

2018

# Policy for Collective Worship



Implemented: April 2018

To be reviewed: April 2019

Review frequency: Annually

Consultation process

Signed (HT)

(COG)

*“In everything we do today, we’re following Jesus and his way.”*

## *Policy for Collective Worship*

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### **Mission Statement**

**Following** Jesus and His way, we

**Aim** to be the best we can be and to respect everyone. We

**Inspire** each other to learn, play and pray

**Together** as children, staff, home and Parish. We grow in

**Holiness** by putting Love into Action every day.

### **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. Collective Worship shapes our daily lives; it is the heartbeat of our school.

### **Legal Requirements**

At St. George's 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. '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.

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".

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests 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 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.

### **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 a religious 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 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 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.'
- To become familiar with prayers from the Catholic tradition

## **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.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be short and appropriately paced ( children's attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life i.e., 5-6 mins. For Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins. For Key Stage 2 );
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.
- Be well-resourced

## **Collective Worship**

There is an Act of Worship on a daily basis as follows:

### ***Key Stage Assemblies***

We would ideally aim to have a whole school act of worship, however, due to the number of children and size of the school hall, we run two key stage assemblies concurrently using the same themes and readings. These Acts of Worship take place on Friday mornings. The headteacher will decide on the theme or an individual class may lead this worship.

### ***Class assemblies***

Each class leads an act of worship once during the school year to which parents are invited. These are generally on Wednesdays and parents are given good notice to enable them to share this experience with their children.

### ***Classroom based Acts of Worship***

An Act of Worship takes place in each classroom on days when there are no key stage or class assemblies. Class teachers are informed of the appropriate themes and readings each week by the RE subject leader. When appropriate, worship takes account of events in the children's lives.

### ***The Rosary***

October is the month of the Holy Rosary and May is the month of Our Lady. During these months, we invite parents to come and share a decade of the Rosary with their children after school. We will pray this special devotion in the Rosary Garden. The rota is available on the school website so that parents know when it is their child's turn. The Rosary takes place at 3.30pm each day.

### ***Daily Prayers are said in each class:***

Morning Prayer:

O my God you love me, you are with me night and day.

I want to love you always, in all I do and say.

I'll try to please you father, bless me through the day.

Prayer before meals (Lunchtime):

Bless us O God as we sit together., Bless the food we eat today.

Bless the hands that made the food, Bless us O God. Amen

Evening Prayer:

God our Father, I've come to say, 'Thank you for your love today.

Thank you for my family and all the friends you give to me.

Guard me in the dark of night and in the morning send your lights.

Amen

## **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.

### ***Recording***

Whole school worship is recorded using a format found on the server (*admin resources > shared data > assembly*)

The planning of Class-Based Worship is recorded – plans are kept by the class teacher once completed by the children.

### ***Monitoring and Evaluation***

At least once a term the school's provision of worship will be evaluated 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. To ensure we have a broad and balanced evaluation of our provision different groups within the school community will be invited to take part in the evaluation process e.g. children, governors, staff.

### ***Resources:***

Resources are kept in each classroom and is kept under review by the RE subject leader.

### ***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.

### ***Policy Monitoring and Review***

This policy is monitored by the headteacher and RE leader 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.