

Collective Worship

at

St. Mary's RC Primary School



The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving worship, 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.

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 and participate 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 backgrounds
- Those from other world faith backgrounds
- Those from other backgrounds who are admitted to the school under the categories agreed by the Governing Body as the admission authority

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain at a level or faith background appropriate to them.

Worship in the Catholic 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 and reflect on their own beliefs and value systems
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and community
- To develop a common ethos and shared value system
- To enrich religious experience and the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the students
- To grow in liturgical experience, understanding and skills
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To nurture and educate pupils/students on their journey and towards full and active participation in the liturgical life of their faith communities through as full a participation as possible
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give meaning and worth to' life.

Principles

All Acts of Worship at St Mary's will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church
- Help Enable pupils to become prayer leaders

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 (attention span lasts with any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life.
- Be reflective, engaging and clear, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Each class teacher takes responsibility for the planning, content and delivery of collective worship in their class, as well as supporting Key Stage liturgy and shared class worship. The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for the monitoring of collective worship.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal statutory requirement that a daily Act of Worship is provided for all students on the school's register. (This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils/students 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 Curriculum Religious Education.

In Catholic voluntary aided schools responsibility for the provision of collective worship along with the logistics for the provision for Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body and is normally delegated to the Head teacher.

General Information

In general, acts of worship will:

- Follow a structure with reference to the Church's liturgical seasons, curriculum Religious Education, significant feasts, universes and events.
- Have scripture as the main focus
- Involve consultation with appropriate parties, ie. local priests and resource staff within the school and in the context of school aims and policies

- Have flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than just contributing in a token way

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded by the RE (see Appendices One and Two) and includes:

- A liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- Displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be formally evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils/students and whether they are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

Whenever possible we will encourage and promote opportunities to develop this aspect of collective worship.

Examples of this include: the Year 6 end of year retreat day with More Than Dance; Year 3 retreat to Holy Island; whole school Mission Week.

Celebration of Mass

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will be celebrated by all pupils. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for young adults to participate will be maximised.

We believe that all students 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**', will be the norm, though regular Eucharistic celebrations take place.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating collective worship at St Mary's, in liaison with other teaching staff.

Policy Monitoring and Review

The member of the Senior Leadership Team who has responsibility for Collective Worship along with the Head of RE will monitor the policy. It is evaluated and reviewed by the school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors (in the name of the Diocesan Trustees) will have a particular role and responsibility for this review. The overall responsibility of Governors from a statutory perspective and Foundation Governors from the canonical perspective needs to be clearly stated in the context of the denominational nature of the school.