

St Antony's Catholic Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

*Learning together
In
God's love.*

Agreed by Governors Autumn 2017

Agreed by Staff: Autumn 2017

Date for Review :September 2018



Collective Worship Policy



INTRODUCTION

“Catholic Education is the conduit through which we guide, direct, mould and influence young minds. Teachers have an almost divine responsibility handed down to them by the greatest teacher of all.... Christ himself. Teachers must consider that every time they speak they represent Christ in their every word and deed. Their example is the greatest teacher of all as their actions always speak more profoundly than their words. Every child we have touched through our teaching is left with an indelible mark on their hearts and minds for the entirety of the lives. Let us ensure that the marks we leave particularly through prayer, praise and worship in communion with each other as The Body of Christ, please God and sets them all on a path for serving others humbly.” (Pope Francis).

“ Every Catholic and religiously sponsored school should have a vibrant worship life, with ample opportunities for student liturgies, time of prayer and reflection and be suffused with religious symbols that nurture the faith identity of the students, staff and community.” (Thomas Groome).

AIMS AND PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- To provide opportunities for pupils and staff to worship God: joyfully, reflectively and collaboratively in communion with their peers.
- To offer the sacrifice and thanksgiving of the Eucharist in Mass.
- To consider, discuss and debate spiritual, social/social justice and moral issues in line with relevant scriptures and the church's social and moral teachings.
- To provide opportunities to meet, get to know and develop a personal relationship with the living God.
- To explore their own belief/faith and that of others (Eg. Islam, Judaism & Hinduism).
- To encourage full, conscious, active participation and response through active involvement in the leading of assemblies in class or whole school.
- To develop community spirit and a generosity of spirit towards those less fortunate.
- To promote and reinforce our common ethos- as a faith school we 'LIVE' our faith.
- To express, in a variety of ways, the distinctive values that underpin the school's existence, vision, outlook against the background of its Mission Statement.
- To offer opportunities to explore the deeper Spiritual Dimension of their learning journey in RE in ways that enable, empower, uplift, inspire and instil a sense of awe and wonder, deepens reflection and adoration and develops the ability empathise.
- To provide moments of reflection and adoration in class, at church, in assemblies.
- To offer opportunities to more deeply ponder the Word of God as well as basic and more profound religious concepts.
- To enable pupils to come into the fullness of Trinitarian life.

LEGISLATION FOR WORSHIP

1989 legislation laid down the following criteria:

All schools must begin the day with an act of worship, which should be:

- Inclusive
- Educational
- Contribute to Spiritual Knowledge, Development and Understanding
- Have a sense of occasion.

CATHOLIC TRADITION

At the heart of Catholic life is the practice of starting each day, or beginning any meeting, project, initiative, piece of work with prayer. We make a point of dedicating our day and work to God, who is at the heart of all we do as a school. We pray as a school at least four times per day.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an act of worship. Our expectation is that everyone participates actively or show respect in the assembly hall or the church for mass.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school family..

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. This takes place through hymn practices, infant and junior assemblies, Masses and Prayer services, collective worship groups and a whole school assembly in St. Antony's Catholic Church.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period for calm reflection and joyful praise. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The Head Teacher or other members of staff conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups or other organisations are invited to lead them instead.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals, feast days and events of the Church's calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children we encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. St. Antony's is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of all the children in assemblies.

We invite parents to assembly on a weekly basis and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

Each KS2 class participates in a phase mass every half term. KS1 classes have a prayer service led by the parish priest in their classroom every half term. All classes come together for whole school masses every term. Parents are invited to attend all class and whole school masses.

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

Although we have never had any parent of any faith, belief or persuasion enacting this right to date because we ensure that at the expectations and Ethos of the school are explained and agreed at the outset (admissions/induction) which stipulates that all children are expected to engage fully in all school programmes and activities inclusive of collective worship; we must however, always remain cognisant of the fact that any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship. Upon this request the school can be asked to make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this request to withdraw as this complies with the 1944 Education Act and was reinstated in the 1988 Education Act.

The Head Teacher/SLT is required to keep a record a record of any such request for withdraw from collective worship.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for Religious Education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The Governor concerned must liaises with the head teacher and the curriculum and staffing committee before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

Monitoring and reviewing of policies are done either annually, biannually or triennially depending on the policy. The RE Team which meets at least once per half term agrees the review dates with governors.