



St Gerard's Catholic Primary School **Collective Worship Policy**

Mission Statement

Through Jesus, we develop the uniqueness of all children by providing: an engaging education, in an inspiring environment with loving people

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 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 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;
- 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.

Collective worship in our schools will be:

- Properly planned
- Adequately resourced
- Recorded
- Monitored
- Evaluated

Collective Worship

Collective Worship in St Gerard's takes several forms

Every day begins and ends with prayers in the classroom.

Whole School Collective Worship on Wednesday morning is led by either the Executive Head or Head Teacher. It focus on Scripture and aspects of the Liturgical Year

KS1 Collective Worship is held on Tuesday in the hall. (Statements to Live By)

EYFS Collective Worship is held on Wednesday in the hall. (Statements to Live By)

KS2 Collective Worship is held on Thursday in the hall. (Statements to Live By)

Whole School Collective Worship and assembly on Friday morning is led by either the Executive Head or Head Teacher. It focus' on celebrating the achievements of pupils throughout the week. Each class has a star of the week - addition awards are often given for specific events/activities.

Prayer group is held on a Thursday lunch time in Mrs Taylor's classroom- themes for prayer group follow the liturgical year (E.G. Rosary in October and May)

Class collective worship takes place on any day when there is not a whole school or Key Stage Collective Worship.

Parents are invited into classes -termly- to take part in Advent, Lenten and Pentecostal Worship. In addition to this they are invited into whole school Collective Worship at various other times in the Liturgical Year

Resources

A wealth of religious resources are kept in both a central area and in classes. A log of resources is kept in the RE coordinators file and these are also on display in the central RE resource cupboard.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

Prayer group is held every Thursday with Mrs Taylor. Different approaches to pray are explored and the Liturgical year is followed. For example, during the months of October and May, the Holy Rosary is prayed.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school occur mainly when a priest is available. Welcome Mass (Beginning of the new school year), Holy Days (When we travel to the Cathedral) and Going Forth/Leavers Mass at the end of the school year.

Family Masses take place once every Sunday at St Mary's Cathedral. All families are invited to join in the celebration. The children who are preparing to make their Reconciliation and Holy Communion- take an active part in the readings, bidding prayers and offertory.

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 Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

Mrs Taylor is the RE coordinator and she is supported in her role by the Executive Head and Head of School. Mrs Taylor oversees the daily RE curriculum, Catholic Life of the School and Collective Worship. She informs the Executive Head and Head of School of any impact which they can then add to the RE self-valuation. (DESF)

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

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 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
- 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 / On-going formation

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

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 (Along with Executive Head and Head of School)

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 or Catholic school which has converted to an academy, 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.

Reviewed July 2018 (Updated changes to Collective Worship September 2018)
Mrs F Taylor
RE Coordinator