



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER



LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY
HACKNEY EDUCATION

Our Collective Worship Policy is very much a reflection of our Mission Statement. At St. Scholastica's Primary School we as our Mission Statement says;

“wish to educate the whole child through the integration of intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional, psychological, social and physical development.”

This is done in

“partnership with the wider community, especially the home and parish, where the development of the whole child is nurtured.”

This policy should be read in conjunction with the RE handbook and RE Policy

THE NATURE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response in work 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.

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 formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action. The four-part structure of Gather-Word-Response to the Word-Mission 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.

THE PLACE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. However, worship at St Scholastica's is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. It is an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all gain at a level of faith background appropriate to them.

In this voluntary aided Catholic school, responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the governing body after consultation with Headteacher.

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).

Collective Worship at St Scholastica's 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 which school may be their first and only experience of church.
- Those from other Christian backgrounds.
- Those from other faith backgrounds.
- Those from other backgrounds who are admitted to the school under the categories agreed by the Governing Body as the admission authority.

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.

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most 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 skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than; always participating or contributing to something prepared for them.

Collective Worship is recorded:

- on a liturgy timetable to assist staff with planning, by informing them of themes and leaders;
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs and class collective worship planners where appropriate.

Each week, a group of children in each class lead a collective worship session with their peers. Children reflect on gospel stories as well as lead prayers, songs and other chosen activities. The children select the Bible reading that they want their session to be focused upon. They may choose a text related to the liturgical calendar, their class saint or a theme they would like their class to reflect upon e.g friendship, honesty or forgiveness.

The sessions are structured around the following parts:

Gather - children gather in a circle with a focus area. They can use candles, rosary beads and other religious artefacts. Some children may choose to hold their session in the forest area in our school.

Word - children chose a Bible reading linked to their prayer theme

Response - Children choose one or two ways to respond to the reading. For example, they ask each child to write down a prayer or a promise and put each paper together in a jar. They could place this jar on the class prayer table as a constant reminder for the children throughout the week.

Mission - Children choose a way to go forth, sharing the Good News and following God's mission in their everyday lives. This can be telling others what they've heard, writing a poem or raising awareness.

RESOURCES

- Resources supporting the planning of liturgies, both Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic.
- Set liturgies for each “Here I Am” topic and feast days (on Diocesan website).
- Bibles
- Prayer books
- Music
- Pictures and artefacts
- Candles and drapes

Resources are held centrally or in classrooms

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The school’s provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it fulfils the aims of our policy in an updated and appropriate manner.

The Role of the Co-ordinator is to:

- plan and present an overview of Liturgy for the year;
- plan the liturgy for whole school occasions;
- support colleagues in the implementation of the Collective Worship Policy;
- monitor progress and advise the Headteacher on whatever action is needed;
- take responsibility for the purchase of central resources for liturgies;
- keep up to date with developments in liturgy and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

PARISH & FAMILY CELEBRATIONS

On these occasions of collective worship, the children, or groups of children, play an active role offering and sharing their celebration with the parish family or their own families. They include:

- Beginning and End of Term Masses.
- Masses for Holy days.
- The Feast of St Scholastica’s
- Ash Wednesday Mass
- Stations of the Cross / Lenten Liturgy
- Preparation for, and celebration of, the sacrament of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.
- Christmas Performances
- Harvest Mass
- Reconciliation Services
- Christingle Service
- May Celebration for Mary the Mother of Jesus

CELEBRATION IN THE WIDER CHURCH COMMUNITY

These occasions allow the children to become aware of the wider church community, furthering their sense of belonging to a universal church worshipping in communion.

Occasions include:

- Diocesan Celebrations
- Making a positive contribution through fundraising.

WHOLE SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

In these we try to develop the children’s sense of belonging to a caring, sharing school family meeting to praise God together.

Occasions include:

- Our Friday assembly celebrates the achievements of our pupils in academic areas but also in the wider life of the school, such as living out the school motto: *'Living, loving, learning through Christ' through our St Scholastica's Super Skills.*

Assemblies may focus on another shared area of school or church life such as:

- Feast Days of the Church e.g. St Peter and Paul
- Welcoming new members to or school family.
- Saying goodbye to leavers.
- Advent Assembly
- Crib Assembly
- Stations of the Cross.
- Devotions to our Lady
- Pentecost – Birthday of the Church
- The Rosary
- Reconciliation Assemblies.
- Local and national charities Catholic charities

Other School celebrations include:

- Grace before and after eating together.
- Special prayers at different times of the school year (ie: The Angelus during Advent).

KEY STAGE CELEBRATIONS

These allow the different ages of children to learn and pray together at a level appropriate to their development and to celebrate events and achievements special to their key stage.

Whole School Assemblies

Monday – Gospel Assembly KS2 Hymn Practice KS1

Gospel Assembly is led by the Headteacher or REC, explaining and reinforcing the weekend's Gospel message.

Wednesday – Gospel Assembly KS1 Hymn Practice KS2

Thursday – Class Collective Worship

Friday – Celebration Assembly

INDIVIDUAL CLASS CELEBRATIONS

The day begins and ends with prayer. This usually includes a morning and night prayer alongside the other forms appropriate to the occasion and the age of the children.

As a School we are developing the area of Classroom Liturgy. The children participate weekly in class liturgies. Children are involved in the preparation of their class liturgies, the level of organisation depending on the age of the children and the theme of the liturgy.

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

The policy is monitored by the Headteacher and RE co-ordinator.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary

Agreed by Governors: January 2023

Presented to staff: January 2023

Signed by Chair of Governors _____ Date _____

Signed by Head teacher _____ Date _____

Review date: January 2023