



**St Teresa's Catholic Primary  
School  
Collective Worship Policy**

*We are made in the image of God  
to live, love and learn in a caring Catholic community,  
where tolerance, confidence and independence are  
nurtured  
and every achievement makes us proud.*

## **The Nature of Collective Worship**

Collective 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.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'<sup>1</sup>

## **Legal Requirements**

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily act of worship offered 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. **Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement.** 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. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship lies 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 will 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, within the RE curriculum.

## **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St Teresa's Catholic Primary School**

Worship is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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.

## **The Aims of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship in St Teresa's Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using 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.'

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<sup>1</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

## **Principles**

All acts of worship in St Teresa's Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead worship;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

## **Planning, content and celebration**

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Ten Ten Resources, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies and prayer times
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word
- the occasional celebration of sacramental liturgies
- a range of types of prayer
- a range of styles of celebration
- opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies and prayer times
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite
- the occasional celebration of sacramental liturgies
- a range of types of prayer
- a range of styles of celebration
- opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship
- opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership roles in worship

Celebrations will:

- 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 )
- take place every day
- include prayer, liturgy, reflection and relate to the life experiences of the children

The timing of Collective Worship is flexible and can be spontaneous but must take place every day. Whole school Collective Worship takes place on a Monday and before whole school assembly on a Friday. Collective Worship may be class-based, paired classes or Key stage. The locations can also vary and may include the Peace Garden, Church, school field, the Green Room or the classroom

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<sup>2</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

**Leading collective worship**

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead the whole school collective worship and the class teacher will lead class collective worship. Children are involved in the planning and delivery of worship according to their age.

**Recording**

Collective Worship is adapted on the Ten Ten planning format. The RE Governor and Parish Priest monitors the whole school Collective Worship and support the head to monitor the class collective worships.

**The learning environment**

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'<sup>3</sup>

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

**Cluster Support and moderations**

St Teresa's is one of 5 primary schools and 1 secondary school in the Parish of John XXiii. We were very closely together to support the vision and mission of our parish. This includes shared celebrations for such as Lent and Advent, preparation for the Sacrament, moderation of RE work, shared RE days, celebrations and CPD for staff.

**Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator 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.

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<sup>3</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

## Appendix 1

### **The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

#### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher/Governors of standards and developments in Collective Worship

#### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content 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 cluster
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

#### **Professional development/Ongoing formation**

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

#### **Resources**

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