

Collective Worship Policy For St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Our Mission Statement:

*St. Peter's Catholic Primary School is at the heart of a Christ-centred community where every person's uniqueness is celebrated with joy, and is truly valued.
We foster caring, supportive relationships based on mutual respect and love.
We embrace the different communities to which we all belong – home, school and parish, as well as our local, national and global families.
When we welcome the child, we welcome the family.
We strive for excellence in all we do, to be the very best that we can be.*

The Nature of Collective Worship.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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 a relationship with Himself, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirements that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils with a focus on prayer and spirituality. This can take place at any time during the 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 by the teacher or everyone present does not fulfil this requirement.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of Our School.

We endorse the belief that Collective Worship takes into account the faith 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 activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. The teacher will ensure that all children are invited to play an active or verbal role over a series of Collective Worship sessions.

Worship in our school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and is central to the Catholic tradition. There will be regular discussion about Collective Worship and how its quality could be improved.

The Aim of Collective Worship.

- We aim to ensure that each member of St Peter's School develops a lasting relationship with Jesus.
- To ensure that all children have the opportunity to worship as a collective body with the staff, as individuals, and with members of the parish - expressing and sharing our faith.
- To develop an understanding of the different forms of worship and to support the work of the family, by helping the children learn how to pray and develop their spirituality in line with our mission statement.
- To extend the children's understanding of other faiths as appropriate.
- To celebrate God's presence.
- To celebrate God's Word, showing the relevance of it to us, and using Bible stories as guidance for the way we live our lives.
- To celebrate God's Word and enable the children to share a weekly Gospel reading with their families through the provision of the Wednesday Word.
- 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 community spirit. To develop a common ethos and shared values.
- To take time out to 'wonder at,' to 'come to terms with' and to 'give worth to.'

Principle

All acts of worship in this school will

- Give glory and honour to God.
- Be a quality activity.
- Be fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character.

How and When the Opportunity for Collective Worship is Provided and Developed.

Whole School Assembly.

This is held each Friday and is led by a different class. A prayer focus with flowers, candles and a crucifix is provided to celebrate the whole school gathering together. The content of the assembly may be linked to the current topic from 'The Way, The Truth and The Life,' and always includes prayers. The Headteacher presents two children from each class with merit awards and the class teacher explains how the children have contributed to the life of the school through good work and co-operative behaviour. We also present a 'Saint of the Week' certificate - children from a class choose a member of our school or parish community to receive this award. This weekly celebration does much to enhance self esteem, and is often brought to a close by singing a relevant hymn or song, before we say our end of day prayer together.

Assemblies

Whole school assemblies are held each Monday, and are a time of prayer and reflection, led by the Headteacher. The content of the previous Sunday's gospel is presented and explained to the children. All members of staff are invited to this assembly. An infant assembly is held each Tuesday and offers children opportunity to gather, listen to the Word of God, and to respond to it by praying, singing and rejoicing.

Whole School Mass

These are busy, happy occasions when we join our school families and parishioners to celebrate feast days and holy days of obligation. The children choose and write the prayers and readings, and carry out the offertory procession. We enjoy the opportunity to sing a selection of carefully chosen hymns.

Class Masses

These are received enthusiastically by parents and parishioners and are celebrated in the chapel. The children and class teacher prepare the liturgy as appropriate, and the parish priest lends confidence and encouragement to the occasion.

The preparation for class masses, which takes place in church and class, provides the children with positive liturgical experiences appropriate to their age, aptitude and faith experience, in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

Prayer Shares

Staff invite clergy, governors and families to class Collective Worship, and the response to these invitations is outstanding.

Staff Collective Worship

Staff lead Collective Worship amongst colleagues at staff meetings. Staff also attend masses in the local pastoral area, preparing these in our turn.

Other Liturgical Services.

These include Lent, the Stations of the Cross, the sacramental programme of sacraments of initiation, Easter, the Holy Rosary, Advent, Christmas and Reconciliation. Throughout the year, the children have the opportunity to 'Come and Pray' in the hall during morning break time. They may gather around a candle whilst listening to reflective music, and have the opportunity to gather and reflect privately, or in a group.

The school aims to arrange its Easter holidays to ensure that the children are in school during the first three days of Holy Week. To celebrate Holy Week, the whole school produces themed Holy Week assemblies led by the children. A daily reflection prepares the children to participate with knowledge and understanding in the feast of Easter. During Advent, two masses are celebrated; one at the beginning and then at the end of the season, to prepare the children to participate with knowledge and understanding in the Christmas celebrations. In addition to this, each class holds a daily celebration which includes the lighting of the relevant candle on the Advent wreath. The school productions always contain a nativity theme or reflection.

Family Fast Days.

The school celebrates these days twice yearly. Any revenue raised is donated to CAFOD and food is donated to local food banks. A CAFOD-related theme is always followed on these occasions, to ensure that the children have an understanding of poverty in the Third World. These services provide an opportunity for a reflection or celebration. A variety of forms of worship are used, and may include drama, prayers, liturgy, song and music. Teachers and children work together to provide memorable material. Our priest and parents are invited.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship.

Collective worship is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'WTL', significant dates and the curriculum.
- With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community e.g bereavement.
- To develop skills in pupils which enable them to prepare, organise and contribute to worship, rather than always participating or contributing in a token way. From the earliest year group, pupils are facilitated to plan and carry out their own Collective Worship. Resources are purchased, and the senior leadership team ensure that all children are able to prepare and carry out the four elements of Collective Worship: gather, Word, response and mission. Children are invited to plan their Collective Worship from the Nursery and Reception years onwards. With age-appropriate facilitation, they are skilfully guided to lead the worship.

Resources

WTL Teacher's books, Lion Bible, Good News Bible, Jerusalem Bible, Listen, holding crosses, reflective music C.D's, Classroom prayer table, Wednesday Word and centrally-held resources located in staff room.

Each class has a Collective Worship box containing different coloured cloths, suitable for different parts of the Church's year, or for different themes of worship. Children are facilitated and encouraged use the resources to set up a visual focus for class Collective Worship themselves. This may be supported by adults, depending on the age and maturity of the children.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will traditionally be celebrated by the children in year 3. We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

The school follows the Diocesan guidelines in relation to the Primary Sacramental programme and so the children are prepared in partnership by the school and parish, and make their First Holy Communion during the month of May. This is followed by a whole school celebration of Mass, generally celebrated on or near the feast of Corpus Christi, with the First Holy Communicants leading the celebration.

Class Celebrations During the Course of Religious Education Lessons.

We follow the WTL scheme, and this provides the focus for what we do in Religious Education. We include a 'Celebration' of each topic which is explored by the teacher & children.

Places for Worship.

Church, chapel, school hall, classroom, peace garden, outdoor environment, bedroom, anywhere and everywhere.

Mrs K. Ryan & all staff – May, 2019

To be reviewed – May, 2022