

Collective Worship Policy, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Mission Statement

Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." At St Thomas More School our Mission is to allow everyone to love and be loved. We believe that Love is: kindness, justice, acceptance, forgiveness and friendship; it is unconditional and inclusive, allowing each one of us to learn and grow to become the wonderful person God created us to be.

The Nature of Collective Worship

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, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Legal Requirements

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

In this school, responsibility for making sure that statutory requirements are met concerning Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the head teacher.

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 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
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church. In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - be as short as possible and appropriately paced
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Worship and Liturgy will take the form of:

- Prayers at the beginning and end of each day, and before meals.
- Longer quiet times of prayer and reflection
- Appropriate assemblies
- Liturgies and Masses

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons and "Come & See", significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- follow the structure of *Welcome, Word, Response, Going Forth*
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded:

- Through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.
- Each class will have a *Collective Worship* book, which will contain photographs showing examples of collective worship and reflection times in the class, at assemblies/liturgies and whole school assemblies and liturgies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Resources

Resources are stored in each class. There is also a central resource.

Voluntary Worship

- Stations of the Cross during Lent
- Y4, Y5 & Y6 confessions during Lent
- Use of rainbow room for all children for quiet time/silent prayer (request should be made to an adult before using the room)

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with all children. 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.

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

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word (follow the structure of Welcome, Word, Response, Going Forth)

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite (follow the structure of Welcome, Word, Response, Going Forth)

Policy Monitoring and Review

Policy agreed March 2019

This policy is monitored by the RE 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.