



Everyone together with Jesus

Collective Worship Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Collective Worship at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is the coming together of children and staff for the purpose of worshipping, praising, thanking, celebrating, and deepening our relationship with God.

The school is a Catholic foundation and therefore, while respecting diversity of belief and commitment, it reflects and follows the traditions of the Church and has Christ at its heart. The worship includes all those who seek to explore and deepen their spiritual beliefs, enabling all members of the community to reflect their shared understanding. All children are involved and given an opportunity to respond in an act of worship each day. It gives all involved an opportunity to contemplate the mystery of God, the wonder of life, and to share our common aims and demonstrate our community spirit. On these occasions children are given opportunities to participate and respond.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 The aims of collective worship in our school are:

- to promote and develop an appreciation of more active participation in prayer, liturgy, and worship, relevant to the age and experience of each child
- to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs
- to reinforce positive attitudes to prayer
- to develop links with our parish community
- to reinforce Home/School/Parish links

- 2.2** The objectives of collective worship in our school are:
- to provide a daily act of worship for pupils and teachers
 - to provide a prayer centre for each classroom
 - to provide opportunities for reflection and silent prayer
 - to encourage a variety of methods of prayer
 - to gather together to celebrate the special times of the school calendar and liturgical year.
- 2.3** We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school or class group coming together and participating. We expect everyone to take an active part.
- 2.4** In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our acts of collective worship on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church.
However, we conduct our acts of worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

3 Organisation

- 3.1** Arrangements for collective worship are established by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, in consultation with the staff. During the week the children gather in their own class group, on one occasion they assemble in larger groups of Infant children and Junior children. Each Friday the whole school gathers together for a celebration assembly. Collective worship is included within these larger assemblies.
- 3.2** **Collective Worship in the Class Group**
There is no designated time during the day for the act of collective worship, but we aim to recognise God's presence in all things. The time allocated will be calculated using the scale of one minute for each year of the children's age. Within this time, there will be opportunities for quiet reflection as well as formal prayer.
Teachers are provided with a class theme for the week and can use, adapt, or enhance these to suit their classes. These

may be based on Come and See topics/themes, seasonal feasts, special events, or scripture. To encourage a prayerful atmosphere use is made of a focus point, music, and/or candles.

3.3 Whole School Assemblies

These are usually led by the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher. Active participation by the children is encouraged. Worship is usually based on scripture. Other stimuli for thought are special events, special dates, Come and See themes or the liturgical calendar.

The act of collective worship is brought to a close with the children reflecting on what message they should take from the session and a resolution to move forwards. This is then offered to the Lord in prayer and often in song too.

4 Right of withdrawal

4.1 We expect all children to attend Collective Worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

4.2 The headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

5 Monitoring and review

5.1 It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.