



# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Signed: Mrs T. McNamara (Headteacher) Date: December 2021

Signed: Mrs M. Williams (Chair of Governors) Date: December 2021

Date of next review: December 2022

## **Our Mission Statement**

### **Loved**

We love one another as Jesus taught us - our friends, our families and those who we may never meet.

### **Valued**

We value everyone - everyone is important; pupils, staff, parents, governors and members of the community– no matter their race, religion ability or need. We try to live like Jesus taught us.

### **Challenged**

We challenge each other - not only with our learning but challenge each other to be more merciful to others, have a little more understanding of others' needs and challenge each other to be better people.

## **INCLUSION STATEMENT**

The Governors are committed to `inclusion` in education: this involves minimizing barriers to learning and participation.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

The Governors and Staff at Holy Cross believe that all people are entitled to equal opportunities, respect and consideration regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, disability or personal circumstances. Therefore, we are opposed to any form of prejudice or discrimination which denies people this equality. This principle applies to both adults and children in our school.

### **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 a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

We believe that the children should plan and conduct the collective worship with minimal teacher input

## **Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.<sup>2</sup> (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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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 Principal.

### **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 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 re-enforce our multicultural community
- 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

### ***How Collective Worship is organised in our school***

We have a daily act of Collective Worship, either as a whole school, Key Stage, or year group. All staff take it in turns to plan and deliver Key Stage acts of Collective Worship each week. Also, in upper Key Stage 2, children plan and deliver their own Acts of Collective Worship, with the support of the class teacher.

We conduct Collective worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell the children that Collective Worship is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and children are expected to behave in an appropriate manner. We encourage the children to be quiet and thoughtful and encourage them to listen, reflect and mediate upon the teachings and the signs and symbols which are used to encourage their full participation in the prayers, readings, stories songs and hymns which they will hear. Children will be encouraged and guided to understand and acknowledge the purpose of gathering, listening and responding, and take forward the mission of the church.

- We take the themes of our collective worship from the traditions of the catholic faith; we acknowledge and reflect upon the liturgical calendar and feast days. Some Collective Worship reflects and builds upon the RE being currently studied and the seven themes from the Caritas in Action document: T
  - The dignity of the human person
  - Family and community
  - Solidarity and the common good
  - Dignity of work
  - Rights and responsibilities
  - Option for the poor and vulnerable
  - Stewardship

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<sup>3</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Parents are informed through the termly newsletter and are encouraged to follow up and discuss at home with their children.

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

**We encourage the children to plan and conduct their own Collective worship**

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, The RE 'Come and See' scheme of work, significant dates in the church year and the seven themes from the Caritas in Action document. 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 pupil's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship with progressing independence rather than participating or contributing in a token way

### **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded, and evidence of some plans are kept in a Collective Worship scrap book which is held in each class.

It is evident through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

### **Resources**

- Let us Pray 2gether resources- held in each class
- Other resources held by class teachers in classroom
- Mass resources located in the RE cupboard and under the Altar table

### **Voluntary Worship**

- Children are free to worship in their class prayer corner/area whenever they wish
- Silent reflection is held in the hall during Advent and Lent
- All children are free to pray in our Peace Garden

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

At least once a year 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.

Each class has QR codes displayed and pupils are regularly encouraged to log on and evaluate masses, class collective worship, retreats and the prayer environment.

### **Voluntary Worship and Retreats**

Year 6 children visit the Briars annually

Lower Key Stage 2 visit our Local C of E church (covid allowing)

All children attend Masses at Holy Cross church and within school time.

Each class have a prayer book that is shared with and contributed to from home - children are encouraged to write prayers with family.

Children can volunteer for the Care and Prayer Group.

## **Eucharist**

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.

These are planned in collaboration between parish priest and school.

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

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship.
- Ensuring that there is an action plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school's development plan.
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitude and family background 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 Catholic church.
- Organising themes for Worship.
- Assisting the governors and head teacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to 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 head teacher regarding matters of concern and development.
- Encouraging positive attitude 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 the Diocesan RE Centre.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the RE 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.

## **The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship**

*Mrs S A Butkevicius*