



St Sebastian's RC Primary School

Catholic Social Teaching Policy

Names and Designation of Policy Author(s)	Caroline Doyle, Headteacher	Is this a Statutory Document?	
		No	
Approved by:	SMT		
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Links to other strategies, policies, procedures etc.	Religious Education Policy, Prayer and Liturgy Policy		

1. The context of this Catholic Social Teaching policy

"Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31)

Catholic social teaching (CST) is rooted in Scripture, formed by the wisdom of Church leaders, and influenced by grassroots movements. It is our moral compass, guiding us on how to live out our faith in the world.

Jesus' instruction to *"love your neighbour as yourself"* (Mark 12:31) is at the heart of how Catholics believe they should participate in their community and the wider world.

Our faith calls us to love God and to love our neighbours in every situation, especially our sisters and brothers living in poverty. Following in the footsteps of Christ, we hope to make present in our unjust and broken world, the justice, love and peace of God.

Modern Catholic Social Teaching is said to have originated in 1891 with the encyclical letter, *Rerum Novarum*. Since then, a wealth of teaching continues to give new life to the Scriptures and shape the Church's response to our modern world. Pope Francis' further enhanced Catholic Social Teaching with his own encyclicals including *Laudato Si'* (2015) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020)

We teach our children to be thoughtful about and challenging of the world's organisations and communities; we must work together to build a better world for the future.

St Sebastian's Mission Statement

Keeping Christ at the heart of all we do, we will:

- Show kindness
- Spread joy
- Share peace
- Love everyone
- Speak the truth
- Respect everything

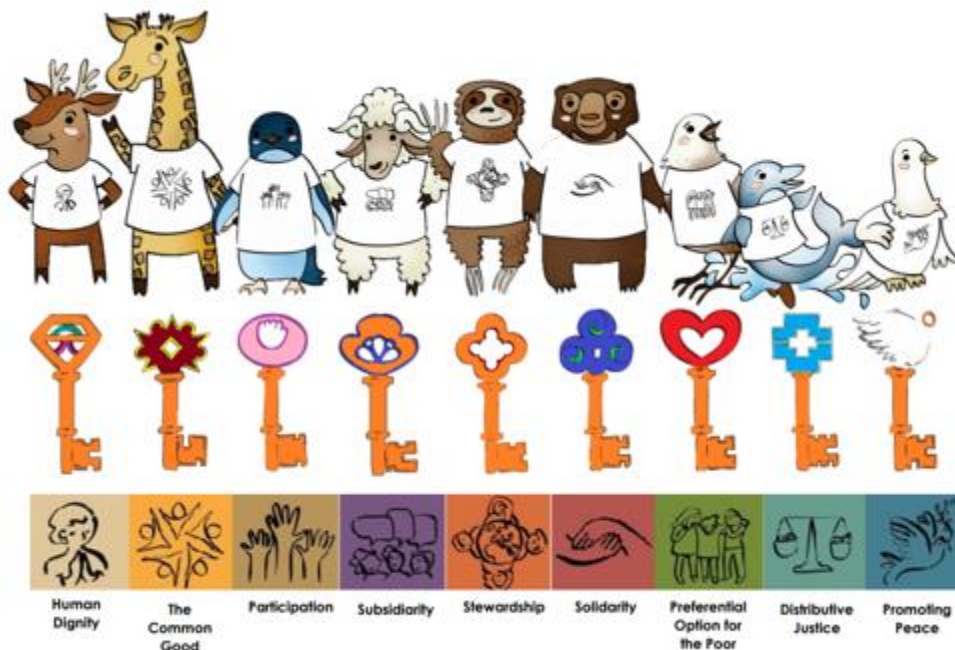
Overview of Catholic Social Teaching provision

The Catholic Church has seven principles of social teaching that we share with our children through all that we do, through the curriculum, special events and activity and through our ordinary actions in school.

At St Sebastian's, Catholic Social Teaching is incorporated into our curriculum. Children are asked to put their faith into action and reflect on how their learning enables them to do so. Each collective worship refers to Catholic Social Teaching mission, which helps make the worship relevant to our lives today.

Catholic Social Teaching underpins the essence of our daily school life. As members of the Catholic Church, we are all called upon to preserve the dignity of all human beings, to care for creation, and to reach out to our sisters and brothers in need. Pope Francis emphasised that it is our duty to work together to bring about a more just and peaceful world: to put love into action. It is vital that our children can articulate the connection between Jesus' teaching and doing good deeds.

We use the CAFOD Catholic Social Teaching resources and the animal mascots to support the children's understanding of principles.



Human Dignity – Everyone is Special

St Paul tells us that each person is a work of art, created by God and chosen for a unique purpose. Ephesians 2:10

At St Sebastian's we recognise the human dignity of others by:

- being respectful
- treating people equally
- raising awareness of civil rights
- preferential option for the vulnerable

The Common Good– Taking Part in our Communities

"You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to them what is theirs." St Ambrose (340-397 AD)

At St Sebastian's we show we are part of a community by:

- working together
- working for the common good
- participating and engaging
- being active members of our community

Participation – The dignity of Work

Do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honour. (James 3:17)

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40

At St Sebastian's we recognise the dignity of work by:

- respecting all workers
- contributing to society
- making responsible economic choices
- supporting wellbeing and workers' rights
- sharing our talents with others

Subsidiarity– All people Should have a Say

Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right- Psalm 106:3

Fear not for I am with you. I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

At St Sebastian's we acknowledge our rights and responsibilities by:

- recognising our duties as members of a community
- standing up for what is right
- following our school rules: Ready, Respectful, Safe

Stewardship – Caring for God's Creation and Gifts

The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion...Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. Pope Francis - Laudato Si

At St Sebastian's we show we care for creation by:

- taking responsibility for our environment

- making environmentally responsible choices
- having awe and wonder for the natural world

Solidarity – We are One Big Family

Blessed Pope Paul VI taught that *"If you want peace, work for justice"*. The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers.

At St Sebastian's we show solidarity by:

- raising awareness of social justice
- writing to our local leaders
- praying for others
- making connections
- making socially responsible choices

Preferential option for the poor – some people need extra help

'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Matthew 25:35-40

At St Sebastian's we show a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable by:

- fundraising for charitable causes
- raising awareness
- treating others with dignity and respect
- thinking of the needs of others

Distributive Justice – Being Fair

...we are agreed today that the earth is essentially a shared inheritance, whose fruits are meant to benefit everyone.' Pope Francis - Laudato Si

At St Sebastian's we recognise the need to share the world's resources fairly by:

- by sharing our belongs

Promoting Peace – We can be God's instruments of peace

"Our common bonds of humanity demand that we live in harmony and that we promote what is good for one another. These ethical implications are the reason why solidarity is a basic key to peace." St John Paul II

At St Sebastian's we show we are people of peace by:

- treating each other kindly
- turning away from conflict
- creating bonds between people

Class custodians

Each class is a custodian of one of the mascots. They will have a particular focus on the Catholic Social Teaching principle that the mascot represents and will put the principle into action by raising awareness and /or fundraising.

Nursery	Distributive justice (sharing fairly - DJ the dolphin)	Mother and Babies – collection during Nativity play. Children to then buy items to donate.
Reception	Participation (taking part - Patariki the penguin)	Mother and Babies – collection during Nativity play. Children to then buy items to donate.
Year 1	Human Dignity (everyone is special - Luc the deer)	Visit old people homes (Holly House)
Year 2	The common good (thinking of everyone- Chikondi the giraffe)	Food bank Harvest Collection
Year 3	Stewardship (caring for God's gifts - Sofia the sloth)	CAFOD Big Lent Walk Year 3
Year 4	Solidarity (showing we care - Shristi the sun bear)	Litter picking – school grounds and local community
Year 5	Subsidiarity (everyone should have a say - Sid the sheep)	Visit old people homes (Holly House)
Year 6	Preferential option for the poor (putting people most in need first- Poppy the popokotea)	Macmillan/ Community Coffee morning
Whole School	Promoting peace (being peacemakers- daisy the dove)	See below – aligns with school Gospel Value

Pupil Leadership at St Sebastian's

We nurture pupil leadership through three key groups that play an active role in enhancing the spiritual, social and environmental life of our school community: the *Laudato Si Team*, the *School Council*, and the *Mission Team*.

Laudato Si Team (Eco Club) Made up of representatives from Years 1 to 6, this team focus on caring for creation and promoting eco-awareness across school. Pupils who wish to be considered present to their classmates, who then vote for their representative. Twelve children will be selected annually, and each member receives a badge to mark their role.

School Council This elected group of 12 pupils represents the student body and help to build strong links with the wider community. Their contributions include organising coffee mornings, supporting events such as the Summer Social and Christmas Fair, and working on initiatives to improve school life. Members will be elected annually by their peers and also receive leadership badges.

Mission Team Dedicated to supporting the Catholic ethos of St Sebastian's, this team play an active role in prayer, liturgy, and faith-based initiatives. Open to pupils from Year 3 upwards, candidates apply for the role and, once selected, remain members throughout their time at the school. The team also work in collaboration with the other leadership groups.

Mission Team members receive purple school hoodies in recognition of their long-term commitment.

Resourcing

Catholic social teaching is central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources. The Catholic character of the school is reflected through our actions including raising awareness through fundraising and taking the mission of the church into the community.

Training and formation

All new staff will be supported during induction and beyond, so that they fully understand the responsibility they carry within their individual role for educating pupils about Catholic social teaching in the school. Any individual training needs will be identified and addressed through training and formation. There will also be the opportunity for whole-staff professional development at least once a year, so that all staff understand the importance of Catholic social teaching and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of Catholic social teaching will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.