

**ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**Barleyfields Road, Wetherby  
West Yorkshire LS22 6PR**

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP  
POLICY**

***'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all our children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment'***

Reviewed & amended  
Next review

- October 2020  
- October 2022

# Policy for Collective Worship At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wetherby.



## **The Nature of collective Worship**

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic School 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 a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of 'Collective Worship' in schools. 'Collective Worship' is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

## **Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils<sup>2</sup>. 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 fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under part of the curriculum, including religious education. As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises or at the Parish Church. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the head teacher.

## **Coronavirus Guidance (2020)**

### Collective Worship

It should also be clear that in such trying times finding ways to unite our school communities in prayer is more important than ever. School leaders should ensure that daily prayer and liturgy remain at the heart of the Catholic schools so that children and young people, as well as staff, can be consoled by the sure knowledge of the presence of God with them. Of course, all gatherings for shared prayer and the celebration of the Liturgy should observe social distancing, ensure that the integrity of 'bubbles' is preserved and conform to the school's risk assessment for the full return of pupils to school. Such risk assessments must also conform to whatever regulations apply in dioceses and local authorities, as summarised below.

### Celebration of Mass in Schools

Whilst all legal restrictions on the public celebration of religious services were lifted in July, collective acts of worship, for example the celebration of Mass, must comply with the Government's public health and social distancing guidance. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) has published guidance for the celebration of Mass and the Government has published advice on the safe use of places of worship. If, however, the celebration of Mass takes place in school, the guidance for class or year group bubbles should be followed along with the guidance below for the celebrant. In any event "If a Catholic parish school or its grounds is to be used for Mass, a separate risk assessment has to be done, the appropriate school authority (Governing Body or Trust) has to give its permission, and both the parish and school insurers should be informed before the event takes place." (CBCEW Guidance for the Celebration of Mass 3 August 2020 Revision 10)

All guidance remains under review and may be updated in line with the changing situation.

## **The Place of Collective Worship in the life of our 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
- Those from other faith backgrounds
- Those from non-faith backgrounds

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

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.

<sup>2</sup> Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

## **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'

## 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
- Give children 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;
- be short and appropriately placed (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)
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

At present, under CBCEW guidance related to the coronavirus pandemic, collective worship takes place in classes only to minimise pupils and staff crossing bubbles. We currently do not hold whole school worships or assemblies; this includes community assemblies.

For details about usual Collective Worship groupings, please see below:

### Pupil groupings

- Whole school
- FS, KS1 and KS2
- Class / community assemblies
- Topic celebrations in year groups
- Individual acts of worship

### Venues

Classrooms, school hall, church, outside classroom, prayer garden, school grounds, Millennium wood. At present, the school hall and church is not in use for worship following coronavirus guidelines.

### Time of day

Usually in the morning although this may vary and collective worship can be held at an appropriate time.

### Weekly pattern

Daily, in various groupings and venues. At present, daily in classes only following coronavirus guidelines.

### Length of time

Age appropriate for Foundation Level, KS1 and KS2.

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

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, The Way, The Truth, The Life, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in acts of worship.
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies.
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community.
- to develop in pupils, the skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship.

### **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded:

- themes follow 'The Way, the Truth, the Life' through the Church's year. Leaders can be the Parish Priest, the Headteacher, Class teachers, and the children themselves.
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Collective worship is evaluated regularly by staff, pupils and governors. At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated 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.

### **Resources**

Resources for Collective Worship are catalogued and stored in the R.E Resources cupboard, with the Headteacher (RE coordinator) as well as in shared areas and in each classroom.

### **Voluntary Worship**

Month of October: Rosary KS1 and KS2. During Lent: Stations of the Cross KS1 and KS2. (Differentiation as appropriate), prayer bags taken home to use with families,

Retreats as and when arranged by the Headteacher and approved by the Governing Body. These may be to support Sacramental preparation, transition into a new key stage, cohort specific to name only a few.

### **Eucharist**

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will 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 Welcome Table. Planning Masses with Children" which contains the complete text of the Church's '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.

In school, therefore, the 'Liturgy of the Word', rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- short simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word.

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and / or the Communion Rite.

### **The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship**

R.E. Co-ordinator: Miss Francesca Waite

### **The Religious Development Team**

R.E. Co-ordinator: Miss Francesca Waite, Miss Louise Milivojevic & Mrs Jayne Ward

### ***Policy Monitoring and Review***

It will be evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.