

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

Nurturing Hearts and Minds



Collective Worship Policy (Prayer and Liturgy)

Our Mission Statement

Let the light of Jesus shine through in all we think and say and do.

Prayer (For children – with actions)

Jesus, let your light shine through, in all we think and say and do.

The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, and praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with the Father, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. 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 this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

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
- Those from other faith backgrounds
- It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship. Children are encouraged to pray in the morning, lunchtime and in the evening. 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 be brought closer to God through reflection and prayer
- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond and celebrate life
- To mark occasions as special
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared value
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- 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 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.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- Be kept small and wherever possible help to personalise the experience
- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and settings

Structure

All acts of worship will follow a Liturgical structure:

Gather – how we come together, the setting, the environment

Listen – the Word of God is proclaimed

Respond – the response to the Word leads into a time of prayerful reflection which may be accompanied by a symbolic action

Go Forth – giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives

Timing

The daily act of Collective Worship takes place at various times of the school day. Usually, the children gather in class groups, although classes do join together in their Key Stages or as a whole school.

On Monday afternoon, there is a Key Stage 2 Hymn Practice which ends with a Collective Worship that is led by a member of teaching staff on a rotational basis. EYFS & Key Stage 1 hold their act of Worship in class and include a Hymn. At the end of the RE topic a class led Celebration Worship, to which parents of that class are invited, takes place in the hall, whilst the other classes will hold theirs in their classroom. This is in place of the Hymn Practice.

On Tuesdays, children will hold their act of Worship in class either led by the class teacher or the pupils or a combination of both using Picture News.

On Wednesdays, children will hold their act of Worship in class either led by the class teacher or the pupils or a combination of both using Wednesday Word.

On Thursdays, children will hold their act of Worship in class either led by the class teacher or the pupils or a combination of both.

On a Friday, there is a whole school act of Worship that takes place at the start of the afternoon assembly.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned;

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'RED – To Know you more Clearly', significant dates and the wider curriculum.
- Involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and Mission Statement.
- With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community using Picture News that incorporates British Values in a current manner.
- To develop in pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship (appropriate to their age and understanding) rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Class Worship

- As the teachers know their own children personally, this experience is most meaningful.
- The scripture used will be words that the children are familiar with through coverage within 'RED – To know you more Clearly' as well as use of the Wednesday Word and CAFOD resources.
- Teachers should create a suitable atmosphere and to do this any of the following could be used - music, song, candles, flowers, prayers (formal and informal), poetry, scripture, books, posters, mime etc.
- There is a focus area in every classroom and teachers are encouraged to develop areas (space permitting) where children can gather for worship.

- The Act of Worship will last for a length of time appropriate to the age of the children in the class / group – recommended 1 minute for each year of the child's life.
- Over the year, parents are invited to a celebration of the RE topic.

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded:

- Through displays, collections of pupil's contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs etc.
- Use of our school App.
- PowerPoint presentations made by the staff and children.
- In a portfolio.
- On class timetables.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the year, the R.E. Subject Leader monitors Collective Worship. This will include worship led by both staff and children. The school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it is current, meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Resources

Each class has their own Collective Worship box which contains scripture, cloths, music, battery candles, artefacts, along with various resources to help the children become more independent in planning Collective Worship.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion or reflect the season of the Liturgical year. Mass is a wonderful opportunity for the whole school and parish to worship together and is celebrated in St. Mary Magdalen's church. For these celebrations, the staff and children prepare the music, prayers and readings.

In addition, children have regular opportunities to attend the weekly Wednesday Mass throughout the year in a variety of ways – as a Key Stage, as a paired class and as an individual class.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

The R.E. Subject Leader for the school, Mrs Wallace, will undertake this role.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the R.E. Subject Leader and is to be evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The RE Governor in particular will play a most important role.

Reviewed and passed by Governors: March 2025

To be reviewed: Summer 2027