



Monday 9th February 2026

Parental Safeguarding Session



Aims

- Explore how Catholic Social Teachings underpin our safeguarding and pastoral work and support here at school.
- Reflect on how we build and develop 'character' in our students.
- Consider how the above work fosters a sense of belonging across our school community.



Catholic Social Teachings



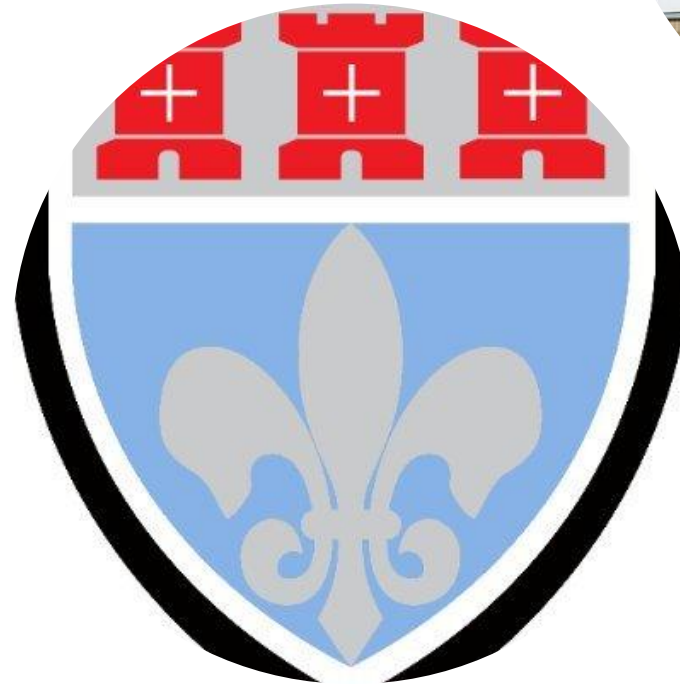
Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching is a body of Church teaching (doctrine) that attempts to address social, economic and political issues, emphasising the dignity and rights of all people, underpinned by the teachings of Jesus. The 'Golden Rule' - Jesus' teaching that we should 'love one another' - is at the heart of Catholic Social Teachings. In short, this teaching focuses on us all living out in a practical manner the Gospel values of love, care, forgiveness, friendship, tolerance, respect and compassion.

Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

- **Sacredness** of life and the **dignity** of the human person
- Call to **family, community** and **participation**
- **Human rights** and the responsibility to protect them
- Preferential option for the **poor** and **vulnerable**
- Dignity of **work** and the **rights** of workers/students
- **Solidarity** with all people as one global family
- **Stewardship** and **care** for God's creation

**How do the seven
themes of Catholic
Social Teaching impact
and influence
our pastoral and
safeguarding work here
at school?**



How do we build 'character' in our students
here at St Mary's?

As part of the Personal Development of our students, to ensure they develop both holistically and academically, developing their 'character' is vital. The term 'character' and, what we mean when we talk about our students having 'character', is very broad. The term relates to 'the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual'. But what type of 'character' do we want our students to develop and how do we do this?



Character Education

- the ability to remain motivated by long-term goals, to see a link between effort in the present and pay-off in the longer-term, overcoming and persevering through, and learning from, setbacks when encountered;
 - the learning and habituation of positive moral attributes, sometimes known as ‘virtues’, and including, for example, courage, honesty, generosity, integrity, humility and a sense of justice, alongside others;
 - the acquisition of social confidence and the ability to make points or arguments clearly and constructively, listen attentively to the views of others, behave with courtesy and good manners and speak persuasively to an audience; and
 - an appreciation of the importance of long-term commitments which frame the successful and fulfilled life.
-

How do we develop character in our young people?

The Department for Education believes that there are six 'Character Benchmarks' that summarise the most important features of excellent school provision for 'character education':

- What kind of school are we?
- What are our expectations of behaviour towards each other?
- How well do our curriculum and teaching develop resilience and confidence?
- How do we support students' extra-curriculum?
- How do we promote the value of volunteering and service to others?
- How do we ensure that all our pupils benefit equally from what we offer?

Belonging

Belonging

The Department for Education believes that all students should be able to **Achieve**, **Belong**, and **Thrive** at school.

To review how students 'belong to a school' it will look at the extent to which students:

- Feel valued and safe: this includes emotional safety and that they are respected as individuals within the school.
- Feel part of the school community: students identify with and feel personally accepted by the school environment.
- Contribute positively and have their voices heard: student voice is gathered, acted upon, and embedded into school systems.

Belonging

Belonging is not a standalone concept but is woven through all areas of school life.

- **Inclusion:** the removal of barriers so all students, especially those with vulnerability and/or SEND, so that they can participate fully.
- **Attendance and Behaviour:** the ‘culture of belonging’ drives engagement. Relationships and inclusive routines reduce absence and improve behaviour.
- **Personal Development and Wellbeing:** emotional safety, mental health support, and representation in the curriculum to ensure every child feels they matter.

Feeling Valued and Safe

Every student is treated with **dignity** and **fairness**. Calm, predictable boundaries and respectful relationships.

Safety is the foundation for learning, attendance and behaviour.

When students feel unsafe or unseen, this could lead to avoidance, disruption, absence. Therefore, we:

- Meet-and-greet at the door.
- Dignity.
- Restorative language.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Clear reintegration after incidents/absence.

Thank you so much!