



SCHOOL PRAYER AND WORSHIP POLICY 2015

"If we gather as we ought – singing together, being silent together, responding together – we will be a community praying, and know that we are such."

(Cardinal Bernardin, Guide to the Assembly, page 10)

Aims:

To contribute to pupils' faith and spiritual development so they can:

- Pray and worship as a Catholic community.
- Understand the importance of prayer and worship in daily living and how it helps us to grow in our relationships with God and with others.
- Experience prayer and worship in a way that makes sense to them and helps them to develop as responsible Catholics so as to value all people of all faiths and communities.
- Recognise a sense of the sacred and holy.
- Have opportunities for worship, and to use prayer and worship as a form of celebration.
- Appreciate the distinctive nature of the celebration of the Mass as central to the life of the Christian community and become aware of all forms of prayer and worship

To contribute to pupil's moral development by encouraging and providing opportunities to:

- Reflect on moral and social issues
- Become more aware of and respect the nature and needs of others
- Develop inclusive attitudes of tolerance and acceptance of difference

To celebrate and engage with the life of St. Joseph's school by:

- Celebrating work undertaken by pupils in all areas of the curriculum
- Contributing to the school community, and place of school community in the wider community
- Developing and reflecting on the values of the school
- Sharing the achievements of members of the school community
- Celebrating our links with other schools locally and across the World

To develop an awareness of pupils' relationship to the wider world by:

- Reflecting on the impact of significant world events
- To celebrate and give thanks for God's world

To explore and share the beliefs of others by providing opportunities to:

- Listen to stories from other faiths and learn about their significance
- Providing appropriate opportunities to have dialogue with other faiths
- Develop awareness of how other faiths worship



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Planning:

At St. Joseph's RC Primary School we will plan through our long term, medium and short term plans for the following:

We will provide whole school worship to follow themes extending over a week or a half a term. These themes will be based on feelings, attitudes, stories or current world events. Assembly themes are based on a strong Catholic ethos. Major festivals, feasts and saints from the Christian tradition and of other faiths will be included.

Assemblies are marked as special times by using symbols appropriate to Christian tradition i.e. the lighting of candles, and/or the focus of a Crucifix or Bible. Other relevant symbols may be used in class Assemblies if they are deemed appropriate. The structure of an assembly will broadly include song, prayer, story or other focus, and time for reflection.

We will encourage children to enter and leave all forms of prayer and worship quietly and calmly, respecting the need for stillness and silence whilst taking part in an act of worship.

We will provide opportunities for children to awaken to feelings and senses from which worship arises:

- A feeling of pride or shared sadness
- A sense of wonder. awe, beauty, pity, smallness in the face of greatness, grandness in the face at smallness, shared loss, peace, thankfulness and of stillness in the midst of a busy existence

We will reflect the broad traditions of the Catholic Faith by giving importance to ideals common to all humanity – life, joy, peace, hope, truth, forgiveness, service, compassion, justice, and respect for life.

Bidding prayers and intercessions are an opportunity to pray not only for our own needs but for the needs of the wider Church and whole World. Formulation of the intercessions may be closely concerned with the occasion and be specific and particular but there should be the inclusion of some general or universal intention.

Teaching and Learning:

Worship also contributes to the general development of pupils. Opportunities will be provided for pupils to develop leadership skills, performance skills, singing ability, speaking in groups and in front of others, and to participate in group preparation and presentation. It is always appropriate to give special support to children especially in preparation so that they may gain confidence and gain a sense of personal satisfaction. Keeping collective worship simple to promote dignity and respect can enhance the celebration and enable all present to engage and feel involved.

Prayers at any time are to be welcomed and valued: particularly if initiated by a child.



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Collective worship will always include prayer and praise by song and reflection, and may include:

- A short passage of scripture or if liturgical a Gospel reading
- A story, poem or piece of literature
- A visual focus
- A personal account of an event or experience in the life of the leader of the worship
- Music/Art/Dance/Drama/Display/Power-Point/other appropriate to needs
- Silence and stillness for reflection
- Group and individual reflection and time for children's responses

Collective worship will usually take place on the school premises but may occasionally be in Church. All classes will start the school day with a prayer. Grace will be said before and after the mid-day meal. Afternoon school will finish with a closing prayer.

Whole school assembly for reasons other than worship (e.g. discipline) will stand completely separate from collective worship.