

St Joseph's RC VA Primary  
School Gateshead  
Collective Worship Policy



# St Joseph's RC VA Primary School Gateshead Collective Worship Policy

## Mission Statement

Aim high  
Care for others as Jesus does  
Everyone welcome

## The Nature of Collective Worship

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 celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'<sup>1</sup>

## Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily act of worship offered for all pupils. 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. Holding an assembly that 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, 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 any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

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 will 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, within Come and See RE curriculum.

## The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St Joseph's RC VA Primary School

Worship 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

### **The Aims of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship in St Joseph's RC VA Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils 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.'

### **Principles**

All acts of worship in St Joseph's RC VA Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead 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.<sup>2</sup> Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

### **Planning, content and celebration**

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Children engage in daily acts of prayer and worship. Staff pray together at the beginning of each staff meeting.

The timetable of class Collective Worship is detailed on individual timetables.

House Meetings and worship take place every Monday morning at 9am

Collective Worship and Hymns take place on a Wednesday afternoon at 2.30pm

Whole School worship takes place every Friday at 9.10am, parents and parish are welcome to attend.

This Collective Worship is followed by a Celebration Assembly.

### **Leading collective worship**

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead or lead a response to collective worship. (This may sometimes be carried out by the Deputy Head or Assistant Head). The class teacher will lead class collective worship. Children are taught to plan and lead worship according to their age.

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<sup>2</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

## **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded using 'Come and See' templates. Adult led worship may form part of an RE lesson or may be a stand-alone act at the beginning or the end of the day. Pictures from whole school acts of worship are displayed on the school website so that parents who are unable to attend can get a flavour of the Catholic Life of the school.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Child/Adult led Collective Worship is monitored in Key Stages as well as by the RE Coordinator.

Collective Worship is monitored using the diocesan Collective Worship monitoring form, (Appendix 2).

All staff take part in the whole school worship on Fridays.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform DSEF.

## **Resources**

Resources for worship are available to staff and children in class as well as in a central location in school.

## **The learning environment**

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'<sup>3</sup>

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

## **Retreats**

Holy Island (Year 5), Holy Island Staff, YMT Summer Festival, Year Six Deanery Liturgy, Senior Leaders Retreat. Cluster Retreat Day.

## **Other opportunities**

Masses in St Joseph's RC Church led by First Holy Communion Children throughout the year of their Sacramental Preparation Programme

School Mass

Service of Readings and Carols

Visits to Church/Cathedral

Little Way Week

Advent and Lent Prayer Satations

## **Eucharist**

School Mass once per term

## **The coordinator for Collective Worship**

The Coordinator for Collective Worship is Mrs Claire Cuskern

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

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<sup>3</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Reviewed September 2018

Date for next review September 2020

## Appendix 1

### **The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

#### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

#### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Collective Worship
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

#### **Professional development/Ongoing formation**

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

#### **Resources**

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

*[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]*





Year Group

Monitoring of Collective Worship

Date

Focus	Comments
Planning (discussed with teacher before or after celebration) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the children been involved in the planning?</li> <li>• Has the Act of Worship been planned around a theme/Feast?</li> </ul>	
Structure (If Liturgy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can the four parts (Gather, Word, Response, Mission) be distinctly identified?</li> <li>• How did children gather?</li> <li>• Was the Word appropriate and treated reverently?</li> <li>• How did the children respond to the Word?</li> <li>• Was there a clear Mission, an evident message at the end of the Liturgy?</li> </ul>	
Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child or adult led?</li> <li>• Depending on the age of the children were they as involved as possible in leading?</li> </ul>	
Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were the children fully engaged and participating enthusiastically</li> <li>• Was it a prayerful experience?</li> </ul>	
Creativity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How creative was the Act of Worship?</li> <li>• Did it include different prayer styles/dance/music etc to enhance the experience?</li> </ul>	





Year Group

Monitoring of Collective Worship

Date

<p>Prayer Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were the children able to create a focal point, atmosphere for prayer, appropriate to their age?</li> </ul>	
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were liturgical resources used appropriately eg correct liturgical colours, artefacts?</li> </ul>	
<p>ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was ICT used to support and enhance the Act of Worship or was it a distraction?</li> </ul>	
<p>Agreed areas for development</p>	

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to the class teacher.

Coordinator:

Class Teacher: