



Together, We Learn and Grow in God's Love

Sacred Heart
Catholic Primary School
A Voluntary Academy

2024-25 Policy for Collective Worship

This policy was approved by Governors: January 2025
Review date: Summer 2025

Our Mission Statement is: Together, we learn and grow in God's Love.

This is underpinned by the five values of the Sacred Heart of Jesus:

- **love** one another
- **inspire** others
- give **comfort**
- know God's **mercy** to us
- live together in **peace**.

Our vision is fulfilled through having:

- High aspirations for all to aim high and fulfil their potential
- A curriculum that stretches, challenges and interests pupils, providing them with the skills and knowledge needed to make a valuable contribution to the society in which we live
- A commitment to lifelong learning that involves enjoyment, hard work and fun
- An inclusive approach that welcomes and celebrates diversity and difference
- Opportunities to lead and work as part of a team
- Superb facilities indoors and outdoors that stimulate pupil learning.

The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school honours 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.¹

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all

¹ 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 we also use the words 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' in our context.

² 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 cannot always be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

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, 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 – 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. 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 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 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.³ 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.

Collective Worship at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

At Sacred Heart Collective Worship currently takes place across the whole week:

- On **Mondays**, we start our school day with Collective Worship in classes, using the Mark 10 video resources and our Prayer & Reflection books.
- On **Tuesdays**, we have a shared Collective Worship experience together at 2:45pm
- On **Wednesdays**, we have Class Worship, which the children take part in preparing and delivering (with adults as appropriate, depending upon Key Stage).
- On **Thursdays**, we have Key Stage worship in the School Hall, which focuses around our Virtues (Eg: Love of Learning, Citizenship, etc).
- On **Fridays**, we have Collective Worship together as part of our Celebration Assembly.

Whole School Masses are also celebrated as appropriate and in accordance with the liturgical calendar. We work with Father Butler, our Parish Priest, to organise worship in school and some classes also go on "mini-pilgrimages" to Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Headingley to worship there for special masses.

We also have additional special worship sessions as appropriate during the Liturgical Year to recognise special events, such as our Rosary Worship sessions in October and May, Travelling Rosaries, Travelling Cribs, etc. These can include additional Class Worship sessions and material to take home to celebrate worship at home (Eg: Travelling Rosaries).

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, The Way, The Truth and The Life , significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in all acts of worship
- a timetable for each half-term is agreed and shared with all staff. This includes whole school, key stage worship and Parish Mass attendance by different classes.

³ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- 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 pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Structure

Usually, Acts of Collective Worship will take the following structure:

- Acts of Collective Worship follow the 4-part structure, to reflect the structure of the Mass: Collect, Word, Response and Sending Forth.
- The room or space will be made prayerful and a focal point will be used (Eg: around the prayer or RE display, at the front of the class, etc). This focal point will include a lighted/LED candle and other religious artefacts, as appropriate, may be added including the words of Scripture, key words etc;
- Often, the children will be gathered and welcomed by meditative music or a hymn;
- Collective Worship will begin with everyone making the Sign of the Cross.
- The theme of the worship will be explained to the children and they will listen to the word of God through Scripture. The length of the reading will vary depending on the age of the children and the theme etc;
- The children will be given a Response activity to take part in. This could be a shared discussion, holding a prayer stone, listening to music, writing/drawing a reflection, etc.
- Following this, the children will be given a 'mission' or something they must try to do for that particular day/week e.g. say something kind to someone who is not your best friend; look for someone at playtime who may not have a friend etc;
- There will be a Closing Prayer and reflective silence for the children to pray/reflect.
- The candle will be extinguished/switched off.
- Collective Worship will end by children making the Sign of the Cross.
- The children will then have additional time to complete a themed prayer/reflection/

From the earliest age, children are encouraged to contribute to Collective Worship through the responses they make. This builds up towards the children planning and delivering their own acts of Collective Worship in key stage 2.

The expectations for the end of each year group are identified below:

Foundation Stage: Throughout the year the children set up the focal point together discussing what they want to include and why the colour of the drape has been selected. They are encouraged to share, through prayer, people who they would like to pray for.

Year One: The children will begin to explain what the focal point consists of and why. They should continue to suggest people who need our prayers, and this should now be extended to people in and out of school as well as events they may see in the news. They should begin to read and possibly write and share prayers during Collective Worship.

Year Two: The children will be encouraged to set up the focal point more independently explaining why they have chosen certain religious artefacts. They should contribute to planning by selecting a suitable hymn from a selection given. The children will be beginning to suggest Scripture readings to share at the major feasts of the year. Children in year 2 should participate in short reflections about the Word of God therefore laying foundations for explaining the Scripture. Throughout Collective

Worship the children may write and share prayers and when appropriate they will be encouraged to write promises for the mission/witness.

Year Three: The children should now be independently setting up the focal point selecting relevant items linked to the theme. They will be able to choose hymns from a selection given and will sing with enthusiasm. Throughout the year they will suggest Gospel readings linked to the major feasts and will also start to select Scripture readings (from a selection given) linked to a particular theme. They will continue to participate in short reflections about the Word of God continuing to lay the foundations for explaining the Scripture. The children will contribute by writing prayers, thinking about and sharing how they could go out and spread the Word of God. Year 3 children will be encouraged to help choose the content for Class Worship and to help adults deliver it.

Year Four: The children should be given the opportunity to plan Collective Worship for their class using the planning frame shared and will select their own content from available selections. They can also help to choose hymns, ensuring that they link to the theme of the Worship. Explaining the Word should be attempted but at this stage may still require the guidance of the teacher.

Year Five: The majority of children should be independently planning and leading Collective Worship for their own class by the end of year 5. They should be able to select a theme, relevant scripture, explain the scripture with the support of the teacher, and then lead their peers in a reflection. Some children may be confident enough to lead Collective Worship in other classes within Key Stage 2.

Year Six: Children should be independently planning and leading Collective Worship for their own class and for others within the school. Opportunities for voluntary worship should be identified and the children should plan and lead this independently. Acts of Worship could be planned linked to special events such as Saints' Days, theme weeks, links to current affairs/world events and so on.

Recording/Celebration

Collective Worship planning is recorded in classes on the "Big Board" sheets, which are collected in a floor book in each class. Children are encouraged to use floor books to celebrate their worship, with pictures, readings, photos and more. Children have the Prayer and Reflection books in classes to respond to Class worship (Eg: via prayers, pictures & reflections, based on the stimulus for worship).

Worship is also celebrated through a variety of other ways as appropriate, eg: displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, PowerPoints, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. Governors will be part of the process along with the leaders of RE.

Resources

Each class has a collective worship area (either part of their RE display or a separate focus area) with candles, liturgical cloths to reflect the seasons in the Liturgical calendar, a Bible and crucifix.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

We are developing our Prayer Garden outside Key Stage 2 as an area for shared worship, where classes will be able to go to celebrate worship together: in small groups, guided by an adult (Eg: as part of the Rosary Worship in May) or as a whole class (Eg: as an alternative location for Class Worship). It can be used for quiet reflection and prayer for small group. It could also be a source of reflection and respectful prayer for our children of other faiths (Eg: for a reflective space during Ramadan). We hope to make it a beautiful and inspiring place for all.

Many additional worship opportunities are held throughout the year these are usually linked to the liturgical calendar or in response to local and global issues. These could include: Harvest Celebrations, Christmas Carol Service, Lenten Liturgies and May Procession - to name but a few.

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.

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

At **Key Stage 1** worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word

At **Key Stage 2** worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.

Leadership

Our Headteacher and Lead for Catholic Life and Mission

for 2024-25 is: Mrs Megan Nichol

Our RE Leader for 2024-25 is: Mr Andrew Prowse

Our Prayer and Worship Leader for 2024-25 is: Mrs Claire Duffy (our **Deputy Headteacher**)

Our Parish Priest for 2024-25 is: Father Chris Butler, Our Lady of Lourdes, Headingley

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 Academy Council every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Prayer and Worship Leader

- Working with the RE Leader and the SLT to formulate 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
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the Academy Council and headteacher 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, an Act of Collective Worship
- Informing the headteacher 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 Academy Council 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 Priest (**2024–25 = Father Chris Butler, Our Lady of Lourdes, Headingley**).
- Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre

Professional development / Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising CPD 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 2

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:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- recorded
- monitored
- evaluated

in order to ensure that the 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.