



CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Together in One Body

# ETHOS & WORSHIP POLICY

Approved: Spring 2024 | Review: Spring 2025

## Introduction

*“A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints.”*

### **Pope Benedict XVI - Twickenham 17th September 2010**

Worship in the Catholic school or college is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving worship, glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Our school motto 'Unum in Corpore Uno' or 'Together in One Body' reflects the importance that we attach to our school community: a community that provides love, support, and encouragement. Collective worship must take into account the religious and educational needs of all who share and participate in it:

- those who form part of the worshipping community of the Church;
- those for whom the school may be their first and only experience of the Church;
- those from other Christian backgrounds;
- those from other world faith backgrounds;
- those from other backgrounds who are admitted to the school under the categories agreed by the Governing Body as the admission authority.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain at a level or faith background appropriate to them, while still maintaining its distinctively Catholic nature and tradition.

## Our School Ethos

Our Catholic faith is at the heart of our school community and the values proclaimed by Jesus in the Gospels are central to everything that we do. We pray together at the start of the day, before lunch and again at the end of the day; and each year group participates in a liturgy during form time once a week. We gather together to celebrate Mass in our chapel each week and at key points throughout the school year. At the end of each academic year, we celebrate a whole school Mass of thanksgiving in our sports hall. We also have regular devotions to Our Lady, as well as services during Advent and Lent. We attach a high priority to the development of faith for all children, including those of other faiths, and we encourage all our pupils to develop a deep respect for each other and each other's beliefs. Our chaplains organise a range of enriching opportunities for pupils to deepen their faith and they are always on hand to support pupils as they make their journey of faith. There are retreats to Castlerigg and there are plans for future pilgrimages to Lourdes and Rome, as well as many opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in living out their faith through charitable works and fundraising.

## The Cardinal Virtues

***“Love one another as I have loved you.” John 13:34***

The priority in our schools must be to strive for the values of the Kingdom of God that we find in the Gospel. Jesus' greatest commandment was for us to love others with a selfless, unconditional love (agape) which he showed in his teachings and actions: washing the disciples' feet, healing the sick and eating with sinners and, ultimately, sacrificing himself for all humanity on the cross.

With Jesus' teaching of love as our focus in school, we practice the ancient Catholic tradition of the Cardinal Virtues. St Thomas Aquinas says “...these virtues are a way to happiness and not happiness in itself”. This is the way to show love to others and build up the Kingdom of God.

### **Fortitude**



### **Justice**



### **Temperance**



### **Prudence**



### Fortitude

(courage/ being brave/ strength of will/ determination / not giving up / faithful / trusting)

#### **Fortitude**



The symbol for this virtue is a strong tower with firm foundations. When we practise the virtue of fortitude, we practise courage and determination, we face challenges and don't give up.

The Gospel passage which reminds us of fortitude is **“Do not be afraid.” (Matthew 14:27)** We need to know that we are not alone, God is with us, and we must have courage. Our house saints are examples of fortitude as they gave their lives for the Catholic faith.

#### Justice

(love of others/ goodness /truthful/ fair/ charity/ forgiveness/ gratitude / service)

#### **Justice**



The symbol for this virtue is a balanced scale. When we practise the virtue of justice we choose to do what is fair and right, even when it might not be popular or difficult. During Advent and Lent, we live out 'the corporal works of mercy', feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the imprisoned, these are some examples of justice in action. Whenever we forgive another person and move on to have a fresh start, this is practising the virtue of justice.

The Gospel passage which reminds us of justice is **“Love your neighbour as yourself.” (Mark 12:31)** We need to remember that, when we are caring for others, we are loving and caring for Jesus.

## Temperance

(Humility / gentleness / self-control / sensitivity / hope / moderation / tolerance)

### Temperance



The symbol for this virtue is an anchor. When we practise the virtue of temperance, we are practising self-control and humility, virtues Mary showed in abundance. An anchor does the hard work below the surface of the water, unseen. The Gospel passage which reminds us of temperance is “**Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit.**” (Luke 23:46) These words are echoed in Our Lady’s ‘fiat’ and in the Our Father “Thy will be done”. We remember that Jesus on the cross gives over everything to God; we too can let God be in control.

## Prudence

(reflection / thinking through / wisdom / doing the right thing/ respect / obedience)

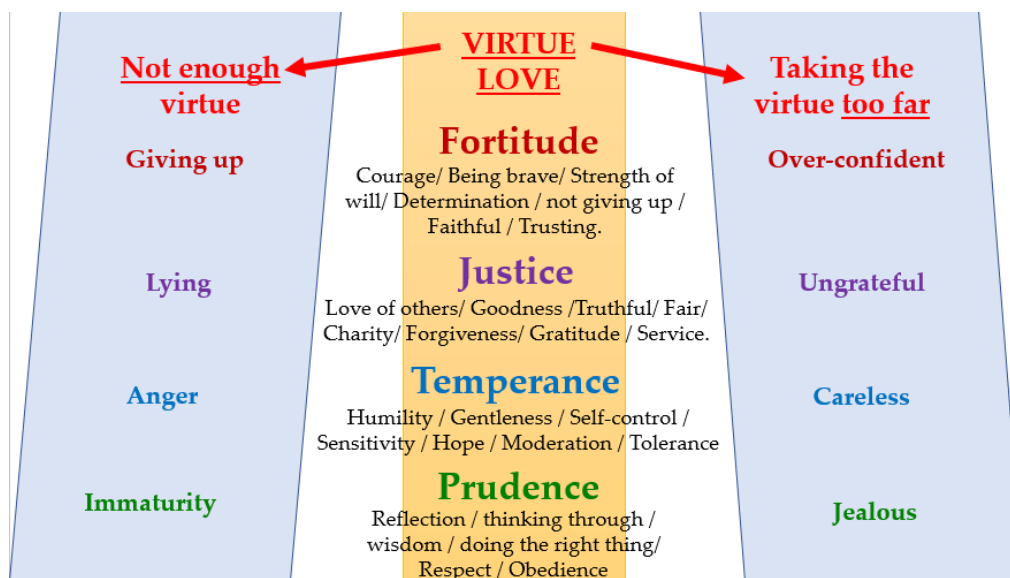
### Prudence



The symbol for this virtue is a compass. A compass correctly directs us to travel, before we take a step we must collect the relevant information and think. When we practise the virtue of prudence we are practising wisdom, thinking before we act. As Christians, we reflect on our actions and the life of Christ and try to put his teachings into action each day.

The Gospel passage which reminds us of prudence is “**You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.**” (John 8:32) When we know what the truth is, and we make a wise decision based on it, we are living as Jesus wants us to and we help to build the Kingdom of God.

The Virtues are the ‘mean’ the “**narrow the road that leads to life**” (Matthew 7:14). We must walk to do what is good and right. We can easily not bother following the virtues, what Aquinas calls a ‘deficiency’ or we can take the virtue to ‘excess’. Both a deficiency and excess of virtue are vices, bad habits leading us away from the love of others and the love of God.



A pupil at Corpus Christi will spend over 5000 hours at school over their 5 years of study. In this time a pupil can practice and begin to perfect the virtues leading a life of love and service, a life of a saint.

## Chaplaincy

The school chaplaincy provides opportunities for prayer and worship throughout the school year. Alongside our weekly community Mass, we hold special services of Reconciliation, liturgies during Advent and Lent, prayer services to mark the seasons of the Church, meditations, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Devotion to the Rosary, retreats and pilgrimages.

## Daily Prayer

*“Prayer is the raising of one's heart and mind to God or the requesting of good things from God.”*

### **Catechism of the Catholic Church 2259**

During the school day, there are three set times for prayer:

1. Morning prayer led in form time. The resources for this are produced by the chaplaincy team and are consistent in routine and quality throughout the school. Pupils are highly involved in leading prayer, recording the reflections, leading the reading of the day, and setting the atmosphere. There should be a rota system in place so all pupils are involved in prayer over two weeks. This time of prayer should ultimately be led by the pupils.
2. Grace said before the pupils go to lunch. The prayer for grace is on the prayer slide directly after the morning prayer slides. In some departments, there may be variation. For example, in modern foreign languages, the sign of the cross and grace are prayed in the language being taught in the lesson.
3. Afternoon prayer. The prayers for the afternoon take place at the end of the last lesson of the day and at least 5 minutes should be left before the bell for this to be said reverently. The resources for this are on the week's prayer resources directly after the grace prayer. Pupils should also take an active role in this, reading for the class the antiphon and psalm. The concluding prayer is different for each department as they ask for the intercession of their subject saints. During the prayer, there is a pre-recorded audio clip guiding pupils in a reflection of the day with a moment of silence.

## Morning year group prayer

All year groups take part in morning prayer as a year group focusing on the Gospel proclaimed on the previous Sunday. This is not an assembly, it is an act of collective worship and these must be separate so pupils fully understand what it means to be part of a distinct Catholic community.

Morning prayer as a year group is led by practising Catholic members of staff in leadership positions or by the chaplains of the school. This is an essential act of community worship each week as a year group.

- Staff wait in the hall as the pupils arrive in silence.
- Pupils are led in the sign of the cross by the member of staff leading the liturgy.
- Pupils should be involved in the Gospel readings and bidding prayers.
- After the liturgy pupils will leave in silence and go back to their form rooms with their form tutor for registration.

At least once every half-term, pupils also come together as a house community to take part in a house prayer. This is then followed by a house assembly but, whilst the pupils remain in the hall, the two sections are strictly defined.

## Monitoring and Coordination

As part of new staff induction, there is an explanation of prayer being central to the life of the school and the sharing of our resources.

When new staff arrive in September they have further training sessions led by the Head of Catholic Life explaining best practice and talking through how prayer should be led. This focuses on reverence, routine and atmosphere. Best examples of morning and afternoon prayer have been recorded and edited, annotated videos have been made and shared with all staff so all can improve and maintain the quality and consistency of prayer in the school.

All staff have further instruction and training on prayer and worship on INSET days and development time sessions during the year.

Prayer is monitored each week using pupils selected from each class to complete a tracking sheet each week. This information is collated by the Head of Catholic Life and presented to the Headteacher for his information.

Prayer resources are created by the chaplains to maintain quality and continuity.

It is the role of the teachers to make sure prayer is led reverently and correctly following the training led by the Head of Catholic Life.

Examples of best practice are filmed and shared with staff in training but are always available in the shared resources folder on the school intranet.

Observations of prayer in form time take place throughout the year and individual feedback is given by the Head of Catholic Life.

## Holy Mass

All pupils at Corpus Christi participate in Mass.

Pupils must be involved in music, readings, serving and responses.

At Holy Communion, all pupils come forward as a community to receive (depending on their faith background):

- A blessing in the name of the Trinity
- An offering of Peace.
- The Eucharist (for Roman Catholic pupils who have made their first Holy Communion and are reminded of the conditions for receiving the Eucharist)

**Mass is celebrated after school every Thursday and all pupils and staff are welcome.**

There are optional masses on Holy Days of Obligation in school which pupils can choose to attend.

Year 7 pupils begin their year with preparation and guidance for a Welcome Mass. There are Masses to celebrate the Christmas season on the return from the Christmas break (Epiphany Mass) and to celebrate The Resurrection of our Lord when we return from the Easter break. Year 11 have Mass said for them as a year group as their examinations begin. The end of the year is marked with a Mass of Celebration and Thanksgiving in July.

Masses are organised and prepared by the school chaplains in conjunction with the Head of Catholic Life and the Chaplaincy Team.

## Legal Requirements

As a Catholic school founded on the values and ethos of the Catholic Church, we are committed to the academic education and spiritual development of our pupils. The spiritual formation of young people as caring, moral beings is essential to our mission. In addition, as a maintained school, we are bound by the statutory requirement of a daily act of worship following the 1988 Education Act and its subsequent amendments.

[Collective worship in schools.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362222/collective-worship-in-schools.pdf)