

Rejoice always, pray continually,  
give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.  
**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**



## Collective worship policy

### **Mission Statement**

Growing together in Christ

Our special purpose is to live, learn and work together in the presence of Christ.

### **The nature of Collective Worship.**

Collective worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving 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.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable our school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'<sup>1</sup>

### **Legal Requirements**

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily act of worship offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

### **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School**

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Collective 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;

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<sup>1</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- Those from other faith backgrounds.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

### **The Aims of Collective Worship**

We believe that Collective 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 experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

### **Principles**

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church<sup>2</sup>. In order to do this, celebrations will:
  - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
  - be appropriately paced and their length linked to the age of the pupils.
  - Include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

### **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the RE scheme, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupil skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

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<sup>2</sup> Directory for masses with Children, paragraph 9.

### **The Timetable of Collective Worship is below.**

Monday we meet in key stages to reflect on the gospel. We listen to the Word of God and reflect on its meaning and how we can follow this in our lives. We have quiet, reflective time and sing appropriate hymns. Pupils are beginning to take a leading role in this prayer time.

On Thursdays in key stage 1 and Friday in key stage 2 we have class prayer liturgies. The latter are based on Bible stories, liturgical times or the statements to live by and are led by pupils. On other days classes have prayer liturgies in their classes or year groups. A range of resources are used and pupils take a leading role in planning and leading prayers and liturgies.

### **Resources**

We have a range of resources available to teachers and pupils -as well as online resources.

### **The learning environment**

The Word of God is displayed at different places around school. Scripture is included in all RE displays. Also symbols and icons of the Catholic faith are displayed in school and throughout its premises to encourage our school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'<sup>3</sup>Each class has a prayer focus area- this always includes a Bible reading relevant to the liturgical year or the topics being covered in the class at that time. It also has

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

### **Voluntary Worship and Retreats**

We have school masses at least once a half term. Also the parish mass is held in school every Friday and one class attends.

Every year group has at least one half day for retreats every year and year 3 and 6 go to Ladywell for a day of reflection.

### **Eucharist**

We attend Eucharistic Adoration twice a year - each class having an opportunity to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament

### **The Lead for Collective Worship**

Members of SLT have a lead role in facilitating collective worship for key stages. IN EYFS and key stage 1 although liturgies are generally teacher led, pupils are encouraged to be as involved as much as possible with their own prayer contributions. In key stage 2 pupils are encouraged to take an active role in planning and leading and contributing to prayer liturgies. Pupil chaplains are actively involved in leading prayer liturgies for classes and key stages.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the headteacher, SLT and the RE lead and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.

November 2023.

Appendix 1

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<sup>3</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

### **The Role of the Lead for Collective Worship**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Collective Worship
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

### **Professional development/Ongoing formation**

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

### **Resources**

- Evaluating existing resources.
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently.