



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to behave in the way Jesus taught us. He said "I have set you an example, that you learn that you are all equal, the Master is no more important than the servant, and that you should behave kindly and humbly towards each other."

The nature of Collective Worship

"The Catholic School is about conversation – about being open to discover the wonder of creation, the wonder of life, the wonder of God. It can provide for those who belong to it an understanding of what it is to be human but it can also contribute through its lived experience to the wider conversation in society of how to live a life that is good, fulfilling and true and to bring to an end wars, rumours of wars and the creation of a just society"

The Bishop of Clifton 2007

At St Catherine's Catholic school we believe that Christian worship is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanksgiving to God. Our words and actions are our response to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with Him, to deepen our understanding of ourselves and to develop our identity as a community. We are guided in all that we do by Jesus' example.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils, we also acknowledge that parents have the right to withdraw their child from acts of worship however it is pointed out that these acts of worship may not be confined to certain timetabled slots. We also encourage all of our parents to reflect on the role of Collective Worship in enabling our diverse pupil population to gain an understanding of each other's faith traditions and to enable our children to talk openly with each other about their beliefs.

Acts of worship may take place at any time during the day. It may take the form of a single act of worship with the whole school community or separate acts of worship in school/class groups. In our school there is no confusion between **Collective**

Worship and **Assemblies** . When we gather for **Collective Worship** we focus on the Word of God, we use symbol and ritual and we are open to God's presence among us. Collective Worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum including RE.

In this school responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

The Place of Collective Worship in the life of the 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 who school may be their first experience of Church;
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

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

Worship in the school is more than a legal requirement but an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

The use of the word "collective" rather than "corporate" acknowledges that in this school worship will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. Thus whilst remaining distinctively Catholic and reflecting the liturgical tradition of the church, the Act of Worship will be sufficiently open in style to include all active participants despite their stage of faith development.

The Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St Catherine's school aims to provide opportunities for pupils and all staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God;
- To reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural 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 positive attitudes;
- To be actively involved;
- To take the time to "wonder at ", "come to terms with" and "give worth to" many life experiences and feelings.

"The Catholic School is not in existence to serve Catholic needs and to throw around itself a protective shield but exists to encourage and enable students to become active citizens contributing to the common good of society. The Catholic school is not about creating a ghetto but recognise the responsibility Christians have for creating a just environment in which dignity of all is upheld and bonds of cooperation forged"
The Bishop of Clifton to Headteacher Conference 2007

Principles

At St Catherine's acts of worship aim to give glory and honour to God. They are seen as quality activities, fundamental to the life and Catholicity of the school. Our aim is to give children positive liturgical experiences appropriate to their age and stage of development.

In order for this to be achieved celebrations are offered in a variety of groupings in a variety of settings. They will often be kept small to help to personalise the experience, be short, simple and focussed.

At some point during the day each class will hold a short prayer time (5 minutes FS/KS1, 10 minutes KS2). The time of the prayer session may vary and it is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure the prayer time takes place. These sessions will usually be organised by the teacher or by the children themselves. These are usually at the beginning of the day, always before lunch and at the end of the day. The session often includes a lighted candle to show the presence of Christ. (When Key Stages meet, class teachers may wish to acknowledge this as their prayer time for that day.)

These class prayers may include the school prayer, prayers from the children and some of the more formal prayers of the church; they may also include scripture, hymns and other appropriate music. Every class has a school prayer book, which can be used for class prayer.

There is a regular Monday morning worship (15 minutes) for the whole school community usually based on the Gospel message of the previous day. The Headteacher will usually lead these sessions. There are opportunities for each key stage to meet for 10-15 minutes once a week. Please see appendix 1 for order of collective worship.

Whole school Masses are celebrated on appropriate Holy Days and other occasions, both in our parish Church and in School. Working alongside the Parish we organise regular School Masses/Family Masses on Sunday's throughout the year, these celebrations have been organised to compliment and support the Parish Sacramental Programme.

The planning, content and delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- With a prepared theme with reference to the church's seasons;
- With reference to the previous Sunday's Gospel or the readings of the day;
- Taking into account whole school or significant events: Fairtrade Fortnight, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Refugee Week and so on;
- With reference to Come and See topics;
- With a scriptural focus;
- Through 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 pupil's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is obviously a difficult task to try to assess individual development against the aims outlined above as they are not finite or measurable. However, the school's worship provision is evaluated by the Headteacher and the RE coordinator as part of our on going self evaluation.

Resources

Each class has an area as a focal point for prayer. This will normally comprise of a table, candle, drape, crucifix, and other appropriate artefacts.

There are a variety of books for planning assemblies and short liturgies that are stored in the PPA room.

We have a wide range of supporting material and literature for staff to use in preparation for worship and liturgy. CPD time is set aside to develop confidence and all staff are given opportunities to develop their skills and confidence.

Eucharist

We believe that our children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step-by-step approach.

In school the Liturgy of the Word is the norm rather than the Eucharist, we do however work as closely as possible with our parish Priest, Fr Albert to give our children regular opportunities to take part in Eucharist celebrations.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage One

Worship at this stage will be kept short and appropriate to the children. It may include short stories, prayers and short periods of time for reflection and meditation.

Key Stage Two

Worship will comprise of short uncluttered liturgies reflecting the parts of the Mass including the Introductory Rite, the Liturgy of the Word or the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

The responsibility for coordinating Collective Worship is that of the Headteacher in conjunction with the Governing Body and the RE co-ordinator.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher and subject leader and will be reviewed and evaluated by the whole staff and governors each year.

Appendix 1 – Collective Worship

The following should be included for FS/KS1 acts of collective worship:

- Enter to quiet music
- Preparation for prayer e.g. sign of cross, closing of eyes
- Introduction and welcome (Leader)
- Prayer (Leader or child)
- Alleluia & processing of Gospel (All stand)
- Gospel reading or other from scripture (Leader or child)
- Talk to the children & involvement of children (Leader)
- Our Father (All)
- Final prayer, comments, thoughts (Leader and/or child)
- Exit to quiet music.

The following should be included for whole school and KS2 acts of collective worship:

- Enter to quiet music
- Preparation for prayer e.g. sign of cross, closing of eyes
- Introduction and welcome (Leader)
- Prayer (Leader or child)
- Alleluia & processing of Gospel (All stand)
- Gospel reading or other from scripture (Leader or child)
- Talk to the children & involvement of children (Leader)
- Introduction to bidding prayers (Leader)
- Bidding prayers (Children)
- Our Father (All)
- Final prayer, comments, thoughts (Leader and/or child)
- Exit to quiet music.