



St Thomas of Canterbury

Catholic Primary School

Where every child is special



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Collective worship Policy (next review, October 2025)



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School family.

We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves.

We will encourage everyone to be the best that we can be.

OUR SCHOOL AIMS

To guide our children to grow in the love of God and build relationships that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the school and society.

To develop an exciting, challenging and creative curriculum that produces confident and successful learners who are the best that they can be.

To develop high quality learning that enables every child to flourish, to discover their talents and be lifelong learners.

To establish a teaching and learning environment that encourages everyone to enjoy, to achieve, to be inclusive, to be healthy, and to stay safe.

To nurture a strong partnership between home and school.

To have respect and understanding for our school, our community and our world, helping our children to become responsible citizens and good role models.

OUR SHARED VISION

Every child at St Thomas of Canterbury is special and will achieve their full potential academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally through the provision of a loving community and rich and varied learning opportunities and the highest quality teaching and learning.

Every staff member at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to provide the opportunities that we want for our children and to do so as part of a loving community which has the highest expectations of and for all.

Every Governor at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to act as a critical friend to the School and to be accountable for the School's strategy. They will play a visible role supporting all children, their parents and staff at School and in the wider community, to provide the best environment possible for learning and spiritual growth.



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OUR GOLDEN RULE

We treat others as we would like to be treated

The Nature of Collective Worship

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.

The Place of Collective Worship in Our School

There is a daily act of worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. Collective worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it, whatever their faith background or practice.

The Aims of Collective Worship at St. Thomas'

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

- To nurture a sense of awe and wonder in their response to God, His world and all His people.
- To listen to and reflect upon the Word of God through our celebrations, to experience it as something living, powerful and active, to engender a sense of respect.
- To have the skills, confidence and understanding to proclaim the Word of God with reverence, a sense of privilege and dignity.
- To contribute to the planning of liturgies and assemblies, to value these contributions and develop the skills and confidence to bring their gifts of music, dance, drama, reading and the composition of words of reflection to our celebrations.
- To develop an awareness of the liturgical seasons and the times of celebrations within the school, parish and Diocesan community.
- To further develop a sense of prayer, through opportunities to pray together, to pray in the quietness and peace of their own hearts, using their own words and those of others, and to ask for the prayers of the community.
- To promote links with other schools within our Deanery and Diocese and to take part in celebrations together.
- To enjoy their times of worship together.
- To provide the children, teachers, parents, governors and parish with richness of experience to sustain us all on our Christian journey.
- To provide the children with opportunities in which to express and rejoice in their knowledge and understanding of the 'Come and See' programme, in a prayerful context.

How Collective Worship is Organised at St. Thomas'

Every meeting of staff and every school day begins and ends in prayer, focusing on the needs of the individuals, our school community, the parish and local, national or global issues as appropriate.



Making **S=P+A+C+E for learning**

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Acts of Collective worship

The school gathers for whole school, Key Stage or class Collective worship, as follows:

Monday	Whole School Worship led by the Headteacher
Tuesday	Foundation Stage and KS1 & KS2 Collective Worship led by Senior Leaders and class teachers or class based worship led by the children and Class staff teams
Wednesday	Foundation Stage and KS1 & KS2 Collective Worship led by Senior Leaders and class teachers or class based worship led by the children and Class staff teams
Thursday	Worship through song, praise and worship led by the Music Leader
Friday	Whole school worship led by a class (with parents) or Prayer Services
	Key Stage Celebration Worships led by Senior Leaders

Each Act of Worship focuses upon prayer and reflection, taking either a 'Come and See' theme or a current school focus, Diocesan or Parish development, local, national or world issue.

In addition, Monday's whole School Worship reflects on the Gospel of the preceding weekend. The Celebration worships at the end of the week reflect on the week and the application of the themes from the Monday worship. They are also opportunities for the children's learning and behaviour to be celebrated and rewarded with certificates of achievement.

Masses and Celebrations

A programme of liturgies and Masses is drawn up with the parish priest at the beginning of the year. It reflects key days in the liturgical year and school life. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised.

Class Worship and Prayer

An area of each classroom is designated as a prayer corner. These provide appealing focuses for prayer and worship for the class members. These are used for collective prayer, meditation, devotion and reflection when appropriate.

When appropriate, RE lessons incorporate time of prayer and reflection. This is intended to engender in the children an appreciation of silence and deepen their experience of awe and wonder. It also introduces the value of thanksgiving, forgiveness, asking and praise. As much as possible, times of worship are child led, with the children being involved in planning and leading the worship.



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School Worship and Prayer

Following consultation with children and staff, a prayer room has been developed in the school. The purpose of this special area is to offer opportunities for quiet prayer and reflection. As part of the "School Council", children from year six make up the "Worship Team". These children help to plan and lead Worship and have a voice in the development of the prayer and spiritual life of the school.

Many opportunities are provided at St Thomas' for both formal and spontaneous prayer. Morning and afternoon sessions in class begin and end with prayers. The traditional prayers of the Church are learned systematically. Children are encouraged to contribute their own choice of prayer. Hymn singing and music making are most important parts of our collective worship and time is allocated to practising and rehearsing these. There is a child led Prayer club which meets weekly.

Throughout the year several opportunities are provided for Liturgical celebrations. Mass for the whole school is celebrated in School at least once a term and at the beginning and end of the school year and on Feast days. Year groups and classes are encouraged to organise their own prayer services and Masses, throughout the year. Each term the KS2 classes visit St Pius' church to join in a Parish Mass and are made welcome. As with Worship, classes and teachers take it in turn to prepare the liturgy. Opportunities are provided in Lent for both Key Stages to prepare for Easter. The School Chaplain visits the school regularly to support our work with 'Come and See', as well as leading our worship on many occasions. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in the spiritual development and worship that the children engage in.

A Parents' Prayer Group meets in school each month to pray for the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school's provision of worship is regularly evaluated using Diocesan monitoring guidelines to assess its impact and quality.

This policy of St Thomas of Canterbury School upholds the school's ethos and Mission Statement. It must be read in conjunction with and implemented in accordance to the school's policies for Health & Safety Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding. Copies of these policies are available from the school website.



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