



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Policy for Collective Worship

Mission Statement

We are a caring community which aims to promote respect and understanding of all individuals through a sharing of Catholic Faith and the love of Christ. All children will feel a sense of worth, knowing that they are valued and loved by God in their uniqueness.

We seek to create a learning environment which enables our children to succeed to their best ability and which recognises and values their variety of talents

We acknowledge the importance of our role in support for the family, the parish and the wider community

Rationale:

Collective worship is a vital element of our Catholic school. It is an opportunity for our community to come together to pray, praise, ask, thank, say sorry to and glorify God Our Father. It can be a shared experience but also a chance in quiet reflection to develop an awareness of God's presence in our own lives and to respond to this call. With God's help, we will educate our children to live safely and responsibly, to care for His wonderful creation and to live their lives through the example of Jesus and the values of the Gospel.

Aims & Objectives:

- ◆ to develop our awareness of a variety of forms of worship all of which are valid and valuable.
- ◆ to develop a sense of quiet reflection within our own lives.
- ◆ to foster an environment in which we feel able to pray and worship comfortably.
- ◆ to nurture a real sense of joy in worshipping our God.
- ◆ to develop within our school a respect for the dignity of each human being and provide children with the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the diverse nature of our society.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents/carers and prospective parent/carers 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.

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 in our school

We believe that Christian worship in a 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 with Him, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Collective worship takes place in school daily: staff and pupils are encouraged to pray with thoughtfulness and with respect through a variety of prayer experiences (for example: whole school Masses and liturgies, assemblies and penance services together with Class Worship and voluntary prayer opportunities).

Collective worship takes place in our school every day

- Monday Whole-school Gospel Assembly (led by Executive Principal)

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| | or Head of School) |
| ➤ Tuesday | Phase assemblies |
| ➤ Wednesday | Class Worship (planned by children) |
| ➤ Thursday | Whole School Mass (led by Year groups in turn) |
| ➤ Friday | Gifts from God assembly |

Children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through daily participation in our formal prayers such as our school morning prayer, grace before and after meals and evening prayer. It is important that we enable pupils to participate in the community of the Church through learning our traditional Church prayers: each class teacher a copy of the prayers in their RE file that their class are expected to learn by heart each year.

Prayer areas and Sacred spaces

Each classroom has a prayer focus area to help pupils in their prayer life and is used in acts of class worship; it has reminders of liturgical themes and colours.

During the planning of Class Worship, children are encouraged to make choices of where they would like to pray. The Sacred Garden is a prayerful space for pupils to use during liturgy and as a quiet space to reflect on the Stations of the Cross. Links with Our Lady of the Caribbean Chaplaincy means that classes are able to celebrate class worship in the chapel.

The Eucharist

Celebration of the Mass is central to the Spiritual development of every member of our community. All children are helped to experience the special closeness and presence of God, and we see each Mass as an opportunity to meet, speak to and hear from the Risen Lord, especially in the reception of Holy Communion.

All the children in school participate in the celebration of the Eucharist either through readings, bidding prayers and offertory processions. Each class takes an active lead across the year.

Assemblies

Alongside our weekly Gospel assemblies and phase assemblies, each class leads one class assembly during the year for the whole school to watch. These assemblies have a specific focus based on traditions, Bible stories or the liturgical year (The Nativity, Reconciliation, Story of Zacchaeus, Mother's Day, Our Lord's Passion and Pentecost). Parents and family members are invited through the school newsletter.

Understanding of the Liturgical Calendar

We ensure that pupils are aware of the Liturgical Calendar and key events in the Church. The symbolism of colours is made clear from the earliest days in our school: purple for penance (seen during Advent and Lent), red for Holy Spirit and martyrdom (seen at Pentecost), white, gold for important feasts, green for the ordinary times of the year, blue is associated with Mary.

Some months of the year have special foci: October is the month of the Rosary and the feast of St. Margaret Mary. November is the month when the Holy Souls (the deceased) are prayed for, May is the month when Mary is especially remembered. The month of June is particularly important for the school as we remember the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the great love he has for us.

Partner classes from KS1 and KS2 join together during special times of the year such as Lent and Advent to plan and celebrate joint liturgies and worship.

Gospel Virtues

Each half term, the children develop their understanding of two new virtues (as established in this form by the Jesuits) and strive to apply these to their everyday lives. Children are awarded with weekly certificates for living out these virtues in school and the virtues are displayed prominently around school and in all classes.

Links with parish and families

Liturgies, celebrations and events related to the Catholic Life of our school are shared in school and parish newsletters. Parishioners, parents and families are invited to every weekly mass and celebration assemblies. Children in each class also have the opportunity to take home a Prayer Bag during certain liturgical points of the year, promoting opportunities for children and their families to talk and pray together. The distribution of the Wednesday Word gives families the opportunity to share the word of God at home and supports prayer in the home. Parents of children in Sacramental year groups are also invited to Sacramental Meetings and Commitment Masses as part of the Sacramental Preparation. EYFS and new starters in other year groups are welcomed to the Sacred Heart family with a special welcome mass and presented with prayer books and a crucifix to remind them that Jesus loves them.

Equal Opportunities

The fair and equal treatment of all individuals irrelevant of race, creed, disability or gender, are integral to the Gospels' Revelations and the Church's message and is central to our school mission statement. All children are given equal access to the Religious Education curriculum, promoting their understanding to their full potential.

A variety of prayer and worship activities are used to try to meet all children's different needs e.g. whole School, whole class, group, pair and individual prayer, also different styles of prayer from formal liturgies to private reflective prayer.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of our collective worship will be evaluated by the sense of reverence and respect which is apparent in the children during worship and by the children's sense of joy in praising God in prayer and song.

Throughout the year, as part of the school's monitoring calendar, the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school. Learning walks for Collective worship are carried out regularly by the RE Lead and/or the Executive Principal/Vice Principal.

Ratified Autumn 2019