

# **Policy Statement for Collective Worship**

## **Mission Statement**

Here at St. Monica's, we recognise that we are all cherished members of God's Family. We love and care for one another, and trust God to guide us in all we do and say. By learning together, we aim to achieve and working together, we will succeed.

## **Intent**

### **The Nature of Collective Worship**

We believe that Christian 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.

### **Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.) 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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, "on a special occasion".

### **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. Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic traditions and rhythms of the liturgical life of the Church.

## **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.

Celebrations will:

- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be short and appropriately paced
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

## **Implementation**

### **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is planned:

- with reference to the Church's seasons, significant dates and the modules followed in the RE curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- so that praying together is a daily experience for pupils and staff.
- 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 pupils' skills that enable them to enthusiastically prepare, organise and lead worship in an enthusiastic and creative way.
- With opportunities for attendance at voluntary acts of worship

- Whenever possible or appropriate acts of Collective worship will be planned to facilitate attendance by families, parishes and other adults associated with the school.

Collective Worship in our school will contain:

- **Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)
- **Proclaim** – most liturgies will centre around at least one text from the Bible. The Word of God will be proclaimed from a bible or lectionary whenever possible.
- **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.

Children at Saint Monica's will learn a variety of traditional and contemporary ways of praying. They will participate in a variety of forms of prayer, communal singing, prayerful silence, meditation, reflection and communal prayer.

### **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos, leaflets, booklets etc.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and the school community.

### **Resources**

Resources for Collective Worship are located in each classroom, some resources are kept centrally in the piety cupboard.

We have subscription to the 'Ten Ten' and 'One Life Music' online Collective Worship resources.

### **Reconciliation and 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.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly reconciliation and the Eucharist in a step by step approach, consultation with the Parish Priest will help support the staff, children and parents. School will mark Holy days of obligation and other significant days, facilitating where possible attendance at Mass on such days.

### **Impact**

- Children understand what it is to have Christ at the centre of our lives through prayer, demonstrating an understanding of the difference it make to their lives.

- Children will recognise that Collective Worship is a celebration of the school community coming together.
- Children know and can draw on the wide breadth of ways of praying and worship in their lives.
- Children are confident in participating in and enthusiastically leading collective worship.
- Children will develop a positive attitude to worship
- By experiencing living and working in a faithful, praying community children will develop their spiritual and moral development, putting their faith into action
- Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the Church's liturgical year, with its cycle of feasts, seasons and Scripture readings through their preparation of and responses in Collective worship.

### **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 time and space is established so that the whole community have the opportunity to be spiritually nourished and that prayer is firmly at the heart of school life.
- Ensure that there is an opportunity to meet God each day.
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it.
- Developing the ongoing programme of GIFT team to plan, lead and facilitate prayer experiences
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and Headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to 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. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

### **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 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 parish priest
- Liaison with Salford Diocese

### **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 with new developments

### **Resources**

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

Policy reviewed: March 2021