

**St Thomas  
of Canterbury  
Catholic Primary  
School**



**Collective Worship  
POLICY  
2020 -2021**



## SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT



At St Thomas' we are learning to follow Jesus,  
showing respect and consideration for ourselves  
and others.

We all have the opportunity to learn and work to  
the best of our ability in a safe and loving  
environment.



## Whole School Target



*In St Thomas' we do the  
right thing because it's  
the right thing to do.*

## School Aims

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, we aim to create and sustain a stimulating Christ centred environment, where everybody involved, children, staff and parents, may grow in their faith and their love of God, developing respect for themselves and an awareness of the needs and gifts of others.

We aim to create an environment where children will be happy, independent and will be able to achieve their full potential, spiritually, academically, morally, emotionally, socially and physically.

We aim to provide children with the experiences, knowledge and skills necessary:

- To deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- To read fluently and accurately.
- To write clearly, fluently and accurately for a variety of purposes.
- To communicate clearly and confidently in speech.
- To listen attentively to others.
- To develop mathematical concepts and skills and apply these to real life situations.
- To develop scientific knowledge and skills.
- To develop the ability to plan and organise their own learning using a range of resources and skills.
- To become observant and curious of the world around them and develop a respect for their environment.
- To develop the skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence to express their thoughts and feelings creatively.
- To develop agility and physical co-ordination and to encourage team skills.
- To learn to recognise, respect and value the cultural, racial and sexual differences in our society.
- To learn to work and play harmoniously and tolerantly with others.
- To develop self-discipline, self-reliance and self-esteem.
- To develop an understanding of the need for personal safety.
- To stay safe, be healthy, achieve and enjoy, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being

We aim to celebrate and share successes and achievements, both individually and collectively.

The school undertakes to work to complement the home and church environment by setting before the children the ideal of Christian life.

## St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

### Collective Worship

Our school is proud to be part of the Roman Catholic community in the Parish of St. Thomas of Canterbury, Grays. Our school has a distinctive character, because everything we do is based on the values of the Gospels. The purpose of our community is to recognise the worth and dignity of all and to fully develop the talents of each person.

#### The Nature of Prayer and Worship

At St Thomas' we believe that prayer and worship in our school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. We believe that at the heart of our faith is the belief in a God who communicates with people, calling every human person into a loving relationship. As with every relationship, our relationship with God can only grow through communication. Prayer is the way in which we engage in communication with God.

#### Legal Requirement

At St Thomas' we acknowledge that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can either be a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. We acknowledge that assemblies and collective worship are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

#### The Place of Prayer and Worship in the Life of our School

Prayer, worship and liturgy are at the heart of our Catholic school and are integral to the ethos, mission and distinctiveness of our Catholic school community. We believe that prayer and 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.
- Prayer and worship will be an experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

#### The Role of the Teacher

At St Thomas' we believe that leading pupils in prayer is a vital and essential part of Catholic education. It is expected that teachers will:

- Provide opportunities for pupils to pray
- Provide pupils with meaningful prayer experiences
- Assist pupils to develop the language of prayer
- Teach pupils the traditional prayers of the Church
- Help pupils to develop habits of prayer.

### The Aims of Prayer and Worship

At St Thomas' we believe that prayer and worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To develop a language of prayer
- To experience a sense of belonging to a community
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To learn prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with', and 'to give worth to'.

### Organisation of Prayer and Worship at St. Thomas'

- Daily Prayers are said at the start/ end of the day and before lunch.
- Weekly Hymn Practices for KS1/LKS2/ UKS2
- Weekly Assemblies KS1/LKS2/ UKS2 led by the Headteacher, AHTs for EYFS/KS1 or KS2, this assembly also incorporates an achievement assembly, SEAL assemblies/ themed assemblies (liturgical themes, Saint's days, world religions/ festivals and world events etc.) All of these begin with an act of worship.
- Masses (Year 2 - 6) are held at the beginning and end of term and on Holy Days. We have a rota for year groups, staff and governors to take a leading role. In addition to this there are regular weekly class Masses. Again, there is a rota.
- Class Liturgies are held on a weekly rota basis by a KS1 Class on Thursdays [EYFS become involved during the Spring Term] and a KS2 Class on Fridays. Every class holds a Liturgy for the rest of the children in their key stage and staff twice a year. The chosen themes are often religious but where they are not, the assemblies have religious elements to them and always start and end with prayers. (Examples of Liturgies are Forgiveness, Bravery, Anti-bullying, Remembrance and Christingle.). All the children in EYFS and KS1 are involved in

a Nativity Play, UKS2 children perform a Carol Service in St Thomas of Canterbury Church and LKS2 children present the Easter Story as a drama, again in St Thomas of Canterbury Church.

\*\*\*\* Hymn practices, Class Liturgies and Class Mass are currently not happening due to COVID 19 restrictions.

\*\*\*\* Weekly Assemblies by the Headteacher are currently pre-recorded audio PowerPoint presentations due to COVID 19 restrictions. These are accessed by all pupils from their classrooms

Updated September 2020 - will be amended when Government guidance allows us to do so.

### Altars

- Each class must provide a focal point for prayer, an altar and display which provide a visual stimulus for prayer. Each altar should have some religious symbols e.g. statues, rosary beads (October and May), bible etc.
- There is an altar in the school entrance which displays recent class and whole school Mass order of services.
- During assemblies there is an altar in the hall which takes account of liturgical colours following the liturgical calendar.

### Liturgical Calendar

- Children learn about the Liturgical life of the church through the Come and See R.E curriculum, assemblies, involvement in displays and altars, masses and prayer services, power points, bible stories etc.

### Staff prayers

- Staff pray together at certain times in the year. Every staff meeting, Inset Day and Governors meetings begin with prayers.

### The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Worship

- Whole school prayer and Worship is usually planned and led by the Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher/s following a structure to the Church's seasons, the Religious Education Curriculum, and significant dates. Scripture is used as a focus for most acts of worship.
- We also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.
- Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. (PSHE)

### Recording

- A liturgy/ assembly overview for the year is kept
- Through displays

- Mass booklets are kept of Masses Services
- Photographs are taken of class Liturgies for the Newsletter to share with parents and the wider community.

#### Guidance and Resources

- Resources for prayer and worship are stored centrally
- Relevant liturgical resources are shared with staff e.g. stations of the cross, Easter pictures
- Teachers are provided with booklets for in class collective worship.