philosophy of Catholic education. While the appointment of Catholic staff is paramount to the development of the shared experience of living the faith in the school context, staff from other Christian denominations and other faiths who are able and willing to accept responsibility for supporting the Catholic life of the school, are very welcome as an integral part of the community.

The value of staff from Catholic, other Christian and other faith traditions working together for the enhancement of the mission of the school towards 'fullness of life' for all its pupils, is a tremendous witness in our pluralistic and richly diverse society. All who value and respect a faith orientated life are welcome;

" be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind..."
(Philippians 2:2)

Staff and pupils need both to hear and see the importance of a lived faith in school; for example, the witness value of sharing prayer at worship and assemblies, in classrooms and parish celebrations, emphasizes the reality of faith and life being one.

For all staff to feel included and part of this journey towards fullness of life, Governors and Leadership Team must provide sound induction processes, on-going opportunities for reflection and study of the Catholic vision of education and professional development opportunities for all staff. Opportunities for retreat days and reflection on their own spiritual journey are vital for the professional, personal and spiritual development of all staff. This is another mark of the Catholic school's distinctiveness.

In Catholic schools, teaching is understood to be a vocation, not just a profession. "Teaching has an extraordinary moral depth and is one of the most excellent and creative activities. For the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings."²⁷

"The principal and model teacher is Christ himself, who shares his vocation with all who teach and invites all to appreciate their relationship with him in this mission. The more fully they respond to his invitation the richer their teaching will become and the more opportunities will be provided for pupils to develop as full human beings. In this ministry of service, teachers share in the work of the Church and collaborate in the ministry of the bishop as first teacher in the diocese."²⁸

In particular, many primary school teachers, who are non-specialists, from within the Catholic tradition or not, teach classroom religious education. This is a particular challenge for them. Governing Bodies, Leadership Teams and the Diocese must ensure that teachers



are assisted as much as possible in this key role in the school. It is from these teachers that children and young people will receive the foundations of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith that will keep them open to the life-long journey towards fullness of life.

“To teach means not only to impart what we know, but also to reveal who we are by living what we believe. It is this latter lesson which tends to last the longest.”²⁹

End Notes

²⁷ The Catholic School on the threshold of the Third Millennium

²⁸ Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of Catholic Education. (CES 1994)

²⁹ Address to Catholic Educators, Pope John Paul II. (1984)

KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. All teaching and support staff in a Catholic school actively work to fulfil the school’s mission statement.
2. Performance Management enables and encourages all staff in their contribution to the development of the Catholic life of the school.
3. Staff should avail themselves of opportunities for professional and spiritual development especially in relation to the Catholic character of the school.
4. Staff should create, in their classroom and around the school, a learning environment that values and respects the development, ability and talents of each pupil made in God’s image.
5. Staff are appointed and employed by the Governing Body in accordance with CES procedures, policies and contracts.

The Educative Process



Learning and Teaching

At the heart of the Catholic school is its belief in Jesus' call to fullness of life. This leads our schools to be committed to providing an education imbued with that faith, in all its aspects, systems and structures, policies and priorities, pastoral care and discipline, relationships and charitable outreach.

“The Catholic school has a single Christian vision, an integrated concept of what makes a fully authentic and mature human being...The curriculum and all its aspects, must reflect this fact.”³⁰ It follows, therefore, that every part of the curriculum in a Catholic school is religious, since everything works out of this philosophy and theology and thus ultimately relates to God. This truth is fundamental to the approach to learning and teaching in the Catholic school. There is no distinction between secular and religious learning because all knowledge and search for the truth ultimately is a search for God. Teaching and learning are holy tasks.

Catholic education strives to develop and provide outstanding educational experiences for our children and young people.

“The search for excellence is seen as an integral part of the spiritual quest. Christians are called to seek perfection in all aspects of their lives. In Catholic education pupils are therefore given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.”³¹

KEY IMPLICATIONS

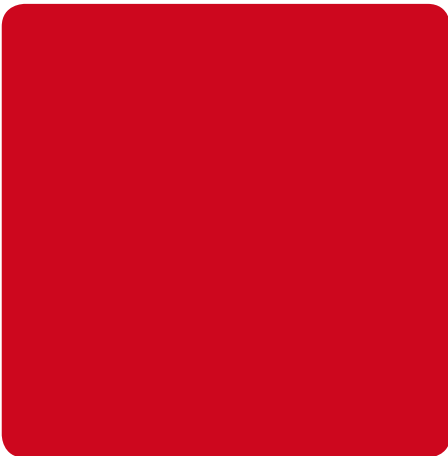
Catholic education is a holy task which seeks to:

1. provide outstanding learning and teaching which are derived from a Catholic philosophy of education;
2. ensure that each subject area of the curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

End Notes

³⁰ Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of Catholic Education (CES 1999)

³¹ Principles and Practices and Concerns. (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales 1996)





“Witness, by the staff and pupils, to belief in Jesus Christ and the Catholic way of life, is itself a teaching and learning experience.”



Classroom Religious Education

The whole Catholic school is part of the Church's ministry to evangelise and catechise. Through the centuries, the Church has educated young people and adults as part of its life. The witness, by the staff and pupils, to belief in Jesus Christ and the Catholic way of life, is itself a teaching and learning experience.

In school, religious education is, in the first instance, education in the Catholic faith; pupils learn about and from the Catholic tradition.

"For all pupils religious education is a proper subject in its own right in the school's curriculum. It is a rigorous academic discipline... For those already engaged in the journey of faith, religious education will be catechesis, and for some children and young people religious education will be evangelization, the first opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel." ³²

Classroom religious education has its own content, methodology, assessment and culture. The broad areas it covers are God's self revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ. It should be accorded the same status and taught with at least the same rigour as the core subjects of the National Curriculum. It is open to inspection at Diocesan level and assessment by public examination. It is an important contributory factor to the passing on of the community's faith from one generation to the next.

It will be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject and requires 10% of the length of

the taught week at each key stage of education. ³³

Classroom religious education has as its outcome:

"religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and ability – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life". ³⁴

KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. Whole school religious education provides for a lived faith experience through worship, retreats, assemblies and action for social justice. The Religious Education Department contributes to this whole school direction.
2. Classroom religious education will be resourced as a core subject and allocated 10% of teaching time at Key Stages 1-4 and 5% at VIth Form.
3. The classroom religious education curriculum will be taught in accordance with the Curriculum Directory and Diocesan guidelines.
4. Classroom religious education will be assessed as rigorously as any other core subject area of the curriculum.
5. Classroom religious education will be inspected according to the Diocesan Inspection Framework.

End Notes

^{32/33/34} Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools. (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales).



Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy is a particular feature of a Catholic school and serves the personal and spiritual needs of both staff and pupils. Chaplains may be either lay (appointed by the school) or ordained (appointed by the Diocese).³⁵ Local contexts vary and often, in the primary sector, the local parish priest acts as Chaplain. In the secondary and college sectors, the chaplaincy team is frequently led by a lay Chaplain, supported by the local parish priest.

Sharing the vision and educational philosophy of the school, the Chaplain will work with pupils and staff to deepen respect for and appreciation of the individual, and to strengthen the experience of being a faith community within the school. Chaplains will provide a listening ear, enable the celebration of key occasions, be a source of support and encouragement at times of difficulties, bereavement or illness.

The challenges of engaging children and young people, in particular, to participate in faith based activities, call for creativity, adaptability and enthusiasm.

Chaplains can help “bring the spiritual life of the school to its most explicit expression”.³⁶

Governing Bodies, through the appointment of a Chaplain, witness to the key role that nurturing the spiritual and moral development of pupils has in the Catholic school.

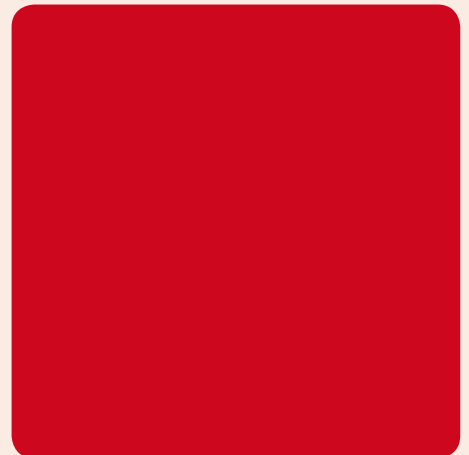
KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. The spiritual and moral growth and development of pupils, students and staff are supported through Chaplaincy provision .
2. Chaplaincy provides opportunities for pupil/student and staff involvement in the planning of and participation in worship and liturgical celebrations.
3. Chaplaincy is organised through regular visits of priest chaplains, local parish priests and/or the appointment of lay men and women to the school.

End Notes

³⁵ The Change and the Challenge - Guidelines for Chaplains (Association of Catholic Chaplains in Education, 1996); A Guide to the Appointment of Lay Chaplains in Schools and Colleges (CES, 2004).

³⁶ Spiritual and Moral Development across the Curriculum (CES 1997).



Inclusion

“All people are endowed with a rational soul and are created in God’s image; they have the same nature and origin and, being redeemed by Christ, they enjoy the same divine calling and destiny; there is here a basic equality between all people and it must be given ever greater recognition.”³⁷

The unique gifts of all pupils and the call to fullness of life for all, which inspire the educational direction of the school, motivate and challenge all aspects of the school’s structure – mission statement, admission policy, curriculum entitlement.

The Catholic school should plan and provide a curriculum which satisfies the needs of pupils of all abilities. Essential to that task will be a proper respect for the gifts and needs of each person, a flexibility of approach and a commitment to acquiring the essential resources needed for this purpose.

“While acknowledging wholeheartedly the hard work and effort that are essential for success in terms of national league tables and examinations, it is crucial for all in schools and colleges to ensure that those who do not succeed academically are valued by the community as a whole, to celebrate the fact that those who have not achieved high grades may well have tried as hard - if not harder - than those who have.

All have God-given gifts. What is important is that these, in all their diversity, should be used to the full.”³⁸

School policies should reflect the distinctive nature of the Catholic school; the allocation of budget should demonstrate its commitment to helping the more needy; it should be provided by high quality experienced staff and its programmes will be monitored and evaluated to ensure the needs of pupils are addressed.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 1. Respect for each pupil and his/her learning needs is reflected in the experience offered at school.**
- 2. Celebration of the gifts and talents of all pupils reflects an appreciation and understanding of the uniqueness of each one.**
- 3. Opportunities are provided for parents to develop their understanding of the religious philosophy of the school’s provision.**
- 4. All staff are helped to develop their understanding and skills to support and challenge children’s learning in all areas.**
- 5. The school provides evidence of how it enables all pupils to engage and participate in all aspects of school life.**

End Notes

³⁷ Gaudium et Spes, 29

³⁸ The Common Good in Education. (CES 1997)

The Pastoral Curriculum

Catholic schools “offer each pupil an education that promotes their human growth since a vision of education inspired by Jesus Christ is one which is concerned with the development of the whole person (social, intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional and psychological)”.³⁹

It is faith in the person of Christ and his invitation to each one to ‘fullness of life’ which inspires, motivates and challenges all aspects of the pastoral care of pupils and staff.

The pastoral curriculum grows out of a Christian understanding of the nature of the human person, the understanding of creation as a precious gift entrusted to us by God, value and respect for our own development and also for the needs of others and the common good. Accurate information provided within the safe context of school and Catholic teaching, provides the best environment for teaching, discussion, debate and growth in understanding of the Catholic Christian response to questions of health, social issues, citizenship and relationship education.

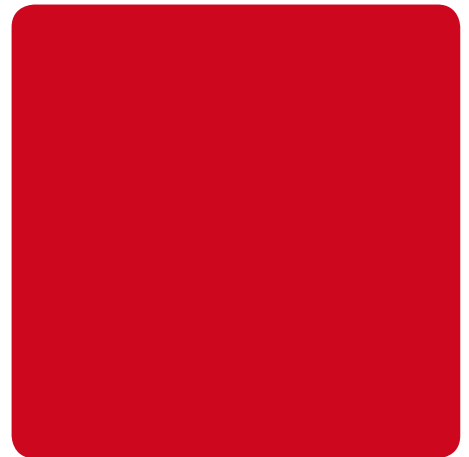
Parental involvement in these crucial aspects of education is essential and ways to engage and support parents should be actively sought and developed.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. All staff contribute to a whole school approach to pastoral care and are provided with the appropriate training and professional development.
2. Partnership with parents and pupils offers engagement through consultation and participation in issues relating to pastoral care.
3. All aspects of the pastoral curriculum are planned, set and assessed from within a Catholic context.

End Note

³⁹ Cherishing Education for Human Growth. (CES 2008)



Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

“Catholic education necessarily incorporates a commitment to certain values and attitudes which spring from an encounter with the person and teaching of Jesus Christ. The values and attitudes to be promoted are truth, justice, freedom, integrity, and respect for all peoples and the created world.”⁴⁰

Spiritual development “entails searching for realities which lie beyond our human experience, and which our senses are unable to know directly”,⁴¹ nourishes that part of the person which exists apart from the material. It recognises the ability of a person to stand outside him/herself and experience, such things as wonder, beauty, loving, suffering. It allows for a search for meaning in events and for knowledge of self.

Moral development looks to the growth of each person as a moral decision maker and embraces both the formation of a moral conscience and the motivation for moral behaviour. “Moral development, therefore, is about a growing awareness of, and a positive response to, the demands of living as an individual with others in community.”⁴²

Provision for spiritual and moral development is, therefore, at the heart of the whole school experience. It encompasses and enriches all aspects of the school day. It is also planned for through each subject area and through all of the systems that support the ethos of the school e.g. reward and sanctions, behaviour, assemblies, policies, physical environment, health and well-being.

“The Catholic school...with its educational service that is enlivened by the truth of the Gospel, appears as a place of integral education of the human person, through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation.”⁴³

“Education today is a complex, vast and urgent task. This complexity today risks making us lose what is essential, that is, the formation of the human person in its totality; particularly as regards the religious and spiritual dimension.”⁴⁴

KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 1. The school provides opportunities for spiritual growth through day to day experiences and its environment.**
- 2. Times for reflection, away days and retreats for pupils and staff are offered.**
- 3. All policies and practices are rooted in the Gospel values of love, freedom and truth.**
- 4. Governing Bodies have a particular responsibility for ensuring that the curriculum is in accordance with the teachings and traditions of the Church.**

End Notes

⁴⁰ Faith and Science, Church and State, Religious Diversity and Dialogue. (Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.)

⁴¹ The Common Good in Education. (CES 1997)

⁴² Spiritual and Moral Development across the Curriculum. (CES 1995)

⁴³ The Nature of Spiritual and Moral Development. Cardinal Basil Hume. Partners in Mission (CES)

⁴⁴ Educating together in Catholic Schools. (Congregation for Catholic Education 2007)

Relationships and Sex Education

“Sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person – body, emotions and soul – and manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love.”⁴⁵

Relationships and Sex Education is an integral part of the curriculum for all students. It takes place in the spiritual and moral context of the Catholic tradition.

Underlying Principles

- Sexuality is a gift from God.
- We are made to love and be loved.
- What we say with our bodies reflects what we mean in our hearts and minds.
- Mature Christian sexuality involves openness and commitment to others.
- Genuine love is creative, unconditional and always open to the possibility of new life.
- The fullest expression of love and human sexuality is lived within the sacrament of matrimony.

The aims of Relationship and Sex Education include:

- to help promote a good self image and sense of self-worth by developing a positive attitude to our own bodies;
- to promote a true appreciation of the gift of sexuality and understanding and acceptance of our own sexuality;
- to develop a sense of responsibility in choices and decisions concerning our and others' values and attitudes;

- to encourage students to recognise and appreciate the positive values expressed in the teaching of the Catholic Church on relationships and sexuality;
- to encourage the acquisition of skills and attitudes which allow students to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner making informed decisions based on the moral teaching of the Catholic Church.

The source of our moral framework is ultimately from the life and teaching of Christ and clarified through the teaching of the Catholic Church. Lessons in Relationships and Sex Education are but part of the school's education in relationships. Consequently, each pupil is entitled to experience a school climate in which the quality of relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves, is marked by honesty, warmth, trust and security. The quality of these relationships must be valued.

Relationships and Sex Education is offered in the spirit of "Good News", with regard to our becoming more fully human. Our education should not be "problem" or "crisis-led". It should be positive and responsible, showing the potential for development, while enabling the risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

Many pupils come from backgrounds that do not reflect the moral values and experiences promoted by the Catholic Church. Sensitivity is therefore needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to them and their families, and to allow such students

to feel a sense of worth. Catholic schools work to help students of all backgrounds and circumstances to reach the 'ideal' that we are called to.

"The Church is formally opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles."⁴⁶

KEY IMPLICATIONS

1. All aspects and subject areas of the curriculum contribute towards pupils' experience of relationships and sex education.
2. A specific Catholic programme for Relationships and Sex Education is offered at times and stages appropriate to pupils' development.
3. All staff receive inservice and support in the spiritual and moral context of Relationships and Sex Education.
4. The school works closely with parents in the provision of relationships and sex education.
5. The key values of respect, honesty and personal responsibility underpin relationships within the school.

End Notes

^{45/46} Familiaris Consortio, 37. (Pope John Paul II)



“Relationships within Catholic schools are to be marked by honesty, warmth, trust and security.”



Appendix

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