

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School



Collective Worship Policy



ST AUGUSTINE'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mission Statement

Vision

To provide an outstanding Catholic education which embraces the Kingdom of God and maximises the potential of all.

Mission

Our mission is to 'Serve the Lord in gladness' by...

- Ensuring a safe, secure learning environment where children thrive surrounded by God's love.
- Nurturing every child's unique gifts and talents given to them by God.
- Being living witnesses to the teachings of Christ in our homes, school, parish and wider community.

Values

Our values are known as 'Attitudes of Being' and are based on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5).

I will serve like Jesus by being:

- Happy
- Gentle
- Just and fair
- Forgiving
- Honest
- A peacemaker

I will serve like Jesus by being the best I can be!



The Nature of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St Augustine's 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. Worship is at the very heart of St Augustine's and must reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities. Collective worship is this community's response to God, which invites us to enter into a loving relationship with Him, made possible by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We believe that Christian worship in our 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 celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'¹

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;
- 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 at St Augustine's school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- 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.²
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.

Planning, content and celebration

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations including Family Masses and 'Stay and Pray' collective worship sessions. A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Staff prayers take place at every staff meeting and every Friday during Advent and Lent.

The timetable of Collective Worship is as below:

- Monday- Key Stage Liturgy (Sunday's Gospel)
- Tuesday- Whole School 'Statements to Live By' assembly
- Wednesday- Key Stage 2 Collective Worship. The teachers lead worship by using the 'Wednesday Word.' Each Wednesday the children receive a copy of the "Wednesday Word" to take home and share with the people in their family.
- Thursday- Class reflection and prayer.
- Friday- Whole school Collective Worship.

At Key Stage 1 Worship includes:

- Frequent short, simple liturgies and prayer times.
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word.
- The occasional celebration of sacramental liturgies.
- A range of types of prayer.
- A range of styles of celebration opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship.

At Key Stage 2 Worship includes:

- Frequent short, simple liturgies and prayer times.
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer and/or the Communion Rite.
- The occasional celebration of Sacramental liturgies.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- A range of types of prayer
- A range of styles of celebration
- Opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship
- Opportunities for pupils to take leadership roles in worship

Whole School

The Headteacher (or a member of SLT) and RE lead whole school in Collective Worship every Monday and Friday, with individual classes and teachers leading worship in between. The theme is closely linked with the liturgical year so that all members of the school community have an understanding of the readings, colours and messages we listen to and see on Sunday at Mass.

Class Worship

All staff in school seek to inspire children in their faith. They lead and model good practice and also give children the opportunity to participate, take ownership of their learning and develop their own relationship with God. Children are encouraged to share their ideas and thoughts planning and leading worship.

Worship in the classroom should:

- 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 minutes for Key Stage 1 and 7-10 minutes for Key Stage 2.
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of forms of worship.

Recording

Examples of Collective Worship is recorded in class Collective Worship books.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE Leader monitors class collective worship books once a term. Collective Worship learning walks take place every year. Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the DSEF.

The learning environment

Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment. Vision, Mission and Values are prominently displayed in all classrooms.

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.

Retreats

- Lenten staff retreat
- Y4 retreat celebration of Holy Communion
- Y6 end of year retreat to the Lady Chapel

Other opportunities and Voluntary Worship

- Stations of the Cross every Friday during Lent in the Chapel and once at St Mary's Cathedral.
- Rosary (October and May)

- Eucharist
- Advent Liturgies
- Monthly Family Mass
- Last Supper Mass

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 reference will be made to the 'Directory for Masses with Children' as a basis for our practice.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

The coordinator for Collective Worship

Jo Nicholson

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator 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.

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 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, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship
- Informing the headteacher 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 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 RE Adviser

Professional development / ongoing 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 and budgeting for new resources.
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.

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, 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.

