



# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Policy: Collective Worship Policy

Review date: September 2021

Next review: September 2024



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Growing Together in God's Love*



### **Give love in all we do and say**

- We live out our school values of:
  - Love
  - Peace
  - Forgiveness
  - Fairness

Which are based on Gospel teachings (The Beatitudes).

- We welcome everyone into our safe and caring family.
- We always try to be positive role models.

### **Rejoice in God's friendship**

- We pray together every day and in many different ways.
- We continue our journey in the Catholic faith and develop our own personal relationship with God.
- We celebrate the awe and wonder of God's creation and look after our world.

### **Open our hearts to others**

- We share our time and talents to enrich the lives of others.
- We build positive relationships within our school family and extend this to the wider community.
- We celebrate our culture whilst exploring and respecting the beliefs and cultures of others.

### **Work at being the best we can be**

- We understand that each of us has been made in the image and likeness of God with our own unique talents and gifts.
- We have high expectations: listening, reflecting and always trying our hardest.
- We value, encourage and support everyone in our school family.

## **What Is Collective Worship?**

*'Collective Worship must in some sense reflect something special in school activities and should be concerned with reverence or veneration to a divine being or power' Government Circular 1/94 (para 50/57)*

Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'Collective Worship' rather than 'Corporate Worship' Education Reform Act 1988 s 6(1).' (57)

'Collective Worship and Assembly are distinct activities. Although they may take place as part of the same gathering the difference between the two should be clear. Collective Worship can nevertheless, be related to the day to day life, aspirations and concerns of the school.' (58)

'Taking part' in Collective Worship implies more than simply passive attendance. It follows that an act of Collective Worship should be capable of eliciting a response from pupils, even though on a particular occasion some of the pupils may not feel able actively to identify with the act of worship. (59)

## **The character of Collective Worship at St Thomas of Canterbury**

Collective Worship at St Thomas of Canterbury, while respecting diversity of belief and commitment, will reflect the tradition of the Church and will be Trinitarian in character. Prayer is addressed to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Spirit.

Collective Worship may take many different forms:

- Music
- Song
- Drama/Mime
- Words of Praise
- Prayers in a variety of forms
- Poetry
- Readings from Scripture
- Listening
- Thoughtful Silence
- Meditation
- Contemplations of Images/Icons/Symbols
- Services

We follow the Stepping Stones approach to enable children to prepare and lead Collective Worship at age appropriate expectations. We use the Collective Worship planners to ensure that all aspects are covered. We aim to foster a special time in which we can all grow spiritually.

## Prayer Experiences

Children are introduced to a variety of forms and styles of prayer:

Praying the psalms	<i>'I thank you for the wonder of my being' (Psalm 139)</i>
Traditional Prayers	<i>Glory be to the Father, Our Father, Hail Mary</i>
Repetitive Prayer (mantra)	<i>'Jesus, I love you', repeated several times slowly</i>
Meditation	<i>Reflection with use of imagination</i>
Bodily Prayer	<i>Raising hands in praise, bowing, dancing, genuflecting</i>
Prayer of the heart	<i>Stillness to listen to God: 'Be still &amp; know....'</i>
Contemplation	<i>Looking at trees, a sunset, an icon</i>
Gestures	<i>The sign of the cross</i>
Hymns	<i>Traditional and modern</i>
Music	<i>Listening to quiet reflective music</i>
Litanies	<i>For all creation: Thanks be to God</i>
Processions	<i>Gospel procession with sung 'alleluia'</i>
Prayer services & liturgies	<i>Formal &amp; spontaneous prayer using candles etc</i>
Celebrations	<i>Prayer, song, sharing food and drink, celebrating work done</i>
Use of visual aids	<i>Images, art, banners, displays, flowers, candles – can all enhance the experience of prayer</i>

## Collective Worship at St Thomas of Canterbury

The 'Come and See' topics studied at any given time are reflected in all our forms of celebration. Time and space are set aside to:

- wonder at
- contemplate
- mark as special
- come to terms with
- give worth to the mystery of life – faith they have explored
- grow in awareness of and actively respond to the spiritual dimension of life
- develop the capacities and skills to participate in and plan worship and celebrations

Whole school Collective Worship takes place twice a week and Key Stage Collective Worship taking place weekly as well as during Advent and Lent or at other special times in the Church calendar. The whole school gathers to worship and celebrate the major festivals of Harvest, Christmas and Holy Week. In addition to these celebrations, each class plans and delivers their own Collective Worship on themes that are relevant to the children's personal and spiritual development. This includes the use of formal and informal prayer.

## Churches' Joint Education Policy Committee (May 2006)

*'We strongly support the continuation of Collective Worship in all schools, recognising the major contribution it makes to the spiritual and moral development of pupils, which is a prime goal of education. It is believed by other faith groups to be of benefit even though its emphasis is mainly Christian. We look for Government support for an improvement in the quality of acts of collective worship and for ensuring that all pupils are able, with their parents' consent, to attend meaningful acts of worship at school.'*