

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY ACADEMY

Mr. J O'Connor – Head Teacher

Collective Worship Policy



Approved by: Joseph O'Connor	Date: June 2024
Review Date: September 2025	

Policy for Collective Worship

Vision Statement

Our Mission statement

“We value all in the name of Jesus the Christ”

The Nature of Collective Worship.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, and 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.¹

Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (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 Academy School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Joint Local Joint Local Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

¹ It is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of ‘Collective Worship’ in schools. ‘Collective Worship’ is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. ‘Prayer’ and ‘Liturgy’ are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

² 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 need to 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

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

We will endeavor that 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
- 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.³ 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
 - Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

³ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Organisation of Collective Worship

Tuesday /Thursday class worship or Key Stage Collective Worship

Whole school worship Monday

Wednesday class worship and hymn practice

Friday class worship and whole school celebration gathering

Reflective times for prayer throughout the day

The school uses the 'Statements to Live by' as a basis for Liturgy and the theme is displayed throughout the school. The Headteacher and RE Lead whole school worship on a Monday, along with the children's chaplaincy team. All staff take responsibility to share in key stage School liturgies and help pupils to take part. This may be helping plan and prepare for liturgies of compose and select their own readings based on the theme.

The school also links with the Church Calendar and plans liturgies both at whole school, key stage and year group level and prayer/reflection time are given during October/ May (Rosary) December (Advent) March/April (Lent).

Parents, guardians and children will be told about any special events and collective worship that will be held in the Parish, e.g. Mothering Sunday Mass and Candlemas.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- ❖ Statements to live by
- ❖ Themes from RE teaching and to address personal, social and emotional needs within each class.
- ❖ following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, feast days, statements to live by and 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's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way. Emphasis on children planning and creating an atmosphere to pray.
- ❖ Following the structure of 'gather, word, reflection, mission,' mirroring that of other Liturgies and Masses.
- ❖ In KS1 children begin to plan their own collective worship and create the focal point. In KS2 the children plan their own class collective worship and evaluate them. See Progressive planning in collective worship document.

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded:

- ❖ most often, but not always on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- ❖ through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the provision of worship will be audited 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. Where possible, an inset day will be RE based each year.

The school also aims to make use of the church to support learning and staff are also encouraged to take children here for special events and liturgies wherever practically possible.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school and at Church will highlight a special occasion for all and will normally be celebrated with the whole school community. The sacramental programs are parish led and celebrated by the schools but led by parishioners. 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.

When planning Collective Worship staff will:

- **Have quiet music for pupils to enter and leave the hall, or to start their class worship;**
- **Have a focal point with candles, artefacts and drapes;**
- **Use music as a prayer (Hymns or songs);**
- **Teach the children the rites of Mass- Sign of the Cross, Responses to the readings, formal prayers (Hail Mary, Our Father, Glory Be);**
- **Create a stillness and reflection at the appropriate parts;**
- **Read a gospel story.**

At 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
- silent reflection

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies, reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.
- Silent reflection

Class Collective Worship

- A whole class collective worship will take place three times a week from EYFS up to Year 6.
- Each collective worship will be separated into: gather, word, reflect and mission.
- Alongside this, EYFS will have creative worship activities available for the children to access within their provision.
- In EYFS- the children will understand which liturgical colours should be used in the collective worship. They will also be able to choose artefacts to support with the setting up of the focal point
- In KS1- children will be able to set up their own focal point independently and choose begin to use the collective worship cards to help plan the collective worship.

- In KS2- children will be able to plan their collective worships independently linking with the liturgical calendar correctly. They will be able to share appropriate scripture quotes, readings or stories within the collective worship and be able to relate these to real life situations. All children in KS2 will have the opportunity to lead collective worship.
- All children will have the opportunity to evaluate the collective worships throughout the year.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship: Headteacher, the RE subject leader with support from the

chaplaincy team. Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in light of any changes.