



Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Our Mission Statement :

'Love One Another As I Have Loved You' (John 13:33-34)

Agreed by Governors on 31st January 2019

Signed  Chair of Governors

To be reviewed : February 2022

Safeguarding Statement :

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all children and expects all staff, parents and volunteers to share this commitment.

Our School Vision

As a Catholic school that puts Christ at the centre, we are committed to developing independent, successful and confident children who have high aspirations, who gain a sense of achievement and leave our school with a wealth of happy memories.

Our Values and Ethos

We believe that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and we value the equality of all, reject discrimination of any kind, and welcome the diversity of different cultures.

Introduction to Collective Worship in our Catholic School

Collective worship in a Catholic school is concerned with the revelation of God's presence so that praise, honour and thanksgiving may be given to Him. Collective worship should strengthen this Eucharistic community, which is called together to give witness to Jesus Christ. 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.

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 by either 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 considered as part of the RE lesson (for time purposes).

In this voluntary aided Catholic school, responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the governing body after consultation with the Head Teacher.

Definitions

Liturgy

Liturgy literally means ‘work of the people’ and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action.

Prayer

One of the early fathers of the Church described prayer as “the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God.” These words of St John Damascene, now found in the catechism, illustrate why in this Catholic school we begin and end each morning and afternoon session with a prayer.

Collective Worship

Collective worship is our loving response, in word and action, to God’s invitation to enter into a relationship with God, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and 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 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 community will provide a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationships with God and develop the following:-

- To contemplate the mystery of God;
- To unite our worshipping Eucharistic community;
- To develop the necessary skills of:
 - reverence
 - contemplation
 - reflection
 - interpretation
 - empathy

· meditation
which will enable our relationships with God to be deepened.

Full participation in our faith will allow us:-

- To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;
- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of prayer.

Implementation

All acts of worship should:-

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants;
- Be clear in their liturgical focus and varied in their delivery;

Collective worship in our school may follow the pattern or variation of the pattern detailed below:-

Gather - how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet/ reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc);

Listen - a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), sharing the word, time to reflect on suitable prayers, including the four main types of prayer i.e Thanks / Asking / Praise / Sorry

Respond - a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme (prayers and songs , gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers, etc);

Go forth- the sending out from the celebration, giving the children something to hold onto from the experience of the liturgy, a mission that they can take into their daily lives.

Also as part of our collective worship time we have introduced Christian Meditation across the school. Our programme of Christian Meditation aims to teach children to find God in stillness, silence, and simplicity. Or as the Old Testament says: ‘Be still and know that I am God. Since its introduction in September 2016 it has proved to be very successful and the feedback from children and staff is very positive.’

Celebration of the Eucharist

We celebrate holy mass with our parish every Tuesday morning at 9.15am. There is rota system for weekly mass where single year groups or two year groups i.e Reception and Year 6 / Year 1 and Year 5 plan attend. At these class masses children introduce the theme of the mass, reading all the scripture readings including their own written prayers and take the offertory gifts. The same applies for whole school masses at key points or celebrations throughout the year.

Throughout Early Years, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through practise and participation in morning, before and after lunch, and home time prayers.

Each child is encouraged to develop personal prayers according to their own experiences.

Each classroom must have a prayer table and religious focus area. These should contain symbolic artefacts and cloths in the correct liturgical colour.

The children are encouraged to take active participation in religious celebrations. These are planned in advance by priest, head teacher and RE subject leader, so they may be included in teachers planning.

School and class masses

As the mass is the centre of the liturgical worship in the Catholic Church, it has an established place in the life of the school. A timetable for each term is planned by the Head teacher, parish priest to include Commitment / Enrolment masses and Parish links. The children are involved in planning and the celebration of mass. Separate Invitations are extended to family and friends to participate.

Every Tuesday morning a class from school attends mass at 9.15am. The children lead the welcome, the readings, bidding prayers and offertory. Each class attends mass in our parish church on a rolling programme, several masses led by the children are held throughout the year:

- Start of academic year Mass
- Welcome mass for Reception children and their parents led by Year 6 prayer friends
- Reconciliation commitment mass for Year 3
- Whole school All Saints' mass
- Confirmation enrolment mass
- Whole school Christmas mass
- Confirmation for Year 6
- Whole school Ash Wednesday mass
- End of spring term mass
- Ascension mass
- Whole school feast of St Peter and Paul mass
- First Holy Communion mass
- Whole school Thanksgiving mass and Leavers' mass independently organised by Year 6 of the school year

Prayer Services

Prayer services are held on a regular basis within classrooms as part of the children's Religious Education programme and collective worship.

Children should be encouraged to prepare and lead the prayer service as appropriate to their age

Older children volunteer and lead prayer services in their own and other classrooms

Assemblies

Monday morning assemblies are usually liturgical in nature and are taken by the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher or a member of SLT.

Friday assemblies are Celebration assemblies or class led assemblies but always begin and end with prayer and hymn singing.

The whole school attend the above assemblies.

There is Key Stage assembly on alternate Thursday mornings

Each class presents an assembly to parents, grandparents and friends at least once a year based on a theme from their Religious Education programme.

Special Liturgical celebrations

Foundation Stage & KS1 perform a Christmas play over two days in the school hall. This reflects the story of the Nativity. Parents, families and parishioners are invited.

Key stage 2 pupils are involved in the presentation of the passion, the death and the resurrection of Jesus. This is presented to the whole school and parents. It is a deeply moving and spiritual experience for all and is used as a teaching tool during Holy Week.

Policy Monitoring and Review

Governors should be aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to collective worship, taking account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, Education Act 1996 and the school standard framework 1998.

In this voluntary aided Catholic school, it is the overall responsibility of governors, in consultation with the headteacher, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and opportunities for quality collective worship are being delivered. Those responsible will ensure that acts of worship are in accordance with the school's trust deed and consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church.

This policy is monitored by the collective worship co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff every two years. Governors should review reports on the prayer life of the school on a termly basis. This will form part of the headteacher's report to governors.

The following will be monitored:-

- Time set aside for collective worship;
- Whether the observed practice is consistent with agreed policy;
- Whether collective worship is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc;
- Staff development on collective worship and its impact;
- Prayer focus and its effectiveness in drawing pupils into prayer;
- Impact on pupils and members of the school community;
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills to access worship and prayer;
- Records of themes and teachings of the Catholic Church covered in collective worship.

Observation and monitoring records should be kept and should form part of the self review process.

Outcomes of monitoring will be communicated to staff and governors with recommendations for future action.

Right of Withdrawal:

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from R.E. lessons and from Collective Worship. Alternative provision will be made. However parents and prospective parents need to be aware that Religious Education impacts on the rest of the curriculum and daily life within the school. Therefore 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 Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship:

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:-

- Formulating a written policy;
- Ensuring that the development of collective worship is included in the RE 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 Catholic teachings;
- Organising themes for worship;
- Assisting the governors and Head Teacher in carrying out their legal responsibilities with regard to collective worship.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to:

- All members of the school community via the school website
- Parish priest
- New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
- New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards collective worship.

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