

Collective Worship Policy

St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School

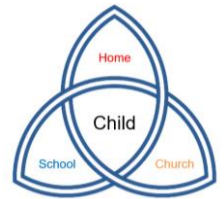
Rationale

*'Everyone who hears these words of mine and acts upon them
will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.'*

Matthew 7:24

Together with parents and our priests, our school plays a key role in building the foundations of our faith for the pupils in our care. By celebrating the Word and Eucharist effectively, vitally and joyfully, we can increase the power of the Word, the value and authenticity of sign and symbol, and the sense of Church.

We seek to create an environment that truly reflects the teaching of Christ, lays the foundations for a living faith, according to our Catholic tradition, and develops everyone's relationship with God. We encourage an atmosphere in which each individual is treated with understanding and respect and is helped to develop and grow within a happy and secure environment. We value the partnership that is needed between parents, carers, staff and children for this policy to succeed.



Whilst being primarily for pupils, this policy also recognises that we are part of a faith community where all are invited to deepen their relationship with God.

Approved at:	SLT Autumn 2021
Review:	Every 3 years
Review date:	Autumn 2024

Mission & Vision Statements

The Mission of St Thomas More's School is *Our mission is to inspire every child by ensuring SUCCESS, providing OPPORTUNITY and fostering STEWARDSHIP within a loving, Catholic community.*

Our vision is that everyone will leave our school feeling they have achieved more than they ever thought possible, and they will make a difference to the world by serving God by helping others.

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Aims

- To develop communication, and deepen our relationship, with God.
- To enable all to participate fully in different forms of worship, especially the Eucharist.
- To enable all to grow in communion with God, each other and the wider community.
- To familiarise the pupils with the different forms of worship within our faith.
- To enable pupils to gain a deeper understanding of Jesus and his teachings.
- To involve parents in the spiritual development of their child.
- To ensure parents and our community feel part of our prayer and liturgy life.
- To develop of skill of prayer and reflection, religious imagination and to develop a sense of divine mystery.
- To make sense of the world.
- To develop Spiritual Leaders to help evangelise and build faith opportunities.

Objectives

- To enable our pupils to participate in the rites and prayers of the Mass.
- To provide opportunities that offer a variety of experiences of personal and collective prayer and worship.
- To provide pupils with the experience of praying prayers used by the Catholic Church.
- To explore and reflect upon the values which underpin our beliefs and actions.
- To enable the pupils to reflect on scripture within liturgy and worship.
- To reflect the Church's liturgical year within the school's different forms of worship.
- Through experience, to deepen understanding of signs and symbols that express our beliefs.
- To develop communion between the school and parish communities, together strengthening their connection with God

Principles

To worship God is to raise our hearts and minds to Him, in reverence and praise, as individuals and as a community. It plays an important part in the development and growth of our faith and our relationship with God. It can instil in us a sense of belonging, dignity, grace, self-discipline, order, respect, thanksgiving, repentance, community spirit, creed, tradition, sacrifice – all of which influence our way of life.

There must be daily acts of worship for all pupils. This will include, but is not limited to, acts of liturgical prayer, prayers at the beginning and end of the day, grace.

Monday- Whole school liturgical prayer reflecting on the Gospel from Sunday

Tuesday- Liturgical singing & prayer

Wednesday- class or phase liturgical prayer

Thursday- class or phase liturgical prayer

Friday- Liturgical Celebration celebrating who have lived out Sundays Gospel

Other acts of worship throughout the year will include;

- Class Eucharistic/ Liturgy of the Word celebrations, with priest (when available/appropriate)
- School masses, including Holy days of Obligation and St. Thomas More's feast day
- Penitential Services during Advent and Lent
- Sacrament of reconciliation
- Adoration
- Benediction

Classroom focal points - Each classroom has its own religious focal points; an R.E. corner with prayer table that is covered with a cloth in the colour of the liturgical season. Prayer tables must not be cluttered, but appropriate artefacts that aid prayer and reflection are placed there.

Communal Prayer areas - Each phase will have an active prayer station available that is personalised to be age-appropriate to the phase. The prayer area will change in line with the liturgical calendar and prayer needs of the school.

Chapel - The school has built a sacred space which is open to the children to pray in, either for class liturgical prayer, prayer clubs or open prayer when a prayer minister is available. It is also available to our community in morning and afternoon prayer.

Planning, Content (Process) and Delivery

The word *worship* comes from the word *worthy* - worthiness, acknowledgement of worth. This reminds us how special and sacred acts of worship should be. It may be expressed in many different forms: in music, song, dance, drama, in words of praise, in prayers, readings and teachings, in listening, in thoughtful silence, in meditation, in contemplation of icons and symbols, in the service of others, in the passing on of one's beliefs, in the lighting of a candle and other symbolic actions.

All acts of worship should:

- Give glory and praise to God
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants
- Be kept to the point
- Be clear in its liturgical focus and varied in its delivery

It should develop the skills of:

- Reverence
- Contemplation/silence
- Reflection
- Meditation
- Making connections/empathy

Key elements which should guide liturgical preparation:

- Scripture readings.
- Season of the liturgical year/feast.
- Nature of the ritual.
- Particular events or concerns for the school and wider community.

Process:

Most acts of liturgical prayer should follow the process of;

Gather → Listen → Reflect → Response → Going Forth

Gather - Assembling & focus	
	Assemble • Sense of order on entering • Different arrangements for different times of the liturgical year • Clear and appropriate focal point • Music to set the atmosphere
	Focus • There are a variety of forms of liturgy offered • Theme is clear • Enables growth in understanding of a community worshipping together • Content, form, organisation and presentation varies • Quality use of artefacts for focal point. • Linked to liturgical year/class work/school life

Listen - Scripture	
<i>Hear God's word that lifts us up, instructs us, corrects us, trains us in holiness (2 Tim 3:16-17)</i>	
	• Draws attention to the need to be serving and loving • Reminds us of God's loving kindness which surrounds us and continually leads us to God • Appropriate • Consider who shares it • Consider how it is shared

Reflect - Explain & Reflection	
	• Relates to the children's own experiences • Contributes to children's living and understanding of the Christian way of life

Response - Action & prayer	
	• Grows from the whole worship • There is a high level of participation • Pupils demonstrate an understanding of liturgical celebrations • Pupils know how to respond and behave during worship • Actions are influenced by the worship
	Prayer • Invitation and response • Approaching God • Considering our world • Whole society • Looking at our needs • Bringing joys and sorrows

Going forward - Living the message	
	• Children have a deep understanding of the revelation of God's presence • Integration of worship and life • Clear sense of order/purpose on leaving

All Liturgical prayer are planned by staff members, our chaplain, priests, or, as their spiritual maturity develops, Y5/6 pupils (supported by staff members). It is structured, with reference to the Church's liturgical year/ God Matters/ Standards in RE (R.E. Scheme of work by the diocese), and in response to events within the community or the wider world.

Staff will use those opportunities which arise in the course of the school day to support children's recognition of God's gospel values in their daily lives.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Religious Education Leader will regularly evaluate and review provision, progression, and pupils' participation. This information will be used to identify areas for development and to structure Continuous Professional Development provision. Pupil, staff and parent voice is essential to ensure everyone's spiritual life is being enriched. Therefore, pupil, parents and staff questionnaires will be utilised to gain an insight into views.

Recording

Spiritual Learning Journeys books are used to record themes, prayers, scripture.

Definitions

Liturgy

Liturgy literally means 'work of the people' and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action.

Prayer

One of the early fathers of the Church described prayer as "the raising of one's mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God." These words of St John Damascene, now found in the catechism, illustrate why in this Catholic school we begin and end each session with a prayer.

Collective Worship/Liturgical Prayer

Collective worship is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with God himself, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and witness of the Holy Spirit.