

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

October 2024

Review: October 2026

Mission Statement

'Treat others as would like to be treated.'

Rationale

Collective 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 Nature of Collective Worship

It is the policy of the school to help children grow in their faith, which is based on the teaching and traditions of the Catholic Church. We aim to encourage children to develop a personal relationship with God through prayer, this is important for all children in our care, regardless of whether they are practising Catholics or not.

Aims

Collective Worship in St Joseph's School aims to provide opportunities for all children and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using 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.'

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily act of worship offered for all children. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all children, or separate acts of worship in school groups. Holding an assembly that only includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present does not fulfil this requirement. Collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the Head Teacher.

Leading Worship

As the spiritual leader of the school the Head Teacher plans and leads collective worship.

Class teachers lead their class worship and key stage worship.

Children are taught and encouraged to plan and lead collective worship appropriate to their age.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St Joseph's School is practised in various ways, from a whole school act of worship to classroom prayers, with regular celebrations of the Eucharist.

Our pattern of Acts of Worship is as follows: -

Monday - Whole school worship, led by the Head Teacher, based on the half termly Pupil Profile values. The Bidding prayers include those offered by the children. Worship is followed by a celebration of children's achievements from the previous week.

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - class based worship. Teacher led or whole class led worship, based on the previous Sunday's Gospel/ Christian Meditation /The Examen

Wednesday – Whole school worship led by Liturgy Leaders, based on themes, e.g. Miracles, Parables or Saints.

Thursday – Classes attend weekly Mass at the Parish Church on a rota basis. Classes not attending that week will hold class based worship.

Monday – Friday – All classes will plan time for meditation, reflection and prayer, including the examen

We celebrate Mass as a whole school at the beginning and end of each term school year and on holy days of obligation. Each term a Class leads the Act of Worship. Parents and Parishioners are invited to join us in school on these occasions.

The Morning Prayer, Lunchtime Prayer and the End of Day Prayer are said in each classroom on a daily basis. The Morning Prayer is incorporated into whole school, class and Key Stage Worship.

Planning and Content of Worship

Collective worship is planned following the structure of the liturgical seasons of the Church's year, the Come and See programme, feast days and other significant dates e.g. School feast day, harvest family fast day.

A variety of prayer styles are used appropriate to the age, stage of development and the occasion.

Parents and parishioners are invited to participate in some celebrations, such as May Procession, Nativity Performances and Beginning and End of Term Mass.

Prayer

Children have a natural aptitude for prayer. They are open to God. Helping children to pray is a fostering of a relationship with God. We support children on their journey in faith. Children are given experience of personal and communal prayer by being encouraged to speak in their own way to God and by being introduced gradually to formal words for prayer at the appropriate level.

Through daily worship prayer builds upon the children's natural spontaneous expressions of joy, wonder, awe, concern, thanks, sorrow, sadness, anger, fear and disappointment evoked through their growing awareness of themselves, others and the world around them. We are aware of children's need for expression through speech, song, movement, art, writing and silence. We are aware of the importance of giving the children a focus for prayer in each classroom, and wherever acts of worship are held.

Prayer Tables

Prayer tables are clearly visible and accessible within each classroom. Liturgical colours are used for any cloth or drape, e.g. purple during Advent and Lent, white / gold at Christmas, white / gold at Easter, red at Pentecost and green for ordinary time. Prayer tables often include something which reflects the topic e.g. baptismal candle, advent wreath, palm cross during Lent and / or other appropriate objects e.g. a cross, crucifix or statue. They always contain a candle and a bible or religious storybook, open at a relevant page.

EYFS / Foundation Stage / Key Stage One

The following prayers are introduced to, and learnt by the children during this time: -

The sign of the cross

The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

Hail Mary

Glory Be

Morning and night prayers. (Refer to Staff handbook for prayers in your setting)

Grace before meals. (Refer to Staff handbook for prayers used in your setting)

Simple examination of conscience.

Simple act of contrition.

Simple responses such as: - The Lord be with you, And with your spirit, Lord in your Mercy, Hear our prayer, A reading from the Gospel of St John, Glory to you O Lord. The Gospel of the Lord, Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. Peace be with you, And with your spirit. The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Key Stage Two

The children learn the above prayers, plus: -

Eternal rest

Act of contrition

Responses to be said during Mass: -

Introduction

The Penitential rite

Lord have mercy

I confess

The Gloria

The Liturgy of the Word (including response after each reading and before the Gospel.)

Apostle's creed.

Bidding prayer response (as above)

Offertory responses – Blessed be God forever, May the Lord accept...

Eucharistic prayer

Holy, holy

Acclamation of Faith

Lamb of God

Response before Communion (if receiving) Rite of dismissal.

Staff Prayer

Staff pray together before SLT meetings, staff meetings and briefings. Governors pray together before their meetings. Thus, offering the whole enterprise into the hands of God.

School as a worshipping community

Prayer, worship and liturgical celebration are central to our Catholic tradition. As stated, we have daily opportunities for Acts of Worship in the school. These are planned to include special feasts and reflect the liturgical year. We celebrate the Eucharist regularly, and each class prays together in the morning, before meals, and at the end of the school day. Children are given time and space to thank God for their day, to reflect on it and to offer up any intercessions of their own, particularly during class-based worship.

Recording

Collective worship is recorded and displayed in each Class's reflection area throughout the year as well as the RE subject leader's portfolio.

Monitoring

Worship is monitored by the RE Subject Leader / Head Teacher and the school's RE advisor using the worship monitoring form.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the RE Subject Leader / Head Teacher. Both Staff and Governors have agreed this policy. It is reviewed by the Staff and Governors every two years.

Reviewed – Autumn 2024

To be reviewed February- Autumn Term 2026

Appendices

- 1. Worship Planning Sheet**
- 2. Worship Monitoring Sheet**

Appendix 1



Worship Planning Sheet

Theme:

Class/Year:

Gathering

Word

Action

Mission

Resources

Appendix 2

Monitoring of collective worship

Date:

Year Group:

Leader:

- Did the act of worship follow a liturgical structure: gathering, word, action, mission?
- Have children been involved in the planning, preparation and leading of the act of worship?
- Were as many children as possible actively involved in the worship?
- Was a variety of approaches used, e.g., story-telling, drama, silence, music?
- Is the main emphasis on worshipping God?
- Was there a prayer focus related to the theme?
- Was time given for children to be reflective, prayerful and silent?
- Were the children helped to grow in liturgical understanding and development?
- Was the Church's liturgical year recognised and celebrated?
- Was prominence given to the Scriptures – the Word of God?
- Was the language used suitable for the year group?
- Was the worship linked to everyday life?
- Were the children encouraged to think about the needs of others?
- Were the children encouraged to develop skills of reverence, contemplation?