

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Living and Learning Together – Shining in our Faith



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Intent

The aim of Religious Education at St Mary's Catholic Primary School is to promote the Catholic vision of the dignity and freedom of every person, as created in the image and likeness of God. This vision inspires and encourages the beliefs and values, which are lived out in the daily life of the Catholic school.

Within this vision, Religious Education is a journey of formation involving every member of the school community, together with the pupil's family and parish community. Religious Education is the foundation of the entire educational process.

Our intent is to provide a high quality Christian Education based upon the teachings of Christ in the gospels, recognising the uniqueness of each member of our school, enabling every one of them to develop his or her gifts and talents to the full.

The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian 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 relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

Worship in St. Mary's 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;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

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

Implementation

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
- Reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- Explore their own beliefs

- Respond to and celebrate life
- Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- Develop a common ethos and shared values
- Enrich religious experience
- Grow in liturgical understanding and development
- Reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- Reinforce positive attitudes
- Participate fully
- 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 an enriching experience, 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.¹

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be short and appropriately paced (children's attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life *i.e.*, 5-6 mins. For Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins. For Key Stage 2);
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings (for example, the classroom, hall, spiritual garden)
- be held in a special, prayerful atmosphere.

Collective worship in our school will be:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- monitored
- evaluated

School Weekly Timetable for Collective Worship

Day	Grouping	Topic / Celebration
Monday (10.20 – 10.45am)	Whole School Collective Worship	Led by Mrs Preston
Tuesday	Classroom Collective Worship	Planned using Collective Worship Planning formats. Linked to the weekly theme.
Wednesday	Classroom Collective Worship	Planned using Collective Worship Planning formats. Linked to the weekly theme.

Thursday	Classroom Collective Worship	Planned using Collective Worship Planning formats. Linked to the weekly theme.
Friday (pm)	Whole School Collective Worship	Led by Mrs Preston. Introducing the Sunday gospel.
Daily prayers also take place at the start and end of the school day and before lunch time as part of the life of our school.		

Resources

All classes have a Collective Worship box of resources. A Collective Worship CD of resources has been shared with the staff, a book of weekly worship ideas linked to the Sunday Gospel, the Wednesday Word and the Ten Ten Resources are used to plan the Monday and Friday worships. There is also a termly planner of themes upon which to base classroom worship. The planner gives guidance when choosing scripture readings, resources and correct liturgical colours.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

Mrs Joanne Preston is the co-ordinator for Collective Worship and Religious Education. (Appendix 1 contains the 'Roles and Responsibilities of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator')

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Subject Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

- ✓ Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- ✓ Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan
- ✓ Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family 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

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- ✓ Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- ✓ Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship
- ✓ Informing the governing body of standards and developments in Collective Worship

Communication

- ✓ Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Collective Worship

- ✓ Reporting to and consulting with the governors 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 Archdiocese

Professional Development / On-going formation

- ✓ Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- ✓ Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- ✓ 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

Appendix 2

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.) We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that 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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, "on a special occasion".

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Head teacher.

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.