



# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

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## Mission statement

*'We treat each other as Jesus teaches us.'*

## The Nature of Collective Worship

At St James Catholic Primary School, we believe that Christian 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 Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School 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. Collective worship considers 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.

## 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.'

## **Principles**

All Acts of Worship in St James 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;
- Develop in pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- 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.

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.

## **Weekly overview:**

See separate key stage collective worship timetable - Daily Prayers are shared in every class (prayers are suitable for each year group). –

Every class celebrates an act of Collective Worship as a Liturgical prayer according to the collective worship timetable.

Whole School Liturgical prayer take place throughout the year (Eg Harvest, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week, Advent, etc.) to celebrate the liturgical calendar.

Our parish priest is actively involved in our school and leads whole school and class masses.

## **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. 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.

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

The RE Co-Ordinator is responsible for Collective worship.

## **Eucharist**

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 '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.

## **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.

## **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 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. 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. church, "on a special occasion".

In this school the responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests 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.

Start Date:	Review Date:	Adopted:
May 2023	May 2025	June 2023