



## Prayer and Collective Worship Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
Sept 2023	Annually	R.E. Coordinator	Headteacher

### **THE NATURE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

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.

### **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.) 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 (R.E.).

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents/carers and prospective parents/carers 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, within the Come and See R.E. curriculum.

### **THE PLACE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE LIFE OF SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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.

### **THE AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Collective Worship at Sacred Heart School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience

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- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using 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 at Sacred Heart School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead worship;
- 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. Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

### **PLANNING, CONTENT AND CELEBRATION**

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's Liturgical seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Remembrance Day.

The Parish and parents are invited to participate in many celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The weekly timetable of Collective Worship is as below.

- Class Worship/Meditation (Monday)
- Scripture based Assembly (Pupil Stream 1 – KS1 & 2) (Tuesday)
- Scripture based Assembly (Pupil Stream 2 – KS1 & 2) (Wednesday)
- KS1 Hymn Practice (Thursday)
- KS2 Hymn Practice (Thursday)
- Class led assemblies - parents/carers are invited to class led assemblies (Thursday)
- Celebration Assembly (Friday)

Each class prepares a class assembly each year. These are a reflection and celebration of their classroom work and are closely linked to the Come and See topics being studied at that time/a theme related to the school's Mission Statement.

Parents/Carers are invited to a range of Masses across the year. Whole school Mass is also celebrated on special occasions (e.g. our Feast Day). The children are actively involved with the preparation and celebration of these services.

There are opportunities for older children to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Pupils from all phases of the school prepare Christmas Nativity Services and Easter Services, held in the school hall and Sacred Heart Church. Parents, governors and friends are invited to participate in these celebrations.

During May and October pupils and staff are invited to pray the Rosary and we hold a May Procession.

In June, we hold a Sacred Heart Feast Celebration Day, inviting all of our parents/carers and parishioners to



be with us for the day. The day begins with an outdoor Mass on our school playground.

All our forms of Collective Worship follow a similar structure. We **gather**, using prayers or actions or music. Then, we listen to **scripture**, readings and reflect on the meaning of the scripture we have heard and after that we **respond** by doing something or saying a prayer together. Finally, we **go forth** by reflecting on the scripture and taking this forward into our work throughout the day. It is wonderful to see the children excited, enthusiastic and deepening their faith through prayer and liturgy. Our Liturgy Prefects in Year 6 support our younger children by leading Prayer and Liturgy.

**Collective Worship and Assemblies must incorporate the statutory requirement for Collective Worship. This is central to the prayer life of our school. (See Appendix 2 for guidelines for Class Teachers)**

### **PUPIL-LED WORSHIP**

Worship in the classroom is the perfect 'training ground' for fledging worship leaders. Worship should enable pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship that lead to improving practice.

Pupils should be responsible for the planning of worship as well as taking the lead for parts of it. Groups of children can be deployed to plan for each week, working on a rota to allow all those who are keen to have a turn. Other children may be involved in setting up the worship 'Altar' table, lighting the candle, reading the Bible or operating the music.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Masses, Assemblies and celebrations are attended by the Head Teacher (R.E. Leader) and Deputy Headteacher.

### **RESOURCES**

All resources for Prayer and Worship are located in the R.E. resource storage unit in the link resource corridor.

### **THE 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 Classroom Environment**

All classrooms will provide a prayer focus area, to nurture spirituality and prayer. The area should be a focal point in a classroom. It will be located in a convenient position for children to access to touch suitable objects, pray nearby or leave written messages. The areas should include the following:

**A PRAYER TABLE** focus area, which should include the following item:

- Prayer table cloths - White, Green, Red, Purple and Blue – to be used in accordance with the Liturgical Calendar
- A class Bible (enthroned) The chosen scripture should be either:

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- the 'reading of the day
  - a particular theme that you are working on
  - a Come and See required scripture
  - A free-standing Crucifix
  - A candle, on a candle stand
  - A candle snuffer
  - Holding wooden cross(es) (for pupils/adults to hold during prayer)
  - Any other objects or symbols which encourage reflection and spontaneous prayer
- Please note that this list is non-exhaustive, other items can also be added (e.g. stones, plants, prayer stones, written prayers from pupils...)*

(See Prayer Table resource box in each classroom.)

- Prayer tables should also create an opportunity for children to have their own private prayer intentions - e.g. a prayer basket, pebbles, stones or ribbons.
- Children should hold/share the responsibility of setting up the class prayer table on a regular basis and maintain it to a high standard and to reflect Liturgical seasons of the year.

**A class R.E. DISPLAY** which should be related to the Church season and up-to-date with the topic being taught through 'Come and See', and clearly visible in the classroom. The R.E. Display is to:

- share the Come and See topic title
- share children's work
- include 'Driver' words – to be displayed, clearly visible, and referred to
- include key vocabulary – to be displayed, clearly visible, and referred to
- include the 'Big questions' – to be displayed, clearly visible, and referred to
- be maintained to a high standard, with work single or double mounted to reflect the quality and importance we attach to each R.E. topic
- carry labels, captions and information which explain and enhance children's work, objects and image
- celebrate children's effort and achievement – children's work is to be named when appropriate
- reflect the rich and varied experiences of current learning
- have the overall presentation which stimulates curiosity and appreciation of learning, e.g. 3D objects to be on display, as well as images and photograph

Classroom environments should also include a prominently displayed wall-mounted Crucifix/Cross, religious images and age-appropriate pupil Bibles.

### **SACRAMENTS**

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and The Eucharist is an integral part of the **Come and See** programme. However, full preparation for children is undertaken within the parish setting, being supported in school where possible.

### **PRAYER**

Prayer is a part of the beginning or end of an RE lesson taking the form of prayer, meditation or reflection.

Children are taught daily prayers and also the prayers and responses of the Mass as appropriate to their age and stage of development.

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Each classroom has a focal prayer point and a R.E. area. Children pray, together with their teacher, at the beginning and end of the day and at lunchtime. Opportunities for spontaneous prayer and individual reflection exist both in the classroom and during collective worship with the wider school.

Prayer takes many forms and may be carefully structured or more informal. Children are encouraged to pray for the needs of others and for special requests. They may themselves ask for prayers for particular intentions.

Above all, prayer is about communication with God: we both speak and listen to Him. Prayer may take the form of adoration, thanksgiving, repentance or intercession. Children and staff alike are encouraged to be drawn into prayer and worship through a variety of celebrations. These are enhanced by:

- i) hymns
- ii) reflective music
- iii) silence
- iv) spoken and sung prayers
- v) movement / dance
- vi) scripture
- vii) stories
- viii) atmosphere – candles, icons, focal points
- ix) drama

Parents play an invaluable role in leading their children in prayer. They are informed of the school prayers (see Appendix 1) for their child via various means, including the school website, and are invited to celebrate Mass and assemblies when their child is involved.

Staff and Governors of Sacred Heart School begin staff meetings with a prayer.

### **ROLE OF R.E. LEADER IN PRAYER AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship, included in the School Development Plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith 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
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling Collective Worship and different prayer styles

### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Communicating standards and developments in Collective Worship

### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content 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 Parish Priest
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

#### Professional development / On-going formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- 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

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it fulfils the aims of our policy in an updated and appropriate manner.

This policy is monitored by the R.E. Lead and is evaluated and reviewed annually.

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**APPENDIX 1 - Sacred Heart School Prayers**

Prayers should be said at the beginning of the day, before and after lunchtime and at the end of the day. School prayers must be shared and said in a respectful way, at the following times:

**Infants**

**Morning Prayer**

Thank you, God, for this new day,  
in my school to work and play.  
Please be with me all day long,  
in every story, game and song.  
May all the happy things we do  
make you, Our Father, happy too.  
Amen

**Juniors**

**Morning Prayer**

Father in heaven you love me,  
you're with me night and day.  
I want to love you always,  
in all I do and say.  
I try to please you, Father.  
Bless me through the day.  
Amen

**Grace Before Meals**

Bless us O God as we sit together.  
Bless the food we eat today.  
Bless the hands that made the food.  
Bless us O God. Amen

**Grace After Meals**

Thank you, God for the food we have eaten.  
Thank you, God for all our friends.  
Thank you, God for everything.  
Bless us O God. Amen.

**Infants**

**Evening Prayer**

At the end of the day just kneel and pray.  
Thank you, Lord for my work and pray.  
I've tried to be good.  
For I know I should.  
That's my prayer for the end of the day.  
Amen

**Juniors**

**Evening Prayer**

God our Father, I come to say.  
Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family.  
And all the friends you give to me  
Guard me in the dark of night  
And in the morning send your light  
Amen

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**Sacred Heart School Prayer**

This is our school  
Let love be here with us  
Love of God  
Love of one another  
Love of our world  
And love of learning.

Let peace dwell here  
Let our school be filled  
With happiness.

Let us remember that  
As so many hands  
Build a house  
So many loving hearts  
Build our school.  
Amen

**School Meeting Prayer**

Heavenly Father,  
Bless us as we come together for this meeting in our school.

Fill us with your spirit and courage  
so that we might bring our talents and gifts to this important work.

Open our minds to the task at hand.  
Open our ears to each other.  
Open our hearts to your will.

Amen

**Learning prayers**

All children should know the Sacred Heart School Prayer. There is an expectation that pupils will learn a broader range of prayers (traditional and informal) as they progress through the school.





## **APPENDIX 2 - COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND ASSEMBLIES – GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS**

Collective Worship and assemblies are an important feature of our collective identity at Sacred Heart School. They are an opportunity for us to engage together both pupils and staff to proclaim our belief as a community.

The day begins and ends with prayer. This usually includes a morning and evening prayer alongside the other forms appropriate to the occasion and the age of the children.

Whole School Assemblies develop the children's sense of belonging to a caring, sharing school and an opportunity for a family meeting to praise God together. Our Scripture-based Assemblies, led by a senior leader, focuses on scripture detailed in our Assembly Rota. Stream Key Stage assemblies allow different ages of children to learn and pray together. Weekly Hymn Practice Assemblies include a reflection or a prayer to complement the joyful singing of hymns. Our Friday Whole-School assembly celebrates the achievements of our pupils in academic areas but also in the wider life of the school, such as living out the school mission and the Heart of Sacred Heart.

**All the above forms must incorporate the statutory requirement for collective worship (see below for details). This is central to the prayer life of our school.**

### **Guidelines on meeting statutory requirements of Collective Worship**

School Leaders / Class Teachers should plan collective worship to ensure that it is a quality experience, central to the life of the school and its Catholic character. In planning this worship, teachers must consider its primary function is to:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, ability and background in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church
- Celebrations will be short and appropriately paced

### **Guidelines for CLASS MEDITATION / WORSHIP**

Class worship/meditation should be linked to the assembly themes (please see the SHS Assembly Themes document) or Come and See topic or Ten:Ten weekly focus.

There should be an opportunity to pray, reflect upon scripture and sing on these occasions.

A candle – a sign of God's presence and love - should be lit before collective worship begins.

Worship in class enables pupils to be actively involved in worship preparation regularly. Class meditation and worship must incorporate the statutory requirement for collective worship. This is central to the prayer life of our school.



#### Guidelines for ASSEMBLIES:

- CLASS ASSEMBLY (with families)
- WHOLE SCHOOL ASSEMBLY
- KEY STAGE STREAM ASSEMBLY

#### Planning / Preparation for assemblies

For class assemblies, parents/carers should be invited at least one week in advance of Class Assembly worship and **the responsibility for this lies with the Class Teacher.**

Class assemblies/Whole school assemblies should have a religious theme and be linked to the assembly themes (please see the SHS Assembly Themes document) or Come and See topic. Assemblies must incorporate the statutory requirement for collective worship: this is central to the prayer life of our school. To cover the requirements for collective worship, there should be opportunities to:

- **PRAY** – at some point *everyone* should be invited to pray or to engage in a suitable reflection. The assembly should begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.
- **REFLECT UPON SCRIPTURE** - there should be reference to a story from the Bible or a piece of religious scripture
- **SING** – a hymn to be sung *by all* at some point in the worship

For class assemblies, children should be prepared for the worship so that they can read their lines clearly and project their voice.

#### Hall preparation for assemblies

- Year 6 to sit on benches on either side of hall
- Staff to sit on chairs on either side of hall
- Central aisle to be in place to allow for safe movement of pupils and staff
- All staff to attend assemblies
- Staff to set and monitor high behavioural expectations for pupils, encouraging reverent prayerful responses / joyful singing, as appropriate

#### Guidelines for assemblies

- **For class assemblies**, the class leading the Class Assembly should be in the hall before the rest of the school enters.
- Music should be played as children enter the hall to help the children realise that they are to be involved in an act of worship.
- Children should enter the hall in silence.
- A candle – a sign of God's presence and love - should be lit before collective worship begins.
- All children should be invited to make the Sign of the Cross at the beginning of the worship.
- At the end of the worship the Sign of the Cross should be made.
- Music/ or singing should accompany children as they leave the hall.