

# Collective Worship

## Collective Worship

### **Mission Statement**

*Love Jesus  
Love Learning  
Love Life*

*As members of St Joseph's school family we will live our lives by following the example of Christ. We will value each other as individuals and work together so that everyone can develop their full potential both at school and in the whole community.*

### **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 a relationship with Him, made possible by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

### **Definitions**

Collective Worship is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we would readily use in a Catholic context. "Prayer" and "Liturgy" are terms more commonly used.

### **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. The four part structure of Gather-Listen-Respond-Go forth is common to many liturgies – it is one way of understanding the structure of the mass.

### **Prayer**

Once 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 illustrate why in this Catholic school we begin and end each session of the day in prayer. Prayer may be an

individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.

**Prayer consists of:**

*Listening, speaking, reflecting and resting*

## **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 either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfill this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. An assembly is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship and as such be part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear. *For our school community, worship is much more than a legal requirement; it underpins our strong catholic ethos and is at the very heart of our school. It reflects something special or separate from ordinary school activities.*

*Schools must constantly strive to create that distinctively Catholic ethos which is the result of truly Christian relationships and values and in which, prayer, worship and spirituality have a central place. (Curriculum Directory, 1997)*

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

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be considered as part of our RE lessons (for time purposes).

## **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St Joseph's 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.

## The Aims of Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate 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 positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'.

## Principles

Collective Acts of Worship in our school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity
- Give our children positive 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 short and appropriately paced (5-7 mins for Reception and Key Stage One and 7-11 mins for Key Stage Two);
  - ~ be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings;
  - ~ be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help personalise the experience.

**Collective Worship in our school follows the pattern or variation of the pattern detailed below:-**

- **Gathering** – 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), breaking the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;
- **Respond** – a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme (gestures such as stillness, shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers etc);
- **Go Forth** – the sending out from the celebration, giving children something to hold onto from the experience of the worship that they can take into their daily lives.

**Liturgy in our school follows the pattern detailed below:-**

- We Gather
- We Proclaim in Word and Action
- We Respond to the Word
- We Leave

**Liturgical Celebrations in our school will:**

- Be something we all do together adults and children alike.
- Involve all our senses
- Give praise and worship to God
- Be ordinary, simple, dignified and part of our tradition
- Be full of routine
- Take time to be learned
- Be about discovering God together in the ordinary things of life – story and symbol

Through Liturgy we are introducing children to rituals, prayers, language, colours, songs and seasons of the church.

**How Collective Worship is organised in St Joseph’s School**

The current weekly pattern is:

<b>Monday</b>	All children experience worship in their own classrooms or elsewhere in our school (e.g. outside, in our prayer garden, in our Prayer Place, the entrance area) planned/led by the class teacher and/or the children.
<b>Tuesday</b>	The Infant children meet from 2.45pm to 3.15pm. Collective Worship takes place in the school hall and is led by the Infant teachers on a rota basis and the children. Key Stage 2 children experience worship in their own classrooms or elsewhere in our school, led by the class teacher and/or the children.
<b>Wednesday</b>	The Junior children meet as a Key Stage from 9.05a.m. to 9.30 a.m. Collective Worship takes place in the school hall and is led by the Junior teachers on a rota basis and the children. The infants experience worship in their own classrooms led by the class teacher and/or the children.

<b>Thursday</b>	All children experience worship in their own classrooms or elsewhere in our school (e.g. outside, in our prayer garden, in our Prayer Place, the entrance area) planned/led by the class teacher and/or the children.
<b>Friday</b>	There is a whole school gathering in the hall from 9.05a.m.to 9.30a.m. Both adults and children experience worship as a school family led by our Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher other members of the SLT, members of a class or Key Stage, or visitors to our school.

## **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship and Liturgy**

### **Collective Worship and Liturgy are planned:**

- following a structure with reference to the Church's Liturgical Year, 'Come and See', significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship.
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school or the wider world.
- to develop in our children skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

### **Recording**

#### **Collective Worship and Liturgy is recorded:**

- on a Collective Worship Weekly Planning Sheet
- on a Liturgy Planning Sheet
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos, power point presentations etc.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of worship will be evaluated yearly 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. Observations of Collective Acts of Worship and Liturgy, discussions with those who experience worship (e.g. pupils) and discussions with those who lead worship are carried out by the Head Teacher and the RE Leader at various times throughout the year. Outcomes of monitoring will be shared with all staff and governors with recommendations for future action. Observation and monitoring records are kept and form part of the self review process.

### **Resources**

A range of books, musical resources, CD Roms and various artefacts such as suitable Crosses, crucifixes, candles, posters are located centrally in the RE resource area and in the Prayer Place.

## **Eucharist**

One of the most important tasks of Catholic schools is to lead children, through celebrating liturgies, towards an understanding and appreciation of prayer and the sacraments.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer and the sacraments in a step by step approach. Asking children to pray in a way they are not capable of, or in a manner beyond their years can inhibit development in this area.

At FS and KS1 Worship includes:

- short simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word
- a range of types of prayers – some formal others less formal and generated by the children ( see development of prayer grid)
- a range of styles of celebrations
- opportunities for children to take active part in worship

At KS2 worship includes:

- short simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rite in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or The Eucharistic Prayer; and/or The Communion Rite
- a range of types of prayer (see development of prayer grid)
- a range of types of celebration
- opportunities for children to take an active part in worship
- opportunities for children to take leadership roles in worship

## **Communication**

This policy will be shared with:

- all members of the school community
- our parish priest
- new members of staff and will form part of their induction
- new parents, to promote positive attitudes towards collective worship