



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Aston Le Walls

'St Mary's.....a place of educational excellence with Christ at its centre'

Collective Worship Policy

'Sing a new song unto the Lord, Proclaim his help day by day' Psalm 95 V1-2

Philosophy

In St Mary's, the daily act of worship is more than a legal obligation. As a living, Christian community the daily acknowledgement of the one true God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is a priority. This acknowledgement is made through prayer, reflection and liturgical celebration, all of which are central to Catholic tradition and therefore integral to the life of the 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

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

Collective worship in St Mary's will be:

- Properly planned
- Adequately resourced
- Recorded
- Monitored
- Evaluated

Organisation

In this school prayer is understood as communicating with God and opportunities are provided for, both individually and collectively, formal and informal prayer.

Formal Prayers are taught throughout the school and progress in complexity of language and conceptual understanding. All children are encouraged to learn, unprompted, the prayers which are considered suitable for their age. (*see appendix 1*)

Informal Prayer, both silent and open, is encouraged throughout the school. Opportunities are given during most prayer sessions for an individual response, privately or publicly and all respect this practice.

Individual Prayer is encouraged through the provision of a spiritual focus in each classroom and the two Reflection Areas. This is available to staff and children, during break and lunchtimes and allows for private or shared reflection.

Collective Prayer encompasses both formal and informal praying and usually included sung prayer in the form of a hymn or psalm appropriate to the liturgical year.

Practise is on a daily basis in several ways:

- Daily class prayers at the beginning and end of each day. – children are often encouraged to offer their prayers out loud or are given time for silent reflection
- Thanksgiving is said before lunch each day
- KS2 say the Angelus daily at 12.15pm
- During assemblies and at the end of the school day children are encouraged to examine their conscience and say sorry for things they have done wrong.
- Weekly Key Stage assemblies. Class teachers plan stimulating and inspirational reflections and/or activities often based on Come and See theme, Gospel Value theme or liturgical calendar
- A Monday morning whole school assembly is led by the Head teacher. The theme is usually based on the Sunday Gospel and is attended by all staff and visitors in the school.
- Each class has a weekly class assembly, which is led by the class teacher. Non teaching staff, students and visitors are included in the worship.
- Children in Years 5 and 6 are encouraged to pray for the dead in the month of November.
- The children are encouraged to say the Rosary during October and May and weekly, in the season of Lent, children in KS2 go to Church to follow the Stations of the Cross.
- During Advent and Lent the children in KS2 follow 'Walk With Me' and younger members of the school use the children's calendar for these periods in class
- Staff Meetings always begin with prayer.

Liturgical Celebration

The Eucharist celebration is the prime acknowledgement by the school of its membership of the Church and is therefore its central worship. It is essential that the children are included in the celebration in a meaningful way and begin to develop an understanding of the Mass.

- A half termly Mass alternating between school and in Church is prepared by one of the KS2 year groups. The children are involved in writing the Bidding Prayers.

- Readings are taken home to practice and many parents attend the Mass. A copy of the Mass readings and music is given to the celebrant (Father James) a few days before the service.
- Non Catholic children in Years 5 & 6 are encouraged to receive a Blessing.
- The Mass dates and times are included in the Church Bulletin and the weekly school letters so all parents and parishioners are invited to attend.

Responsibilities

- The head teacher leads the whole school assemblies on a Monday.
- Each class teacher leads their own class assembly and prayers.
- Teachers in each Key Stage are expected to lead one assembly per week.

Resources

- A variety of resource books on assemblies, prayer, meditations and feast days is kept in the Staffroom.
- Resources for meditative activities linked to the Liturgical Year are kept in the R.E area of the resource cupboard.
- Bibles are in every classroom and additional Bibles, including those for young children, can be found in the library.
- ‘Celebrations for Everyone’ hymnbooks are in each classroom and spare copies are in the library.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher, RE Leader and Worship and Liturgy Leader is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

January 2016

To be reviewed: January 2018

Appendix 1

Prayers and Religious Practices

| Class | Prayers | Practices |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Willow Reception | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Father • Hail Mary • Prayer before meals • Night time Prayer • Children’s Morning Offering • Simple responses in Mass • Greeting the Gospel • Simple litanies of thanks and praise • Advent prayers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes the sign of the Cross • Give the sign of Peace • Know that the Church is God’s house • Visit the Church • Bless themselves with Holy Water |
| Cedar Years 1 and 2 | <p>All of those listed above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Offering • Act of sorrow • Mass responses • Lenten prayers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that God is present in the Tabernacle • Genuflect facing the Tabernacle • Respond to the Blessing • Use Rosary Beads to follow prayers • Join in singing responses in Mass |
| Oak, Juniper and Vine Years 3-6 | <p>All of the above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confiteor • Gloria • Angelus • Morning Offering • Take my hand • School Creed • Magnificat (sung) • Mysteries of the Rosary • Stations of the Cross <p>Prayers at Mass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offertory prayers • Eucharistic prayers for Masses • Holy Holy Holy • Lamb of God • Rite of dismissal • Prayers used for Sacramental Rites • Blessing and giving of ashes • Saints’ prayers • Simple phrases from the psalms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the Blessed Sacrament appropriately • Make a good confession • Join in spoken and sung responses in Mass • Follow readings in Mass Book • Read at Mass • Serve at Mass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the Gospel blessing (triple cross) • Join in all responses at Mass • Know Rosary Mysteries • Find and give Bible references • Participate in Stations of the Cross • Prepare Altar for Mass |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Creed • Come Holy Spirit • Memorare • Hail Holy Queen | |
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Appendix 2

The Role of the Headteacher and RE / Worship & Liturgy Leader

- Formulating 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 governors 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
- Monitoring 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 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 school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre

Professional development / Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation 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

