

# St Thomas More Catholic Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2023

Next Review : Spring 2026

**Review: Every 3 years**

## Preamble to the Policy

The document has been developed by the Religious Education Advisory team and approved by the Trustees. Governing Bodies in Catholic schools, within the Archdiocese of Southwark, may use this policy as a basis for their own Collective Worship policies. All diocesan policies and guidance are reviewed on a three-yearly cycle or earlier if necessary.

## Introduction

‘The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.’

Collective Worship in a Catholic school acknowledges and celebrates the life-giving presence of the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) in our lives. It is how we, as a community of faith, come together to give glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is through acts of shared Worship, prayer and liturgy, that the Catholic identity of our schools are shaped and sustained.

Sacramental aspects of the Church’s liturgical life, especially the Eucharist and the sacrament of reconciliation, must be intrinsically woven into the fabric of a school’s Catholic identity. It is therefore expected that all schools will have a schedule of liturgical events which will include planned for participation in Mass and other Eucharistic liturgies such as Adoration, and the opportunity for its members to participate in the sacrament of reconciliation during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

## Legal requirements

The law requires all maintained schools:

- provide daily Collective Worship for all pupils including those in the sixth form (Section 70, 1988 Education Act);
- Acts of Collective Worship are not to be designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school this means that times of Collective Worship are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education;
- recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship.

In addition

- Foundation governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools;
- Governors in Catholic academies give a written commitment to do the same.

## **Our Mission Statement:**

Our principal role as a Catholic school is to participate in the mission of the Catholic Church by providing a framework which will help children to grow in their understanding of God, The Gospel and in the practice of their faith.

The school will help the children to develop fully as human beings and prepare them to undertake their responsibilities as Catholics in society.

We are inspired by our Catholic faith and the Gospel vision of love, equality, justice, reconciliation, mutual respect and service.

We seek to create a community which:

- offers opportunities for all pupils and staff to aspire to achieve our God given potential
- is a place where our pupils can flourish and grow emotionally, academically, spiritually, physically, morally and socially
- offers opportunities for individuals to strive for excellence, enlightenment and understanding
- ensures every individual feels safe and valued
- provides a centre of excellence where our pupils can learn to become active members of society

**Share the light of Jesus by learning together and loving others**

## **Ethos and Values:**

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School we provide a welcoming and safe learning environment, one in which the talents of all children and staff are recognised and developed to the full. The children enjoy the learning process and are guided by caring, enthusiastic and highly motivated staff.

Our aim is to give each child every opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards. We encourage a 'can do' attitude and ensure that each child strives to achieve their personal best. The school is calm, ordered and well resourced. We are united by a shared mission and a clear vision for future development.

A strong partnership with the home, parish and wider community is central to the school's ethos. Success and friendship are celebrated through a calendar of shared events which include curriculum information evenings, assemblies, musical performances, drama productions, sporting events, and PTA events including our summer barbecue. These and many more occasions enable the children to develop confidence and share their accomplishments with the community.

To enable this to happen we support all pupils to develop and progress, not only academically, but as rounded, spiritual, moral, social and cultural individuals, with Catholicity as our cornerstone.

Throughout the year families will be invited to join the school when we celebrate Mass at our parish church of Ss John Fisher & Thomas More, Well Hall Road.

Our children are happy, enjoy learning and are proud of their school

## **Assemblies/ Collective worship**

Day	Assembly
Monday	Ten Ten assembly/Whole School
Tuesday	Singing whole school assembly
Wednesday	Class Collective Worship
Thursday	Class Collective Worship
Friday	Praise Assembly for the whole school

## Responsibility and oversight of Collective Worship

The governors and headteacher are responsible for ensuring that there are daily timetabled opportunities for whole school, class/form and year/phase group Worship;

### Each school must ensure:

- that there is a named person who is responsible for organising Collective Worship across the school – RE Lead – Miss Orla McGill
- that Collective Worship, in the form of prayer or liturgy, happens for all pupils daily;
- that all pupils are able to access the prayer and liturgy offered within the school day;
- that Collective Worship is well resourced, both in regard to content and the continued professional development of those planning and leading, this includes enabling pupils to plan and lead;
- that there is regular and comprehensive monitoring of Collective Worship which clearly demonstrates the impact on the school's Catholic mission and values

## Principles of Collective Worship:

Acts of Worship in our Catholic schools should endeavour to:

- give praise and honour to God;
- give pupils meaningful opportunities to engage in the Sacramental Life of the Church
- give pupils and students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family context in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.
- be of high quality, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- be examples of good practice, which should enable pupils and students to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead Worship.

## Aims of Collective Worship

The ultimate aim of Collective Worship in the Catholic school is to provide the space and tools for our pupils, within the context of the Catholic faith and traditions:

- to contemplate the mystery of God;
- to reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- to foster and nurture relationships;
- to respond to and to celebrate life;
- to experience a sense of belonging and to develop community;
- to nurture a common ethos and shared set of values;
- to enrich religious experience;
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development;
- to reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;
- to seek appropriate responses to the love of God;
- to take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'
- We respect the right of any parents wishing to withdraw their child(ren) for the whole or part of collective worship. However, as St Thomas More is a Catholic School, it is expected that parents are in agreement to their children attending acts of worship unless a specific request is made for their child to

- be withdrawn. Equally, teachers and teaching assistants are expected to support the Catholic ethos of the school, including their attendance at acts of collective worship.
- Collective worship at St Thomas More closely follows the Church's liturgical year. The programme of assemblies also celebrates other major events in the life of the school. The timing of assemblies is, of course, dependent on changes in the dates of different feast days, but the programme follows this pattern:

T e r m 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New beginnings – looking forward to our work building God's Kingdom during the coming year</li> <li>● Yr R - Welcome Assembly</li> <li>● Saints' Feast days, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist – 21st September</li> <li>○ Ss Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels – 29th September</li> <li>○ St Theresa of Lisieux – 1st October</li> <li>○ Guardian Angels – 2nd October</li> <li>○ St Francis of Assisi – 4th October</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Our Lady of the Rosary – 7th October</li> </ul>
	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● October is remembered as the month of the Rosary</li> </ul>
T e r m 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All Saints – 1st November (all children to Mass when the feast falls during term time)</li> <li>● All Souls – 2nd November ● Remembrance Sunday</li> <li>● Sundays of Advent</li> <li>● Immaculate Conception – 8th December</li> </ul>
	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● November is remembered as the month of Remembrance</li> <li>● During Advent an Advent Candle is used at all Assemblies</li> <li>● Christmas Jumper day raises money for Save The Children</li> <li>● Christmas is celebrated with Nativity Plays and an Advent Carol Service</li> </ul>
T e r m 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Epiphany – Mass is celebrated</li> <li>● The Baptism of the Lord</li> <li>● Saints' feast days, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● St John Bosco – 31st January</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Our Lady of Lourdes – 11th February</li> <li>○ St Patrick – 17th March</li> <li>○ St Joseph – 19th March</li> <li>● The Presentation of Jesus</li> </ul>
Term 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ash Wednesday Service</li> <li>● Mothering Sunday</li> <li>● The Annunciation – 25th March</li> </ul>
	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During Lent the children take part in fundraising activities for charities such as CAFOD</li> <li>● Stations of the cross led by the children take part in the Parish Church of St. Thomas More and John Fisher</li> <li>● Lent concludes with an End of Term Mass</li> </ul>
Term 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Saints' feast days, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ St George – 23rd April</li> <li>○ St Mark, Evangelist – 25th April</li> <li>○ St Catherine of Siena – 29th April</li> <li>○ The English Martyrs – 4th May</li> </ul> </li> <li>● The Ascension</li> <li>● Pentecost</li> </ul>
	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● May is remembered as the month of Our Lady</li> </ul>
Term 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corpus Christi</li> <li>● The Sacred Heart – 12th June</li> <li>● Saints' feast days, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ St Anthony of Padua – 13th June</li> <li>○ Ss John Fisher and Thomas More – 22nd June</li> <li>○ Ss Peter and Paul – 28th June (all children to Mass when the feast falls during term time)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Year 6 Leavers' Mass</li> </ul>