

# St Vincent De Paul R.C. Primary School, Knutsford

**Mission Statement:**

***Believe, Trust and Be Ready***

*“That they may have life, and to the full” John 10:10*



## Collective Worship Policy

Policy Date: October 2020    Review Date: October 2023



## **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.<sup>1</sup>

### **Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.<sup>2</sup> (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, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the head teacher.

## **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.
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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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

<sup>2</sup> 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 can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

- 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

### Assemblies:

Whole School Assemblies are held each Monday and Friday and are led by the Head Teacher and staff on a rota system.

Praise Assemblies are held each Tuesday, if Mass is not being celebrated and are led by staff, on a rota system.

Each class presents a Class Assembly at least once a year to which Parents are invited.

Collective Worship is outlined in our termly Celebrations timetable.

After the whole school assembly, a few children are encouraged to complete a written reflection and these are displayed in the Pupil Reflections book; an example is occasionally chosen to share with parents in the school newsletter.

### School Masses:

Whole School Masses are celebrated in School approximately twice per half term and on each occasion the Mass is the Parish Mass of the day. Parishioners regularly join us, as do many of our Parents, and are invited to comment in our Visitor Book.

On specific occasions throughout the year the School participates in various liturgies and Mass in the Parish Church.

### Class Worships:

Daily prayers are said in each class, in the morning, before and after lunch and at home time. These will involve formal and informal prayers with time also given for private prayer.

Each classroom also has a focal point for prayer. This may be a crucifix, a poster or a special book chosen by the teacher and the children. This display changes as the year progresses.

Children play a vital role in the planning and delivery of collective worship in school. With increasing independence, throughout the school, children work in pairs/ small groups to choose their own theme then plan appropriate activities

to gather pupils together, select scripture, identify ways for the children to respond to The Word and plan a way to take the message forth. Our Year 5/6 Prayer Leaders may assist the younger classes in the planning and preparation of these as required. Worships which are led by children are recorded in class scrapbooks and consist of a variety of planning sheets, photos, responses etc. Staff will also lead Class Worships as a way of modelling good practice.

#### Other Liturgies:

Various Services are held relating to specific seasons in the liturgical year including Penitential Services held during Lent and Advent. These liturgies are school-led or led by visitors to our school.

Voluntary Lenten Prayer sessions are held each morning before school begins and the older children help to lead these sessions.

Staff have opportunities to pray together at Mass, during Whole School Worship, on INSET days and at other key liturgical times.

### **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 most acts of worship
- 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 pupil's skills which enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
- guest visitors are also invited to deliver assemblies on a variety of topics including supporting various kinds of charity work.

### **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded:

- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc often stored on the staff share area
- in Class Collective Worship scrapbooks
- In Children's RE books when appropriate

### **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.

### **Resources**

Each class has resources relevant to their RE Units.

Each class has a Collective Worship box

All resources for Mass and Assemblies are kept in the hall cupboard.

There are also resources in one of the bays in the KS2 corridor.

### **Voluntary Worship and Retreats**

*Prayer Trails*

*Lenten Worship before school*

*Y3 Retreat Day*

*Y4 and Y5 Retreat day at St Nicholas Catholic High School*

*Travelling Cribs during Advent*

**Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed annually by the whole staff and the governors. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

October 2020

To be reviewed October 2023

Responsible person: Lisa Holland