

Introduction

We believe that Christian worship in our Catholic school 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.

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

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

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

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 worship and praise 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.

Collective Worship normally will be arranged to take place during the period set aside at the start of each school day. This period of time is referred to as Registration and Assembly. All acts of collective worship will involve a mix of people from the involved group.

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

- Entrance music
- Introduction
- Focus or symbol
- Sign of Cross
- Hymn
- Reading
- Commentary
- Response to reading – dialogue
- Prayer
- Theme of the week
- Blessing
- Recessional Music

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 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 pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year 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.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

The school has a team of chaplains who work to support the school (all on a part-time basis). The chaplaincy team consists of

Tony Mills, School Lay Chaplain

Fr David O'Donnell, Priest Chaplain (Parish priest of St Francis)

Deacon Maurice Scanlon;

Annmarie Wilson, Deputy Headteacher;

Rob Aldridge, Head of RE and

Huw Powell, Headteacher

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. 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 maximised. When preparing these celebrations consideration will be made to the faith journey of students within the school community.

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.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the SLT and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every three years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Policy Approved: November 2019

Policy Review Date: November 2022