

Saint Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Christ is the centre of our school community where we live, love and learn together

Adopted March 2021

Reviewed March 2023

Signed by the Chair of Academy Committee: **Date:**

Collective Worship Policy

At the heart of the Church's very being is her mission to teach. Christ's own words to his

disciples are addressed to his Church today.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations;

baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look,

I am with you always; yes, to the end of time".

(Matthew 28: 18-20)

We see St. Thomas More school as having an integral role in fulfilling this command of Jesus, our Lord. The challenge that Christ sets us in the gospel is a goal we seek to attain within our school community.

THE AIMS OF R.E. IN OUR SCHOOL

1. We aim to lead children into a close, loving relationship with God through Prayer, Worship, Sacraments and Scripture.

2. To place at the heart of the curriculum, the essential truths of our faith and along with these, the understanding of their significance in terms of celebrating and living the Christian life.

3. To help children to know, understand and appreciate the spiritual and religious dimensions of life as expressed in the Catholic faith tradition.

4. We seek to develop within our school a respect for the dignity of each human being and provide children with the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the diverse nature of our society.

5. We strive to make our Mission Statement and General Aims of the School a lived experience for our school community.

The whole of the education provision at St Thomas More is rooted in putting Christ at the centre

of everything it does by integrating Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church

into every aspect of learning, teaching and totality of school life. A child's time at St Thomas More school will also be a journey of faith (Based on Christ at the Centre. A summary of why the

church provides Catholic schools 2005)

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Academy Committee after consultation with the Principal

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents/carers and prospective parent/carers need to be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other that those which are specifically structured.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that Collective Worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

• Those who form part of the worshipping community in church

• Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church

• Those from other Christian traditions – or none

• Those from other faith backgrounds.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

The Aims of Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils

and staff to:

• Contemplate something of the mystery of God

• Reflect on spiritual and moral issues

• Explore their own beliefs

• Respond to and celebrate life

• Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit

• Develop a common ethos and shared values

• Enrich religious experience

• Grow in liturgical understanding and development

• Reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition

• Reinforce positive attitudes

• Participate fully

• Take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Assemblies and Collective Worship

In order to achieve the above, Collective Worship is organised as follows:

 All pupils have the opportunity to attend Mass either in person as part of their class or via live stream web link each fortnight.

 There is a monthly Whole School Mass which is led by individual year groups.

 Hymn Practice takes place weekly for children in Year 2 upwards. Reception and Year 1

join together for Hymn Practice at an age appropriate level.

 Weekly Gospel Assembly led by the Principal/Vice Principal

 Class Collective Worship led by class teachers and/or pupils.

 Weekly Gifts from God Assembly (KS1 and KS2 separately) either in person led by a member of the SMT or via web link . During this assembly, individuals are selected as pupil of the week. Children are recommended for a variety of reasons e.g. sharing with others/ achievements in sport/effort shown in all areas of the curriculum. The House cup is presented to the House with the most House Points. KS2 parents are invited to attend in person and all parents are invited to join in with the live stream.

*Individual days and arrangements are subject to change due to changes in parish/school

circumstances and other external circumstances such as Covid.

The Eucharist

Celebration of the Mass is central to the Spiritual development of every member of our

community. All children are helped to experience the special closeness and presence of God,

and we see each Mass as an opportunity to meet, speak to and hear from the Risen Lord, especially in the reception of Holy Communion.

Children in Year 2 and upwards take it in turn to prepare for Mass to which their family, friends, parishioners are invited. The theme of the Mass is taken from the readings of the day. During the year, we ensure that children take an active part in the Mass either by readings, bidding prayers, or the offertory procession.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

• Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship

• Involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies

• With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community

• To develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

• Planning for prayer in the classroom is evident in teachers' weekly planning following the Diocesan proforma.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the year, as part of the school's monitoring calendar, the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school. Learning walks for Collective worship are carried out by the RE Co-ordinator and/or the Principal.

There are many resources available for planning Collective Worship. These are stored centrally in the RE cupboard and are reviewed regularly as part of the RE Coordinator's monitoring role. There are several Internet sites that are also a useful resource for planning. Staff also make use of resources stored in individual classrooms. Staff receive CPD during staff meetings led by the RE Co-ordinator. Staff are encouraged to make use of the Ten Ten Resources to which the school has an annual subscription.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

The co-ordinator of collective worship is the school RE Co-ordinator, although the Coordinator manages and plans for these occasions, different staff through devolved leadership opportunities, lead and plan for collective worship.

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