

St John's Catholic Primary School



Religious Education  
Collective Worship Policy

*"I am the vine you are the branches" – John, 15.*



At St. John's Catholic Primary School we endeavor to take account of the religious and educational needs of all of our children, including;

- Those from supportive Catholic families
- Those for whom school may be their first, and perhaps only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions
- Those from other faith backgrounds

We aim for our Collective Worship to be an experience or activity that

- All may contribute to
- All may gain from

The Act of Worship is a legal requirement.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from worship if they wish.

We believe that all children should have the opportunity to be included in Collective Worship and support those children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

### Aims of Collective Worship

- ✠ To provide the opportunity to worship, praise and give thanks to God
- ✠ To develop a sense of community, with shared values and common ethos
- ✠ To develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs
- ✠ To respond in a variety of ways to the world around us; through spoken word, in song, in thought or in stillness
- ✠ To create and maintain an environment where prayer is fostered and developed
- ✠ To reflect the traditions of the Church, understanding the Catholic faith

### ORGANISATION

Our Collective Worship gives reference to the Liturgical time of the year, the Seasons and the Religious Education themes and topics. It is planned with the ever changing need of the school and community in mind so that we may respond, develop and grow. Children, staff and visitors reflect and evaluate collective worship and remember it through photographs and displays. We share prayers with parents through newsletters and displays and our School Prayer Book.

## Prayer in the Classroom

Each class will start and end the day with a prayer. Teachers may choose other times of the day for their class to gather in thought and prayer: before and after lunchtime, for special intentions.. The Angelus is celebrated in each class at noon.

The focal point of prayer should be the *Religious Education* topic display. The class should gather in a way that is fitting and appropriate eg standing quietly or sitting together on the carpet.

Individual teachers are responsible for the format of prayer in the classroom, choosing from a variety of 'styles': formal, informal, public and private. Quiet time or music may be used for atmosphere and as an aid to reflection.

Children are introduced to traditional prayers following during their time at St. John's. Each class has a prayer book, including a mixture of traditional, personal and global prayers. Each class has copies of the School Prayer Book.

## Prayer around the school

There is a dedicated area for prayer and reflection with a selection of books, pictures and artefacts. In the school hall and corridors, there are books and artefacts to remind us of the seasons or the Liturgical year eg May and October for prayer to Our Lady, September and October in thanksgiving for harvest, prayers and posters with a world theme eg CAFOD display.

## Prayer in a large gathering

The children gather together quietly in class or friendship groups. There is usually music to listen to and enjoy, a candle lit or waiting to be lit, flowers, drapes, pictures, artefacts to look at and think about.

Children gather for a variety of different assemblies each week including;

- ✠ A focus on the previous Sunday reading, presented at the children's level and expanding their understanding of scripture.
- ✠ Hymn practice and prayer. The hymns chosen are from a rich variety of sources and includes sacred music for children and hymns used in the parish. The chosen music reflects the time of the year, needs of the children and the Liturgical Season.
- ✠ Appeals on behalf of organisations eg CAFOD, Mission Together, to the school/home/parish calendar.

✠ Good News Assemblies. Children are encouraged to bring awards and certificates received for activities, achievements and pursuits – eg swimming, sport, dance, drama and music. The assembly is a celebration and the hymns and prayers use reflect this.

Each year group and key stage holds regular assemblies in their class. This enables the teacher to select a theme particularly relevant to their own children and to develop this in a prayerful way with their specific age group. The Wednesday Word is promoted in class each week before it goes home to be shared with families. Collective Worship, planned and led by the children, as guided by the Diocese, is celebrated in each class at least once per half term.

At all of our assemblies, the children and adults are encouraged to participate in a calm, thoughtful and considerate way. A hymn and prayer related to the assembly theme is used.

### School Masses and other Liturgical Celebrations

The celebration of Mass in school enables the children to experience the joyful occasion of the school community at worship. Mass is celebrated regularly, in collaboration with the parish priest. Masses take place in the school hall or in the local church. Music and singing is an important part of our masses. The songs reflect the season and the theme of the Mass. Parents and parishioners are invited to join us for mass. Masses and other services and sacraments that the school participates in and celebrates throughout the year include:

✠ Harvest thanksgiving

✠ Advent

✠ Christmas

✠ Ash Wednesday

✠ Palm Sunday

✠ Stations of the Cross

✠ Holy Week

✠ Rosary

### Link Policies

- Religious Education
- Spiritual and Moral Development

## Review and Further Developments

Agreed by governors: Autumn 2017

This policy will be reviewed within 3 years.