

# **St. Mary's Catholic Primary School**



## **Collective Worship Policy**

**Learning and Loving  
Caring and Sharing  
through  
The message of Christ**



**St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a happy community where we are loved and valued as individuals.**

**As Disciples of Jesus, we learn together, pray together and celebrate together as one in God's love.**

**Together with parents/carers, the parish and the wider community, we prepare our children to live and build God's kingdom on earth.**

## **Mission Statement**

This policy document should be considered in the light of our School Mission Statement which outlines all that underpins our work at St. Mary's:

*“Learning and Loving, Caring and Sharing, through the message of Christ.”*

## **The Nature of Collective Worship**

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It 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.

## **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School**

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 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 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.'
- To involve all staff where possible
- To involve parents, where possible, when a class or year group is involved in is involved in leading the worship

## 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
- Develop pupils skills, enabling them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.<sup>1</sup> In order to do this, celebrations will be;
  - kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
  - short and appropriately paced (children's attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life *i.e.*, 5-6 mins. For Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins. For Key Stage 2 );
  - simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

## Collective worship in our school will be:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- recorded
- monitored
- evaluated

Collective Worship occurs on these occasions:

### Within the Class

- Prayers are said at the start and end of the day, also at lunchtimes. The children are also made aware of other prayers such as the Angelus. Children are encouraged to bring their own prayers to share.
  - The opportunity for children to meditate is given after the lunch hour in every class. Level of child input is dependent on year group. The purpose of meditation in St Mary's is to 'Be Still'. Music can be utilised to aid reflection and the 'Be Still' prayer is recited in all classes;
    - Open my eyes, Lord.*
    - Help me to see your face.*
    - Open my ears, Lord.*
    - Help me to hear your voice.*
    - Open my heart, Lord.*
    - Help me to love like you.*
    - Maranatha.*
  - Opportunities for age appropriate child led collective worship are given across the school at least twice per Come and See topic. One of these is done through a chosen appropriate theme and the other follows the Come and See topic.
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## Within Key Stages

- Parish priests are invited to pray with the children in accordance with the celebration timetable. This may take the form of a Mass, which the children will have planned with the priest or other liturgical celebration.
- Weekly collective worship takes place in each key stage, led by SMT with some child led input where appropriate.

## Celebration of Come and See topics

These reflect the work covered and the knowledge gained through each topic. The children are actively encouraged to participate in a variety of ways. This can be organised by an individual class or the year group as a whole. All relevant staff are present at this worship.

## **Other World Religions**

It is recognised that the parents have chosen to send their child to a Catholic school and to be educated through the Catholic faith. Children from other World Religions are present in the school and are fully included in the religious life of the school. This religious diversity is celebrated and children are encouraged to share, beliefs and customs associated with their faith in a positive manner.

**World Religions** other than Christianity are taught in the school in accordance with the Come and See scheme of work.

## Resources

A selection of resources are available in each class and can be found in the staff resource room on the RE shelves.

Each Foundation class has a set of topic boxes containing resources relating to the Come and See scheme.

## Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. 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. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to the *'Directory for Masses with Children'* as a basis for our practice.

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

## Equal opportunities

All pupils have opportunities to participate in collective worship. Provision is made for certain pupils with SEN and physical disabilities.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Mission and Purpose Committee in particular will play a most important role.