



# Collective Worship Policy

Approved : February 2016  
Next Review : February 2018

## **Our Mission Statement**

**‘Growing in Love in the Spirit of Christ for the benefit of all.**

### **Introduction to Collective Worship at St Joseph’s**

Collective worship in a Catholic school is concerned with the revelation of God’s presence so that praise, honour and thanksgiving may be given to Him. Collective worship should strengthen this Eucharistic community, which is called together to give witness to Jesus Christ. Collective worship is this community’s response to God, which invites us to enter into a loving relationship with Him, made possible by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### **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 class groups). We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said by either 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 considered as part of the RE lesson (for time purposes).

At St Joseph’s Catholic school, responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the governing body after consultation with the headteacher and teacher responsible for the coordination of Religious education.

### **Definitions**

#### **Liturgy**

Liturgy literally means ‘work of the people’ and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action.

#### **Prayer**

One of the early fathers of the Church described prayer as “the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God.”

#### **Collective Worship**

Collective worship is our loving response, in word and action, to God’s invitation to enter into a relationship with Godself, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and witness of the Holy Spirit.

## **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St Joseph's**

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 tradition.

## **The Aims of Collective Worship**

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff :

- To provide opportunity for worship which enriches religious experience.
- To build a spirit where the individual feels valued.
- To deepen and widen emotional responses thus contributing to the individuals personal development and growing sense of responsibility.
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development and participate in prayers which are of the catholic tradition.
- To take time to contemplate something of the mystery of God and to respond to this in celebration.

## **The Objectives of Collective Worship**

**To develop a sense of :**

- Awe, wonder and mystery
- Interdependence with the natural world
- Self-worth and value others

**To develop awareness :**

- That life involves choices of belief / attitude / behaviour / relationships.
- That there are issues of meaning, purpose and value in life.

Collective worship at St Joseph's is a special time when our children meet feeling secure and relaxed and share with each other in order to foster a sense of community. This is based on the principles that Collective worship should be:

- Inclusive
- Educational
- Providing opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Time and programme for Collective Worship at St Joseph's :

Day	Involvement	Themes	Lead by...
Monday	Whole School	Based on Gospel or Statements to live by..	Head
Tuesday	Key Stage	Come and See topics	Teachers
Wednesday	Whole school	Singing worship / Visiting speaker.	Head / Visiting speakers
Thursday	Class Liturgy / Whole school Mass	Various themes relating to the liturgical year	Parish Priest Class Teacher
Friday	Whole school	Children's Assembly rota.	Children

Collective worship in our school may follow the pattern or variation of the pattern detailed below:-

**Gathering** - how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet/ reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc);

**Word** - a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), breaking the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;

**Action** - a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme (gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers, etc);

**Mission** - the sending out from the celebration, giving the children something to hold onto from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

### **Celebration of the Eucharist**

Whole school Mass is celebrated termly by our Priest Fr Christopher and is prepared by the teacher responsible for religious Education and the children. Children have a variety of roles within the Mass and children from all the classes are involved.

A programme of Collective worship is planned with the priest at the beginning of term and distributed to all teachers and Parents. Parents / Guardians are invited to celebration well in advance and parishioners are also welcomed.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

At St Joseph's, it is the overall responsibility of governors, in consultation with the headteacher, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and opportunities for quality collective worship are being delivered. Those responsible will ensure that acts of worship are in accordance with the school's trust deed and consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church.

This policy is monitored by the collective worship co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff every two years. Governors should review reports on the Catholic life of the school on a termly basis. This will form part of the headteacher's report to governors.

The following will be monitored:-

- Time set aside for collective worship;
- Whether the observed practice is consistent with agreed policy;
- Whether collective worship is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc;
- Staff development on collective worship and its impact;
- Prayer focus and its effectiveness in drawing pupils into prayer;
- Impact on pupils and members of the school community;
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills to access worship and prayer;
- Records of themes and teachings of the Catholic Church covered in collective worship.

Outcomes of monitoring will be communicated to staff and governors with recommendations for future action.

### **Right of Withdrawal:**

Parents have the right to withdraw their non-catholic child from acts of worship. It is hoped, however, that parents of non-catholic children accept that admission to St Joseph's school means that their children will be included in all aspects of worship.

### **The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship:**

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:-

- \_\_\_ Formulating a written policy;
- \_\_\_ Ensuring collective worship is considered and incorporated in ongoing school development.
- \_\_\_ 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 Catholic teachings;
- \_\_\_ Organising themes for worship;
- \_\_\_ Assisting the governors and headteacher in carrying out their legal responsibilities with regard to collective worship.

### **Communication**

This policy will be communicated to:

- \_\_\_ All members of the school community;
- \_\_\_ Parish priests or members of pastoral areas as appropriate;
- \_\_\_ New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
- \_\_\_ New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards collective worship.

### **Review**

The teacher responsible for Religious Education and Collective worship alongside the headteacher will be responsible for reviewing this policy. Staff and the school community will also be involved and Governors will consider the policy in their policy review programme.