

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Collective Worship Policy





St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Collective Worship Policy



Each one of us has been created by God for a special purpose and is therefore uniquely special. Together we pray, grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus.

The Nature of Collective Worship:

We believe that Christian worship in St. Joseph's Catholic Primary 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 with the Father, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Legal Requirements:

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose, in the power of the Holy Spirit is to show reverence to God our Father, Jesus his son, Mary his blessed Mother, the angels and saints, and to give thanks for the wonderful world created for us to live in. A daily act of worship is offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can either be a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups to ensure that collective worship is age appropriate.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that Collective Worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Catholic church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of others.

While all our acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the wider and global community in line with the RE programme "Come and See".

Collective worship and assembly can be distinct activities although they will usually form part of the same gathering. We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil the requirement or the spirit of collective worship.

Right of withdrawal

In choosing a Catholic School for your child we expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act, restated in the 1988 Education reform Act.

The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from Collective Worship.

Children are not excused from National Curriculum Religious Education as this is a statutory expectation.

Aims and Purpose of Collective Worship:

The Aims and Purpose of Collective Worship are:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To provide an opportunity for the children to praise and worship God;
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- To encourage participation and response;
- To enrich religious experiences
- To develop the skills of:
 - Reverence
 - Contemplation
 - Reflection
 - Interpretation
 - Empathy
 - Meditation
- To encourage children to respond to and celebrate life
- To develop in the children a sense of belonging, community and faith;
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- To teach children how to worship
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- 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 at St. Joseph's will:

- Give glory and honour to God.
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character.
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the church.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of settings and in a variety of groupings in order to help personalise the experience.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our Schools

We endorse the belief that 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 can be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship in this school is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Organisation of Collective Worship

Good worship happens when the whole school community, staff and pupils, are fully involved in the preparation and celebration. Time for worship is in addition to the 10% curriculum time for classroom Religious Education, as required by the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales. Within St. Joseph's, liturgy and worship provides opportunities for the community to come together to celebrate and share. Parents of a class leading a Class Assembly are invited to join the worship, as well as individual class Masses and whole school Masses that take place throughout the year.

Timetable of Worship

Day	Who is involved	Led by:	Worship:
Monday	KS1 & KS2	Headteacher/RE Lead	Gospel Assembly
Tuesday	Whole school	Classteacher	Collective Worship – well-being focus
Wednesday	KS1 & KS2	Headteacher	Hymn Practice
Thursday	Whole school	Class teacher	Collective Worship
Friday	Whole school	Headteacher/RE Lead	Celebration Assembly/ Class Assembly

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that Collective Worship is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect the children to behave in an appropriate way. Pupils are actively involved in planning and delivering acts of Collective Worship at the end of each Come and See unit in their class. They plan each of the four sections Gather, Listen, Respond and Go Forth. Children are quiet and thoughtful and listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayers and hymns. The pupils create an appropriate atmosphere by choosing music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point during the worship.

We take the themes of our Collective Worship from the traditions of the Catholic faith and we often reflect the feast days and events of the Catholic calendar. The Leader of Learning for Religious Education provides a different theme for Collective Worship each week. Often the themes of our Collective Worship reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the Come and See programme. We plan our assemblies based on the unit of work we are studying in the 'Come and See programme.'

Twice a week children have assemblies delivered by the Head Teacher or RE Lead. One assembly is a Gospel Assembly, based on the Gospel from the previous Sunday. This allows children to understand the significance and importance of the Gospel reading and how it relates to their daily life and our school values. The other Headteacher led assembly celebrates the children's achievements and certificates are awarded. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all pupils are valued and all achievements are recognised.

Throughout the year each class delivers an assembly based on the work they are studying in Come and See and parents and family attend. The class assemblies are closely planned around the four elements of worship (Gather, Listen, Respond and Go Forth).

During the academic year we work closely with our parish, Holy Family, to prepare liturgies and Masses. The Parish Priest will lead these and involve the children in their preparation as appropriate to age and circumstances.

EYFS and KS1:

A year group service with priest

Ash Wednesday Service (if in term-time)

KS2:

Two reconciliation services (Advent and Lent)

Ash Wednesday Service (if in term-time)

One year group Mass, prepared by the children with support from the priest and class teachers

KS1 & KS2

Masses for Solemnities, Feast Days and Holy Days as agreed with the Parish Priest.

Our acts of collective worship will involve some or all of the following features:

1. Entrance music
2. Introduction
3. Focus or symbol
4. Sign of the Cross
5. Hymn
6. Reading
7. Commentary
8. Response to the reading-dialogue
9. Prayer
10. Thought for the day

11. Blessing
12. Recessional music

We welcome governors attendance at our assemblies any time.

Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

EYFS Worship Includes:

- Short and simple prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be
- Liturgies
- Drama

Key Stage 1 Worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word

Key Stage 2 Worship includes:

- Liturgies with ritual and variety
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word; and/or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the communion rite □
Angelus/Regina Caeli

General:

- Following a structure with reference to the church's seasons, 'Come and See', significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship.
- Involving consultation with appropriate parties e.g. parish priests and reference to school aims and policies.
- With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community.
- With a variety of styles such as reflection, reflection, meditation, story, prayer areas etc.
- To include stories from the Old Testament, as well as Christian virtues and provide opportunities to lead/be lead by other pupils.

- To integrate school values and statements to live by support the delivery of key messages as appropriate.
- To encourage children of other faiths to share their faith and culture. Through Head teacher assemblies, class Acts of Worship, class assemblies and the use of an outdoor prayer space, children will be given the opportunity to be proud of their culture through sharing their experiences in a prayerful context.
- To develop in pupils, skills that enable them to prepare, organise and take part actively in worship.

Each classroom has a designated worship focus area which includes a display relating to the ‘Come and See’ theme, this is changed regularly either by the teacher or by the children. The children are initially guided by the teacher to create a prayer focus area but eventually are given the opportunity to select their own resources to create this space.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. Each year group is invited to prepare a Mass specifically for the group. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximized. (NB: Active participation does not mean every child actually doing some visible activity. It means real, interior, conscious participation). When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to appropriate support materials and advice, for example, “The Welcome Table” and “Planning Masses with Children” as a basis for our practice.

The Parish Priest celebrates these Masses which parents and carers are invited to attend, and take place in the Parish church.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach. In school therefore, the ‘Liturgy of the Word’, rather than the Eucharist will be the norm. However, a number of times throughout the year we celebrate Mass as a whole school, e.g. Beginning and end of terms. Feast days and solemnities and Holy days. These take place in Holy Family Church and parents and parishioners are made welcome.

Worship Leaders

A voluntary group of children from Y6 assists in leading religious activities throughout the school year. They provide support in planning assemblies and Masses, are members of CAFOD club and support younger children in prayer groups during break/lunch time. In addition they assist with reading, organising music and acting during assemblies.

Special Educational Needs:

It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that every child can participate in acts of collective worship to the best of their ability.

Health and Safety:

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that all health and safety procedures are followed and that equipment is both used and placed safely to ensure no harm or injury.

In particular the policy and risk assessment for the use of candles, incense etc., must be read and followed.

Safeguarding:

All usual safeguarding procedures must remain in place. A disclosure during collective worship/prayer time must be treated in accordance with our usual policies and procedures.

The Role of the Leader of Learning for Collective Worship:

- Formulates a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensures that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils
- Ensures that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it
- Organises themes for Worship
- Assists the governors and Headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship

The Leader of Learning for Collective Worship is also responsible for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of collective worship.

This task involves:

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

The Leader of Learning for Collective Worship will also:

- Communicate to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Collective Worship
- Lead and organise in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attend appropriate in-service courses and report back
- Report to and consult with the governors and Headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Act as consultant to colleagues
- Encourage positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Inform newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicate with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaise with the parish priest
- Liaise with other school Leaders of Learning at termly, Trust meetings.
- Liaise with the Diocesan RE personnel
- Evaluating existing resources and purchase new ones when required. This might include: visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, relevant books, posters etc., the invitation of visitors, and leaders.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

It is the role of the named school Governor with responsibility for Religious Education and Collective Worship to monitor this policy and practice of Collective Worship supported by the Leader of Learning for Religious Education every two years. The Governor liaises with the Headteacher before reporting to the Governing Body on Religious Education and Collective Worship.

The school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship in accordance with the school improvement planning cycle. This may include observation, scrutinising planning of worship/pupil interview.

Governors will systematically monitor the Catholicity and provision of and response to worship for pupils of their school visits using the agreed evaluation sheet.

Last Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: September 2027