



## Catholic Life Policy

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

Colossians 3:16

***We walk kindly in the footsteps of Jesus Christ as we live and learn.***

This mission statement above is the foundation stone on which we build The Catholic Life of the School. At Blessed Robert Widmerpool, we aim to achieve our mission by:

- Establishing, maintaining and developing a Catholic ethos which is permeated in everything we do and is apparent to all those who enter the school.
- Providing frequent opportunities for conscious and active participation in collective worship in order for all members of the school family to encounter Jesus Christ through Mass and other services/celebrations in accordance with the rites of the Catholic Church to all in the community.
- Providing a supportive Sacramental Programme in collaboration with the Parish in accordance with the rites of the Catholic Church and diocesan policy.
- Creating a place of learning where Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church are evident in everything we do.
- Modelling the image of Christ in the way staff speak, act and treat others.
- Modelling the image of Christ in the way the school is lead and managed.
- Providing an enriched curriculum, which is creative, inspiring, inclusive for all pupils and fundamentally based on the teachings of Jesus and his Holy Church.
- Developing the prayer and spiritual life of all members of our school and the community it serves.
- To be an outreaching centre of God’s mission on earth in promoting the virtues of faith, hope and charity and living out the Bishop’s vision of Discipleship and Mission Discipleship
- Engendering the culture of vocation by educating pupils to be active in their faith and by reaching out to those in our community and beyond.
- Ensuring that the Gospel values and are permeated through all policies which include a carefully chosen Scripture quote to drive policy, standards and initiatives and which are clear, fair and consistent on matters of inclusion, behaviour, curriculum etc.

Caring and meeting the pastoral, spiritual, moral, cultural and social needs of the children are met by:

- Providing good Catholic role models for the younger citizens of the future so that they may follow in Jesus’ footsteps.
- Maintaining, working with and developing successful links with the home, parish, diocese, community and the wider world.

The school aims to follow in the mission of Christ and his Holy Church on Earth by:

- Providing opportunities for daily collective worship.
- Providing a caring, inspiring and creative environment.

## Blessed Robert Widmerpool Voluntary Catholic Academy

### **The Spiritual Life of School**

Blessed Robert Widmerpool Voluntary Catholic Academy aims to create and maintain an environment where the spiritual life of the school is fostered and developed through creativity, vibrancy and innovation. Our classrooms, work areas and school entrance is welcoming, bright, colourful, creative and celebratory so that our Mission Statement is lived out through our surroundings.

Prayer occupies an important role in Religious Education as a means of expressing, fostering and nurturing faith. Children have a natural aptitude for prayer; they are open to God. They respond in joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world round them.

Children are encouraged and helped to discover the many different ways in which to pray, formal and informal, private and communal. They are encouraged to be still and listen to God and also encounter him in action and movement.

We aim to teach and develop a variety of prayer methods to the children such as:

- Teaching the traditional prayers of the church alongside new prayers.
- Allowing the children to develop their spiritual awareness by giving them the skills to create asking, thanksgiving, praising and sorry prayers.
- Through the reading of the Gospels and the Holy Bible.
- Through the teaching of traditional hymns alongside modern hymns.
- Through the teaching of drama, sacred music and prayer.
- Meditating and reflecting in silence whilst being inspired by liturgical music and religious art.

### **Catholic Social Teaching**

At BRW, Catholic Social Teaching (CST) threads throughout the catholic life of the school. Children and staff are encouraged to actively promote and live out the below explicit CSTs in their beliefs and actions:



In promoting CST, BRW's aim is to teach children how to love their neighbour and live the Gospel values in our modern world.

Children learn about CST through whole-school assemblies and everyday learning and teaching in formal and informal forms, for example:

- CST displays can be found in every classroom as well as in a whole-school display.
- In learning and teaching across the curriculum, CSTs are present in planning, when discussing learning objectives, in children's books and in recall opportunities.
- CST is celebrated in a weekly 'Celebration Assembly', where pupils are celebrated for living out the CST principles.
- The Annual Theme is embodied by CST and links made explicit to the school community.
- The Faith In Action Team work together to further promote CST through fundraising, reflecting and documenting ways to 'build the Kingdom'.
- Each subject leader identifies how CST is present in their subject. This is made explicit in their annual subject policy.
- Links with CAFOD enable staff training and pupil workshops on CST.

### **Prayer in the Classroom.**

Each classroom in the school creates a prayerful environment through a prayer focus area.

It is required that this focus is dressed in the liturgical colours of the year as a visual sign to the children to show the change and the mood of the liturgical calendar.

This prayer focus has a Bible which shows the previous Sunday's Gospel readings; or the reading associated with a feast day; or a reading which is relevant to the current scheme of work.

Teachers are encouraged to be creative when creating an interactive display on this focus. Objects, images, candles and other symbolic items will feature which reflect the liturgical year, feasts, liturgical celebrations or lesson foci.

## Blessed Robert Widmerpool Voluntary Catholic Academy

Each room in the school has a cross or crucifix which reminds us all of the sacrifice of Christ for all of humanity; it reminds us that Christ is the foundation stone of Catholic education and that Christ is at the centre at everything we do. The mission statement is also displayed in every room.

### **Providing Class Collective Worship on a Daily Basis.**

Worship is provided daily. Teacher and pupils pray at the start, middle and end of each day.

Collective worship also occurs within:

- Monday morning assembly
- Tuesday in Key Stage Celebration of the Word
- Wednesday in Key Stage Hymn practice
- Thursday in Whole School/Class Mass or assembly
- Friday at the start of Celebration assemblies

### **Places For Prayer**

School is committed to attending to all children's interests and needs and so is active in creating and providing a variety of places to pray. The Memorial Garden is a quiet designated spaces outdoors and a lunchtime session called The Retreat offer pupils a quiet place to contemplate, pray and reflect weekly on a voluntary basis.

### **Collective Worship**

#### **Year Group**

Class/Year Group Collective Worship occurs in each year group at least once per Come and See, RE topic. This is a Celebration of the Word, which is planned, prepared and led by the children. Every child will have the opportunity to lead class Celebrations of the Word within the year.

#### **Key Stage**

- The Year 6 Celebration of the Word Team plan, prepare and lead KS2 Celebration of the Word weekly
- The Year 2 Celebration of the Word Team plan, prepare and lead a weekly FS/KS1 Celebration of the Word
- Staff Celebrations of the Word, planned and led by either the children, the SLT, or the staff themselves occur at least once per term.

All Celebrations of the Word follow the structure of Gather, The Word, Respond, Mission.

### **Mass Celebrations**

We acknowledge and revere the most Holy Sacrament of the celebration of the Eucharist. We believe it is central to our roles as being members of the Body of Christ and the redeeming life graces and blessings it provides. We firmly believe in the importance of celebrating the Mass by:

- Providing opportunities for School and parish Masses throughout the academic year
- Celebrating Holy Mass on Feast Days and Holy days of Obligation.
- Celebrating Masses as part of the Sacramental programme.
- Celebrating Mass at the key times of the school year.

## Blessed Robert Widmerpool Voluntary Catholic Academy

- Celebrating joint class Masses to provide a more intimate celebration
- By teaching the structure of the Mass to the children.
- By allowing our children to plan, prepare and lead Masses

Using the Liturgical year as a framework, we draw on the wealth of the whole church to teach our children who God is and what they are. We follow the development through the Curriculum Directory, introducing children to the lives of saints, to the changes of season and the mood and colour expressing these changes. Children are given the associated language, signs and symbols. This involves progression, some repetition and deepening of understanding.

A devotion to Our Lady as Mother of Jesus and our Mother is encouraged and celebrated during Celebrations of the Word and Masses in October.

Prayers for the dead are encouraged in November.

Advent and the Christmas season is observed and celebrated through the diocesan curriculum programme of study and through a variety of collective worship gatherings such as Advent assemblies, Nativity celebrations, Carols Around The Tree Service and Mass. After the Christmas Holidays, the season is continued up to its official ending with a celebration service based on the Epiphany which either includes the saying of Holy Mass or a collective worship gathering.

Holy Week preparations which take place in school are brought to life with special presentations led by each KS2 throughout the week. The whole school gathers as a family to celebrate a traditional Passover, a special Mass dedicated to the Last Supper includes a re-enactment during the homily and the week ends with a Crucifixion presentation with Year 6. Year 3 present the Resurrection celebration after Easter Sunday.

### **Giving to Others**

We aim to bring about an awareness of the needs of others. This is on-going throughout the year and those less fortunate than us are remembered in daily prayer.

In Autumn, children and the community are encouraged to bring in food for those less fortunate during the Harvest Festival celebrations. The food is taken to Emmanuel House and Clifton food bank. There is also the annual charity event in the Autumn term. The Royal British Legion and Youth Fun Day are also supported during this term. During Lent, classes are encouraged to raise money by leading individual charitable events. Other charities are also supported including Save The Children and Cafod.

Children are always encouraged to help each other as well as their parents, teachers and other people in our community. It is our aim that our whole school ethos is one that will foster and nurture a generous giving of self, an appreciation and respect for one's own property and that of others.

### **Parental Involvement**

We seek to involve parents and give them the confidence to play their part in the formation of their children. The school supports and develops the primary task of parents as the first teachers of their children in the ways of Faith. We aim to involve parents by:

- Inviting them to assemblies
- Inviting them to celebrate Holy Mass
- They are invited to parent meetings when Religious Education is discussed e.g. as their children enter school in Reception, at Curriculum Open Evenings and later as they begin their immediate preparation for the Sacraments.

## Blessed Robert Widmerpool Voluntary Catholic Academy

- Inviting them to special celebrations e.g. Nativity, Carol Service, Holy Week celebrations and Leavers' Mass and Assembly.
- They are encouraged to bring their children to the Holy Mass either Saturday evening or Sunday.
- They are encouraged to support the Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and discuss with their children work being completed when preparing to receive the Sacraments.
- Providing information on the school blog regarding all areas of RE
- Strengthening Parish links by displaying the Parish newsletter on the school blog
- Inviting them to share their views often through questionnaires and Parent Voice