

St. Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre
Ysgol Gatholig San Joseff

Collective Act Of Worship Policy



Collective Act of Worship Policy agreed by Governors:

Signed by Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Wellingham', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Date: 10/07/2024

1. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the aim of St Joseph's Catholic School and Sixth Form Centre to create an ethos in which the school community has the opportunity to grow together in their faith. We seek to offer an education in the practice of the faith, in prayer and worship, which puts God first.

2. 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 with God, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Sacramental aspects of the Church's liturgical life, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, are intrinsically woven into our school community. We provide various liturgical events throughout the year with termly Mass, class Eucharistic liturgies and opportunities to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the season of Lent and Advent.

THE PLACE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

In this policy the term Collective Worship refers to the legal requirement for a daily act of worship. Daily Collective Worship is a statutory requirement under the 1944 Education Act. 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. The daily act of worship is not intended to include the delivery of the liturgical cycle of worship. Worship is more than a legal requirement; it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Acts of collective worship is not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Formation. We recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from collective worship.

DAILY WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Every day we make it our priority to give the pupils in our charge the opportunity to reflect and pray at the start of the day. We recognise that this is something pupils have a right to and a need of and that it is incumbent on us to make this possible. Staff will start briefing and full staff meetings with prayer. All full school based INSET days will begin with prayer. Worship and the religious life of the school is a shared responsibility of all those involved within the community of St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre.

PRINCIPLES OF ALL LITURGICAL WORSHIP

All Liturgical Acts of Worship in St Joseph's will:

- give glory and honour to God.
- be a quality activity, planned and organised, and suitable to the age, social and religious development of the pupils.
- give pupils a positive liturgical experience. We will achieve this by making the liturgy relevant to the lives of the pupils and involve them through words, music, drama, silence, reflection, listening and sharing.
- be examples of good practice, which should enable pupils and students to develop skills so that they can lead, organize and lead worship.

3. THE AIM OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP is to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff to:

- contemplate something of the mystery of God.
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
- explore their beliefs.
- respond to and celebrate life.
- experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- develop a common ethos and shared values.
- enrich religious experience.
- grow in liturgical understanding and development.
- reinforce positive attitudes.
- participate fully.
- take time out for personal reflection and appreciation.
- respond to the wider and global community.
- Daily Collective Worship will be in the form of prayer. Prayer can be described as the 'raising of one's heart and mind to God or the requesting of good things from God' (Stroh Damascene).
- Daily Collective Worship will take place every morning via form tutors, year group or whole school assemblies.

“The community of a Catholic school will generally be inclusive of people who are not Catholics or Christians. This context provides Catholic schools with a unique opportunity to present, in an authentic way, our tradition of Catholic prayer and liturgy, while at the same time providing a welcoming environment for all pupils and staff. In order to respond to this most fruitfully, we are called to understand the tradition of the Catholic faith and maintain an approach that respects the integrity of all members of the school community.” (To love you more dearly, Prayer and Liturgy Directory, 2023, p. 6).

Guidelines for Daily Collective Worship

- It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to emphasise the importance of prayer by creating a conducive atmosphere in the classroom.
- The main focus of the prayer will be related to the Liturgical calendar.
- The Head of RE will email all tutors the prayer themes for the following week. This will be said daily in tutor groups and will begin by making the sign of the Cross, followed by a reflection, a prayer (Our Father, Hail Mary or Glory Be).
- Resources and guidance are also available from the Head of RE and the RE department.

Guidelines for Daily Collective Worship via Form Tutor

- Daily prayer is the responsibility of Form Tutors except when whole school and year group assemblies are taking place.
- It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to ensure that the legal requirement of a daily act of worship is given to their pupils each morning.
- It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to emphasise the importance of prayer by creating a conducive atmosphere in the classroom. This may be achieved by:
 - Beginning and ending prayers by saying and making the Sign of the Cross.
 - Encouraging pupils to be still and to bow their heads.
 - The tutor may lead prayer; however, it is encouraged for pupils to lead the prayer at the start of each day.
- Prayer may take the form of words or silence.

Guidelines for Daily Collective Worship via Assemblies

- Each year group will have one assembly per week
- Year group assemblies will usually be led by SLT or Heads of Year.
- Upper and Lower school assemblies will take place as scheduled as well as whole school assemblies at various points during the year (i.e. Memorial Assembly in November, Holocaust Memorial Day in January)
- There will also be special assemblies to mark special times during the liturgical year (Advent and Lent) led by the Head of RE and School Choir.
- Prayer is to be included as an integral part of every assembly.
- It is the responsibility of the person leading the assembly to emphasise the importance of prayer by creating a conducive atmosphere. This may be achieved by:
 - Beginning and ending prayers by saying and making the Sign of the Cross.

- Encouraging pupils to be still and bow their heads when appropriate.
- It is the responsibility of every member of staff present in the assembly to support the importance of prayer by helping to create a conducive atmosphere.

This may be achieved by, for example:

- directing pupils into the assembly in an orderly and quiet manner.
- supervising pupils during the assembly.

Prayer may take the form of words or silence.

IDENTIFYING AND MEETING NEEDS

Daily Collective Worship Support Materials

- Weekly Staff Bulletin with liturgical calendar for the week, half termly virtues and religious quote (i.e. from Pope Francis)
- Lenten, Advent, and other Diocesan materials.
- Each Monday the focus of prayer in Morning Care, is based on the Gospel of the previous Sunday. The resource is shared in advance for tutors to use. The resource contains the Gospel reading, a reflection linked to the virtues and an invitation to focus on something concrete for that week.
- Each Friday the focus of prayer in Morning Care is the Examen, offering an opportunity to pupils to reflect on how they have followed Monday's invitation. The resource is shared in advance.
- At other points during the school year, linked to the liturgical year, pupils will have the opportunity to pray traditional forms of devotion such as the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary.
- The RE team have various resources, for example, books on assemblies and festivals.

Staff Professional Development Needs

Staff Professional Development needs on an individual, team or whole school basis will be identified through, for example:

- Discussions with individuals, line managers and especially the Heads of Year
- Regular staff surveys
- Performance management
- Discussions at Pastoral Meetings and RE department meetings

- All school based Staff INSET Days will start with a prayer service and all Full Staff Meetings and briefings will incorporate a prayer/reflection.
- At least one INSET day will focus on Catholic Life/Ethos CPD where all staff are invited to reflect upon the important contribution they make to the Catholic life of the school. This may be led by the Diocese or school.

5. THE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Headteacher and Governors, in collaboration with the RE Department, is responsible for writing and reviewing the policy. Consultation will involve members of the RE team including the RE link governor and SLT.

Roles and Responsibilities

Whilst remembering that worship is a shared responsibility of all those in our community, the following have specific responsibility:

- **Governors and Headteacher:** to ensure the Collective Worship Policy is implemented and practised daily.
- **RE Department:** To support, review, monitor and evaluate the practice of Collective Worship within the school. Collective worship will be well resourced, both in regard to content and the continued professional development of those planning and leading collective worship, including pupils.
- **Heads of Year:** To deliver year group assemblies, to assist at whole school assemblies and to monitor the delivery of Collective Worship within their year group.
- **Form Tutors:** To lead and deliver Collective Worship when assemblies are not taking place. To assist at year and other school assemblies and Liturgies.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy is written and is to be practiced in the context of our school Mission Statement and Religious Education Policies.

6. MONITORING, REVIEWING AND EVALUATION

At least once a year the school's provision of Collective Worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils.

Evaluation will also take place in Term 6 with a view to revising aims and setting revised or new objectives for the following school year.