

# Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy



## School Prospectus 2026-2027

"Do whatever He tells you"

Doing whatever He tells us – in God's love, we grow and learn together to build the kingdom of God.

### Welcome to Our School

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy is a welcoming and inclusive co-educational school for children aged **3 to 11 years**. We nurture each child as a unique individual, supporting their academic, spiritual and personal development within a caring Catholic environment.

We are part of the **St Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Multi Academy Trust** — a family of 64 academies working together under a shared vision, established in partnership with the Department for Education and the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Our day-to-day leadership is led by our Principal, who is responsible for maintaining and developing the Catholic character of the school, ensuring our curriculum is rich, engaging and rooted in our shared values.

### Contact Us

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy  
Woodland Street, Biddulph  
Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire  
ST8 6LW

Telephone: (01782) 512644

Email: office@olognewman.co.uk

Website: www.ourladyofgracercacademy.co.uk

Principal: Mrs S Rathbone

Chair of Local Governing Body:  
Mrs J Clarke

## Our Aims

### Catholic Ethos

Christ's presence is at the centre of all we do. Through daily prayer, liturgy and high-quality RE, we nurture children's faith and their relationship with God.

### Academic Excellence

We combine a strong Catholic ethos with high-quality teaching to enable every child to achieve their God-given potential, developing confidence, self-worth and respect for others.

### Community & Belonging

We maintain close links with English Martyrs Catholic Church. Parish catechists support sacramental preparation and liturgical celebrations, strengthening home, school and parish partnerships.

## Safeguarding & Child Protection

- The safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. All adults working in school are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check. Our **Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Rathbone**. In her absence, concerns should be reported to Mrs Statham, Mrs Catalano or Mrs Scarlett. Our school is part of Operation Encompass, a safeguarding initiative that enables us to receive timely information when a child may have experienced domestic abuse, so we can provide immediate, sensitive support to ensure every pupil feels safe, secure, and ready to learn.

## School Organisation

| Year Group       | Class Teacher                                       | Support Staff  |
|------------------|---|--|
| Foundation Stage | Mrs Pedley  | Mrs Hall – Early Years Practitioner  |
| Years 1 & 2      | Miss Fellows  | Mrs Law – Teaching Assistant<br>Mrs Harvey-Oates – Teaching Assistant (am) |
| Years 3 & 4      | Mrs Catalano – Class Teacher/Assistant<br>Principal | Mrs Harvey-Oates – teaching assistant (pm)                                 |
| Years 5 & 6      | Mrs Edwards – Class Teacher/SENCO                   | Mrs Zoumidis   |
| Leadership       | Mrs Rathbone – Executive Principal                  | Mrs Statham – Executive Head of School                                     |

### Support Staff

- Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Scarlett
- Office Manager: Mrs Harrington
- Site Manager: Mr Murphy
- Catering Manager: Mrs Bailey

### Extended Day Staff

- Breakfast Club: Mrs Bates, Mrs Hall, Mrs Bailey
- After School Club: Mrs Bates, Mrs Law, Mrs Harvey-Oates, Mrs Hall
- Lunchtime Supervisors: Miss Power, Ms Johnson

## School Hours & Class Sizes

### Foundation Stage

Arrival: 8.30am – 8.40am

Collection: 3.00pm – 3.10pm

Lunch: 11.30am

Max 15 places per year group

### Years 1 – 6

Start: 8.40am

End: 3.10pm

Max 30 pupils per class in both KS1 and KS2

### Wraparound Care

Breakfast Club: 7.30am – 8.30am

After School Club: 3.00pm – 6.00pm

Available Foundation Stage to Year 6

## School Term Dates 2026/2027

| Term             | Autumn                 | Spring               | Summer              |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Opens            | Thursday 3rd September | Tuesday 5th January  | Monday 12th April   |
| Half Term Closes | Friday 23rd October    | Friday 12th February | Friday 23rd May     |
| Reopens          | Tuesday 3rd November   | Monday 22nd February | Monday 7th June     |
| Term Closes      | Friday 18th December   | Thursday 25th March  | Wednesday 21st July |

School is also closed on **Monday 3rd May 2027** for Bank Holiday.

## Admissions & Induction

### Admissions

The Local Governing Body is responsible for all admissions, managed in line with statutory requirements and Archdiocese of Birmingham guidance. Admissions are applied fairly and transparently.

Full details including criteria and application processes are available from the school office or via the school website: [Our Lady of Grace – Admissions](#)

### Induction

Induction sessions are held for parents of children joining Nursery and Reception. Families receive detailed information packs and are invited to complete an individual pupil profile to help staff get to know each child.

During the summer term, families of children starting Nursery are invited to attend our **pre-school group**, which runs weekly on one afternoon — a wonderful opportunity to become familiar with school life ahead of September.

## The Curriculum

### Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, all pupils engage in a wide range of rich and stimulating learning experiences based on the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

This curriculum is carefully structured around three prime areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication and language; and physical development. These are supported by four specific areas: literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world, and expressive arts and design.

Learning through play, exploration and first-hand experiences is at the heart of our approach. We provide a nurturing environment where children are encouraged to develop curiosity, independence and confidence, while also supporting their spiritual growth. Through this balanced and engaging curriculum, we lay strong foundations for future learning and development.

### Key Stage One and Key Stage 2 Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to foster respect for religious and moral values, encourage curiosity and critical thinking, develop confidence in language and number, and nurture a lifelong love of learning — equipping every pupil with the skills needed for future success.

### Core Subjects

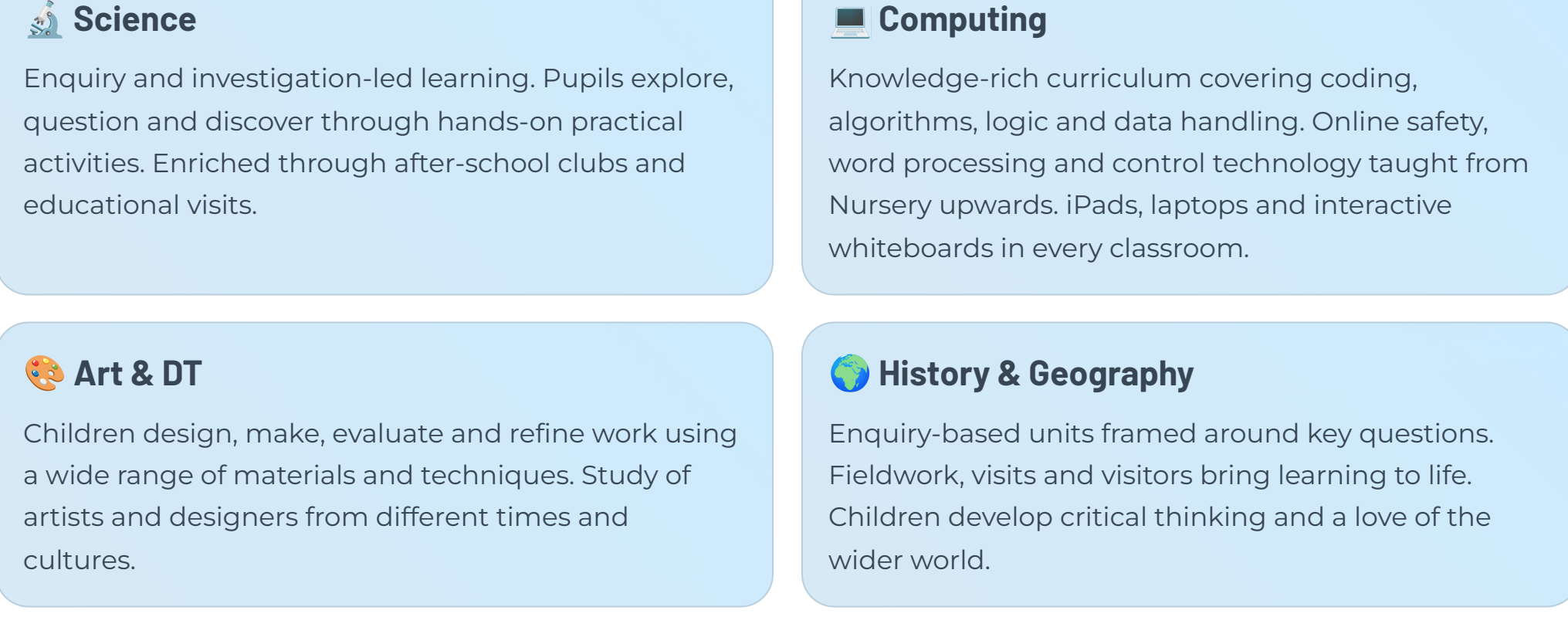
- English (including daily reading and phonics)
- Mathematics (Power Maths mastery approach)
- Science (enquiry and investigation-led)
- Religious Education (Discerning Disciples programme)

### Foundation Subjects

- Computing, History, Geography
- Art & Design Technology
- Music (specialist teacher, KS2 instruments)
- Physical Education, French (KS2), PSHE

## Religious Education

- As a Catholic school, **Jesus Christ is at the heart of every aspect of life** at Our Lady of Grace. We follow the **Discerning Disciples** programme, fully aligned with the Religious Education Directory set by the Bishops of England and Wales.



Daily prayer takes place at the beginning and end of each day. We celebrate Mass regularly as a whole school or within key stages, and warmly welcome parents, families and parishioners. During Advent, Lent, May and October, special prayer services and Rosary Club bring the whole community together.

## Language Development & Reading

At Our Lady of Grace, we aim to help every child become an enthusiastic, confident and independent user of language. Strong language skills are at the heart of all learning.

- Foundation Stage:** Phonics Bug programme, rich language environment, stories and purposeful play
- KS1:** Daily English lessons, whole-class reading, handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar
- KS2:** Extended writing, independent reading choices, weekly spelling sessions, cross-curricular application

Children are read to **every day** by their class teacher. Drama, discussion, debate and role play develop confident speakers across all year groups.

### Reading at Home

#### Nursery

Weekly library book to share with family

#### Reception – Year 2

Phonically matched reading book + library book

#### Years 3 – 6

Self-chosen books matched to reading level

## Mathematics

### Our Approach

We follow a **mastery approach** to teaching mathematics, supported by the **Power Maths** scheme. All children develop a secure understanding of key concepts through structured, progressive learning using a wide range of practical resources.

All pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 take part in our **99 club** maths programme, supporting essential mental calculation skills.

### Key Focus Areas

#### Fluency

Number bonds, multiplication tables, mental maths — regularly practised and reinforced

#### Problem Solving

Children apply knowledge to real-life contexts and unfamiliar problems

#### Reasoning

Pupils explain their thinking, choose appropriate methods and develop independence

## Science, Computing & Foundation Subjects

### Science

Enquiry and investigation-led learning. Pupils explore, question and discover through hands-on practical activities. Enriched through after-school clubs and educational visits.

### Computing

Knowledge-rich curriculum covering coding, algorithms, logic and data handling. Online safety, word processing and control technology taught from Nursery upwards. iPads, laptops and interactive whiteboards in every classroom.

### Art & DT

Children design, make, evaluate and refine work using a wide range of materials and techniques. Study of artists and designers from different times and cultures.

### History & Geography

Enquiry-based units framed around key questions. Fieldwork, visits and visitors bring learning to life. Children develop critical thinking and a love of the wider world.

## Music & Physical Education

### Music

Music is taught by a **specialist teacher** in KS1 and KS2. All KS2 pupils have the opportunity to learn an instrument — violin, trombone, flute, clarinet or trumpet. Year 4 pupils learn the recorder.

- KS1 'Songbirds' after-school club with City Music School
- 'Young Voices' concert
- Annual Recorder Festival at the Victoria Hall

### Physical Education

All children benefit from lessons delivered by a **specialist PE teacher**. Swimming is included for Reception to Year 6. Extra-curricular activities include:

- Netball, football, gymnastics, cross-country, cricket, basket ball
- Street dance, multi-skills, cycling proficiency
- Government PE funding supports specialist provision

## Modern Foreign Languages & PSHE

### French (KS2)

Pupils in Key Stage Two study French, developing language skills and cultural understanding. Learning progresses from basic vocabulary in Year 3 to extended writing and speaking in Year 6. Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoy a **bi-annual French Adventure** residential trip.

### PSHE

We follow the **Jigsaw programme** for a structured, progressive approach across all year groups. Relationships, health and sex education is delivered through the **Ten:Ten – Life to the Full** programme, approved by the Diocese and Multi Academy Trust, reflecting Catholic values.

[Our Lady of Grace – RSE Policy](#)

## Special Educational Needs & Disability

- We follow the **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**. Our SENCo is **Mrs Edwards**, who works closely with staff, parents and external agencies to coordinate support. Contact Mrs Edwards via the school office.

### Cognition & Learning

Tailored programmes and pupil passports to support individual learning needs

### Communication & Interaction

Early identification and specialist external agency support where needed

### Sensory & Physical

Adapted environments and resources to support access to the full curriculum

### Social, Emotional & Mental Health

Whole-school wellbeing approach with family involvement at every stage

For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), a **pupil passport** is created, providing a clear profile of strengths, needs and support strategies. Progress is closely monitored and parents are fully involved through termly consultations and additional meetings as needed. [Our Lady of Grace – SEND](#)

## Communication with Parents

### The Messenger

Our monthly newsletter, shared by email, providing updates, news and useful information about school life.

### Consultation Meetings

Progress meetings in spring and summer terms, plus family learning events in English and mathematics to support parents at home.

### Home-School Diary

All pupils have a diary for homework and communication. Parents are asked to sign it at least three times per week to confirm home reading.

### Open Door Policy

The Principal operates an open-door policy. Parents and carers are always encouraged to contact school with any concerns or questions.

## Homework

| Stage            | Daily Homework   | Weekly Homework   |
|------------------|--|---|
| Foundation Stage | 5 new vocabulary words; Rhyme of the Week                | Creative homework on Thursdays<br>Reading (minimum 3 times per week)                                  |
| KS1              | 4 maths calculations; 5 new English words with sentences | RE/History/Geography/Science/Art/DT /Reading (minimum 3 times per week)                               |
| KS2              | 4 maths calculations; 5 new English words with sentences | English or Maths focus +<br>RE/History/Geography/Science/Art/DT<br>Reading (minimum 3 times per week) |

## Behaviour & School Uniform

### Behaviour

We have high expectations for behaviour, placing a strong emphasis on **respect, kindness and courtesy**. Children are recognised through praise, commendations and achievement points. Outstanding work or behaviour may be recognised by the Principal, and parents may be contacted to share in their child's success.

At the end of the academic year, a special **presentation evening** celebrates excellent progress, outstanding effort and exceptional contribution to school life.

### School Uniform

#### Boys

Navy sweater (logo), white shirt, school tie, dark grey trousers, black shoes. Summer: grey shorts, navy/black sandals.

#### Girls

Navy cardigan (logo), white shirt, school tie, dark grey skirt/pinafore (knee length+), black shoes. Summer: navy/white checked dress, navy/black sandals.

#### PE Kit

White T-shirt, navy shorts, navy sweatshirt (logo), navy jogging bottoms (winter), black pillo/mats or trainers.

⚠ No jewellery, make-up or nail varnish. Hair must be conventionally styled; shoulder-length hair tied back with navy/white accessories only. Highlight and/or lowlights are not permitted.

## General Health, School Meals & Attendance

### General Health

If your child is unwell, contact school **before 9.30am** on the first day of absence by phone (01782 512644) or email. Regular health checks are offered by the school nurse; dental checks are provided for Reception pupils.

### School Meals

Meals are cooked on the premises. **Nursery: £2.40/day**. **KS2: £3.25/day**. Reception and KS1 children receive **universal free school meals**. All payments via Arbor. Packed lunches are welcome. We operate a healthy food policy — fruit or vegetables may be brought for morning break.

### Attendance

Regular attendance is essential. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored. We work closely with the Educational Welfare Officer to support families. **Holidays during term time are not authorised** as they significantly impact a child's learning and progress.

## Extended Services & Enrichment

### Beyond the School Day

We are dedicated to supporting pupils and their families. Our committed **Family Support Worker** offers guidance, and we work closely with the school nurse, educational psychologist and local children's centre.

Extra-curricular activities include: art and craft clubs, music clubs, street dance and a wide range of sports.

### 100 Things to Do at Our Lady of Grace

We are committed to offering pupils a wide range of experiences supporting their academic, spiritual, cultural and moral development. By the time our pupils move on, we aim for them to have experienced the broad range of opportunities that every child deserves.

[Explore our 100 Things +](#)

## Charging, Data & School Policies

### Charging & Remission

Voluntary trip contributions aim not to exceed **£15**. Year 6 residential: approx. **£275**. Year 5 retreat: approx. **£150**. Bi-annual France trip available for Years 5 & 6. All trips payable by instalments; reduced charges available for eligible families.

### Data Protection

A copy of the collegiate Data Protection policy is available on the school website and in the main entrance area.

### School Policies

All policies are produced by the Governors in full consultation with staff and parents. Pupils contribute to relevant policies via the school council. Policies are displayed in the main entrance. Copies available from the school office.

### Parental Volunteers

We warmly welcome volunteers into our school community. All regular volunteers require an enhanced DBS check. If you can offer your time, please contact the school office — your support is greatly valued.

"By combining a strong Catholic ethos with high-quality teaching and learning, we aim to enable every child to achieve their God-given potential."