

SACRED HEART  
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



LIVE LEARN LOVE

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP  
POLICY

APPROVED BY  
THE GOVERNING BODY  
APRIL 2018 – APRIL 2020

# **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

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

## **2. 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 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 our school, as with any Voluntary Academy, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Head Teacher. Parents are informed of the school's policy for Collective Worship through the school website. (Please see Appendix 1).

## **3. 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.

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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. 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.

Worship in our school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Prayer will punctuate the school day. (Please see Appendix 2).

#### **4. 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'.

#### **5. PRINCIPLES**

All Acts of Worship in our 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 concise wherever possible and appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
  - be short and appropriately paced;
  - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.
  - Christian meditation takes place regularly throughout the school

Our weekly schedule for Collective Worship is as follows:

Monday	<b>Class/Praise Assembly</b>	Head Teacher
Tuesday	<b>KS2/KS1 Act of Worship</b>	Class Teachers
Wednesday	<b>Class Act of Worship</b>	Class Teachers
Wednesday	<b>Class Act of Worship</b>	Class Teachers
Thursday	<b>Class Act of Worship</b>	Class Teachers
Friday	<b>Whole-School Act of Worship</b>	Head Teacher

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

In addition to this, each class will lead a whole-school Act of Worship during the year. Masses and Liturgies also take place throughout the year. Please see Appendix 3 for further information about the school's Liturgical Calendar.

We ensure that our children experience a range of celebrations which mark the liturgical year.

## **6. PLANNING, CONTENT AND DELIVERY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Collective Worship is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the school's Religious Education scheme, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most Acts of Worship; Please see Appendix 3.
- 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.

## **7. RECORDING OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Collective Worship is recorded:

- On a range of pro-formas which are stored in an annual 'Liturgical Life of the School File'. This provides a comprehensive evidence bank for when the school undergoes a Diocesan Canonical Inspection. Please see Appendix 4.
- Through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated by the Head Teacher to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organizing and leading worship. As part of our whole-school monitoring and evaluation cycle, Acts of Worship in the form of whole-school liturgies are always evaluated by a member of staff and these are also filed in the school's 'Liturgical Life' files. Please see Appendix 5. Provision will also be made for the views of pupils to be gathered, this may be through the Chaplaincy Team or through pupil interviews.

## **9. RESOURCES**

The school has an extensive range of resources to support Collective Worship including a number of books, CD-Rom resources, music and visual aids. The majority of these are stored in the entrance hall resource area and the Head Teacher's office. The school also has a projection system in the hall for the enhancement of collective worship.

## **10. EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATIONS**

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. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to *'The Welcome Table: Planning Masses with Children'* which contains the complete text of the Church's *'Directory for Masses with Children'* as a basis for our practice.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

On holy days of obligation, children in Key Stage 2 will celebrate Mass whereas children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 will normally take part in a shorter, celebration of the Liturgy of the Word – this is normally led by one of the Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 staff.

There are occasions when we feel it is important for the whole school community to gather together to celebrate the Eucharist for example at the beginning and end of each academic year, Christmas and other school occasions. When this is the case, great care will be taken to ensure that the celebration is appropriate and relevant for all children – this may mean that certain parts of the Mass may be either shortened or omitted in keeping with the guidelines contained in the Directory for Masses with Children.

Once per term, Years 3-6 will attend a Mass at Sacred Heart Parish Church.

As with all aspects of Collective Worship, the celebration of the Eucharist will also be monitored in order to ensure that our provision can continue to be improved. An example of the evaluation sheet for Eucharistic celebrations can be found in Appendix 6.

## **11. THE CO-ORDINATOR FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

The school's Head Teacher takes on the role of co-ordinator for Collective Worship and he/she is supported by the school's Deputy Head Teacher and the Religious Education Coordinator in monitoring and developing this aspect of school life. An outline of the role can be found in Appendix 7.

## **12. POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship 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. (Please see Appendix 8 for further information).

## **APPENDIX 1 - DIOCESAN STATEMENT ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

It is the responsibility of every Catholic school to provide for all its members a vital experience of liturgy, worship and prayer which:

- Names and celebrates God present and active in authentic human experience;
- Is educative;
- Is within our Catholic tradition.

The purpose of these experiences is:

- To give honour and praise to God;
- To develop the school as a community of faith;
- To assist pupils in developing their relationship with God, creation and the community of the Church;
- To witness to the community and the wider world.

Collective Worship in our schools will be:

- Appropriately planned;
- Adequately resourced;
- Recorded;
- Monitored;
- Evaluated.

In order to ensure that Collective Worship experienced within the school is a relevant, meaningful and positive contribution to the religious, spiritual and moral development of all members of the community.

Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, however, given the importance of Collective Worship within a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to be 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. Worship is and will continue to be 'central' to the life of the school. It should also be noted that the school is under no obligation to provide alternative arrangements for children who are withdrawn from Collective Worship.

## **APPENDIX 2 - PRAYER LIFE OF THE SCHOOL**

Prayer is at the very centre of the life of our school. It is important for children to engage in a number of different forms of prayer including both formal and personal prayer times.

Children will be encouraged to pray in different ways within Acts of Collective worship, however, prayer should also form part of daily classroom life.

Prayers should be said at these parts of the school day:

<i>Beginning of day</i>	<b>The Morning Prayer</b>
<i>Lunch time</i>	<b>Grace before meals The Angelus</b>
<i>Beginning of afternoon session</i>	<b>Grace after meals (School Prayer)</b>
<i>End of the day</i>	<b>The Evening Prayer</b>

These prayers can all be found in the School Prayer Book which is in every classroom.

*Prayer reflects a personal relationship with God. Alongside personal prayer there are opportunities and occasions to participate in communal prayer. We bring ourselves, with our relatedness to God, to pray with other members of our community.*

*In the Catholic community there is a rich heritage of traditional prayers. It is important for pupils to be familiar with these so long as they are encouraged to recognise that prayer is about a personal relationship with God.*

*What is also important is giving children an awareness of the appropriateness of prayer at any time and in any place. In the midst of everyday life we can learn to be open to quiet and prayer – to being.*

*Prayerfulness may include the saying of prayers, especially those which have a central place in the Catholic tradition. However, praying cannot be identified only with saying prayers. Prayerfulness includes an attitude of stillness, quiet and openness to the presence of God experienced in a variety of ways. So while it is good to pray regularly, care must be taken not to fall into a dull routine.*

(R.E. – The Primary Years by D. Sullivan *Bishops' Conference of England & Wales*)

## **APPENDIX 3 - EXAMPLE OF THE ANNUAL LITURGICAL CALENDAR**

*The information below is intended to provide an overview of the range of liturgical celebrations which take place during the year. In addition to the liturgies below, each class leads a whole-school Act of Worship and class Masses are also arranged in collaboration with local clergy.*

### ***Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy***

#### **LITURGICAL CALENDAR**

##### ***Advent Term***

<i>Date</i>	<i>Liturgy</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Coord</i>
<i>September</i>	Mass for the Beginning of the Year *		
<i>September</i>	Welcome Liturgy for Reception Class *		
<i>October</i>	Harvest Liturgy *		
<i>October</i>	Rosary Liturgy		
<i>November</i>	KS2 Mass for Feast of All Saints *		
<i>November</i>	F/KS1 Liturgy for Feast of All Saints *		
<i>November</i>	Year 2 Act of Collective Worship *		
<i>November</i>	Remembrance Liturgy		
<i>November</i>	Year 1 Act of Collective Worship *		
<i>November</i>	Family Mass (Christ the King) *		
<i>November</i>	Advent Liturgy		
<i>December</i>	F/KS1 Christingle *		
<i>December</i>	School Carol Service		
<i>December</i>	Mass for the End of Term (Christmas) *		

##### ***Lent Term***

<i>Date</i>	<i>Liturgy</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Coord</i>
<i>February</i>	KS2 Ash Wednesday Liturgy		
<i>February</i>	F/KS1 Ash Wednesday Liturgy		
<i>February</i>	KS2 Penitential Service		
<i>March/April</i>	F/KS1 Stations of the Cross *		
<i>March/April</i>	Family Mass (Lent) *		
<i>March/April</i>	KS2 Stations of the Cross *		
<i>March/April</i>	Holy Week Liturgy		

##### ***Trinity Term***

<i>Date</i>	<i>Liturgy</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Coord</i>
<i>April</i>	Easter Liturgy		
<i>May</i>	KS2 Ascension Liturgy *		
<i>May</i>	F/KS1 Ascension Liturgy *		
<i>May</i>	Family Mass (Pentecost) *		
<i>May</i>	KS2 Liturgy for Corpus Christi *		
<i>May</i>	F/KS1 Corpus Christi Liturgy *		
<i>May</i>	Marian Procession		
<i>June</i>	Mass/Liturgy for the Sacred Heart		
<i>June</i>	Mass for the Feast of Ss Peter & Paul		



**APPENDIX 4 - COLLECTIVE WORSHIP PLANNING PRO-FORMA**

# Liturgy Planning Sheet

Theme:

Gathering      
 Sign of the Cross

The Word      
 Scripture:

Response    

Mission    

Sign of the Cross



**APPENDIX 5 - COLLECTIVE WORSHIP EVALUATION PRO-FORMA**

# Liturgy Evaluation Sheet

Theme:

**Gathering** Circle if activity style is present in this section.

**Sign of the Cross**

- Welcome
- Opening prayer / Theme
- Sorry prayers
- Introduction to the scripture

**The Word** Circle if activity style is present in this section.

**Scripture:**

- Correct responses
- Drama / Reflection
- Explanation
- Linked with theme

**Response** Circle if activity style is present in this section.

- Whole group action
- Linked with theme
- Asking prayers
- Silent reflection
- Thanksgiving prayers

**Mission** Circle if activity style is present in this section.

- Mission / challenge to complete
- Follow-up activities
- Closing prayer / reflection

**Sign of the Cross**

**Comment on each section**

*Focus display  
Digital images  
Photos/Videos  
Colour  
Drama/props*



*Music  
Speech  
Singing  
Scripture  
Silence*

*Prayer  
Silence  
Time  
Questions  
Stimuli*



*Activities  
Actions  
Equipment  
Objects  
Accessibility*

**The Space:**

**The Atmosphere:**

**Pupil Engagement:**

**Pupil Leadership:**

Date:  
Time:  
Venue:  
Group:  
Led by:  
Evaluated by:

# Mass Evaluation

The Mass is the most important celebration we have.

Please look below and share any thoughts and reflections on your experience today so that we can continue to make our celebrations engaging and enriching for all.

## **Setting the space**

Please comment on what you saw today.

Was the space welcoming and inviting? Did it look like something special was happening?



## **Hearing The Word**

Please comment on what you heard today.

Was the theme of the Mass clear? Could you hear everything and were the prayers and readings clear and understandable?

Was the music suitable and enjoyable? How was the singing?



## **Time and space to pray**

Please comment on the opportunities to reflect/think

Was there a prayerful atmosphere? Did everybody show respect and reverence during the Mass? Were you given space and time to reflect and pray?



## **Engaging with our faith**

Please comment on what you did today.

Were you able to be involved in the celebration? What could we do differently in the future to make our celebration more enjoyable?



# *Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy*

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **ROLE OF THE COORDINATOR FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship;
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan;
- 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 principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children';
- Organising themes for Worship;
- Assisting the governors to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship.

### **PLANNING, RECORDING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation;
- Observing, on occasions, Acts of Collective Worship;
- Informing the governors of standards and developments in 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 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 school chaplain;
- Liaison with the Diocesan Education Service.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ONGOING FORMATION**

- Leading and organising INSET and ongoing formation for Collective Worship;
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back;
- 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.

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY REGARDING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

*The following information is taken from guidelines issued by the Diocese of Nottingham.*

Governors should be aware of their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship taking account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, Education Act 1996 and the School Standard Framework Act 1998.

#### **The Legal Framework**

There must be a daily Act of Worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can either be a single Act of Worship for all pupils, or separate Acts of Worship in different school groups (i.e. a group or combination of groups in which pupils are taught or take part in school activities).

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship and this must be made clear in the policy statement on Collective Worship and in the school prospectus. However, a Catholic school will make it clear to parents that worship is central to the life of a Catholic school and both formal and spontaneous Acts of Worship take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

The Governing Body makes arrangements for Collective Worship in a Voluntary School after consultation with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that requirements are met.

In a Catholic Voluntary Academy, Governors must take account of the Instrument of Government which states that Acts of Worship shall be consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church. Foundation Governors, appointed by the Bishop, have a particular responsibility for seeing that the Catholic character of the school is reflected in Collective Acts of Worship and are in accordance with the Instrument of Government.

Governors should also be familiar with any guidelines issued by the diocese.

While the OfSTED Inspection team is required to report on whether the school fulfils its statutory responsibility for Collective Worship, the content of Collective Worship will be inspected by the Diocesan & Canonical Section 47/48 Inspector.

The Act of Worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and should not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum. It must be

distinctive and be able to be identified as such if it is to meet legal requirements.

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. a church on a 'special occasion'.

### **Other Responsibilities**

Governors will be familiar with all documentation regarding Collective Worship issued on their behalf and will be actively involved in the process of Collective Worship development in the school (after consultation with the Head Teacher).

Governors should ensure that there is a development plan for Collective Worship, which is appropriately reviewed as part of the whole school development plan.

