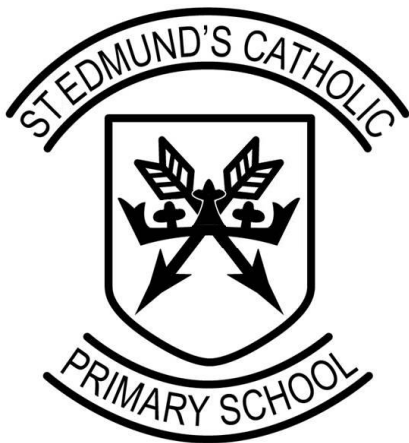


St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



Headteacher: Elizabeth Higgins

'Learn, Love and Live with the Lord'

The Nature of Collective Worship.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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.¹

Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (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 any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided 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 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 – 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.

¹ 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.

² 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.

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.

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 develop the skills of:
 - Reverence
 - Contemplation
 - Reflection
 - Interpretation
 - Empathy
 - meditation
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding.
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ.

Principles

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality experience, 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.³
- Celebrations will:
 - be appropriately paced

³ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

At St Edmund's, each week usually Monday or Tuesday there is a whole school worship led by the headteacher the focus of this is the previous Sunday's Gospel. There is a Key Stage assembly held on alternate weeks led by members of 'the teaching staff, if it is not key stage's assembly that week there is a class collective worship. At the end of each half term there is a 'Golden' celebration assembly for the whole school where awards and achievements are celebrated.

Mass is held in school with a School Mass held in the parish church of St Joseph's in Milford at least twice in each academic year. The classes in Key Stage 2 have opportunities to walk to St Edmund's Church to attend Mass throughout the year. There are other Masses celebrated throughout the year, a procession to Ladywell for Our Lady in May. Year 6 have a retreat day and a Leavers' Assembly at Ladywell in the summer term.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

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 in a token way.

The format for Collective Worship for our school will be:

- ❖ **Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)
- ❖ **Proclaim** – every liturgy will centre around at least one text from the Bible, with the reading of the day being the first source. The Word of God will be proclaimed from a bible or lectionary.
- ❖ **Respond** – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, music, drama, art, poetry etc.) We place our needs before God (intercessory prayers)
- ❖ **Go Forth** – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

Class Collective Worship and meditation

- Class Collective worship takes place weekly and meditation(World Christian Meditation) is part of our daily worship
- To encourage development and growth of children's spiritual journey

The aim is for what we do collectively to allow God's presence in the children's lives and to give meaning, shape and purpose to our worship.

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once every half term the school's provision of worship will be evaluated by the RE Subject Leader 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

There are resources for collective acts of worship in the RE cupboard located at the rear of the hall and in the headteacher's office.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

There is a weekly Mass held before school during Advent and Lent where the whole parish community is welcome to attend.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally 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

Elizabeth Higgins, the headteacher is the co-ordinator for collective worship.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.

Appendix 1.

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family 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 if the co-ordinator changes the headteacher) to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship

PLANNING, RECORDING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING.

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

COMMUNICATION

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Collective Worship
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors (and if the co-ordinator changes the 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 school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ONGOING FORMATION

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- 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