

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Updated March 2023

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. S. S.', is written over a horizontal line.

(Chair of Governors)

**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.**

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Our Vision

'As a St Mary's family we inspire and ignite a love of learning in our children, and create happy and confident lifelong learners who reflect Jesus' love to other

Our '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."

"Dysgu a Charu, Gofalu a Rhannu, trwy'r neges Crist."

Catholic Education Service

'In schools with a designated religious character, like Catholic schools, collective worship is far more than a statutory requirement. It is crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Collective worship is an important part of a Catholic school's distinctive ethos.'

It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

In **St Mary's Catholic Primary School** worship is central to the life of the school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision and mission. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in.

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. Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer,

reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (*and other faiths*) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

Worship in our 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
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Develop pupils' skills, enabling them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well-known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- 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. In order to do this, celebrations will be;
 - kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - short and appropriately paced
 - 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 (where suitable)
- 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 Religious Education topic. One of these is done through a chosen appropriate theme and the other follows the Religious Education topic.

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 Religious Education 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 Religious Education Directory.

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 Religious Education 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 ALN and physical disabilities.

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour and discipline
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

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.