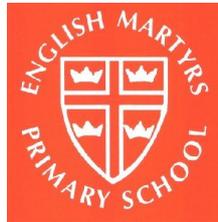


# ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

*'A Learning Community in Christ'*



## Collective Worship Policy

### Mission Statement

To accept each

Individual

as they are

and to enable them to develop their full potential

within a Christ-centred, worshipping community

in a spirit of

love,

happiness

and

understanding

## **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 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.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

## **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.

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
- Reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- Explore their own beliefs
- Respond to and celebrate life
- Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- Develop a common ethos and shared values
- Enrich religious experience
- Grow in liturgical understanding and development

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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/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 parent/carers 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.

- Reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- Reinforce positive attitudes
- Participate fully
- 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.

## Organisation

Monday – Whole School Collective Worship – based on the previous Sunday's Gospel Reading - Led by the Headteacher for 20 minutes in the morning.

Tuesday – Key Stage Collective Worship with a focus on Hymn Singing – led by a member of the Teaching Staff for 20 minutes.

Wednesday – A Class led Liturgy for the whole school – based on a theme, planned termly – for 20 minutes.

Thursday – Key Stage Collective Worship - led by a member of the Teaching Staff from KS1 and KS2 for each based on a theme, planned termly – for 20 minutes for each Key Stage.

Friday - Whole School Collective Worship – led by the Headteacher based on the praise of pupil achievement and celebration for the whole community – for 40 minutes.

## The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'Come and See', 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 in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

## Recording

Collective Worship is recorded:

- On a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings

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<sup>3</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- Through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

## 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. The Link Governor will monitor annually.

## Resources

Resources for collective worship are held in the RE cupboard in the hall, the poster drawers in the hall and any other provided by the leader of the collective worship as appropriate.

## Mass

Mass celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Mass celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to "*The Welcome Table. Planning Masses with Children*" which contains the complete text of the Church's '*Directory for Masses with Children*' as a basis for our practice.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

In school, therefore, the '**Liturgy of the Word**', rather than the Eucharist will be the norm. At our masses in English Martyrs, opportunities are given for all children to be actively involved, through reading, bringing up offerings, singing, silence, prayer, drama and dance. Children in the Early Years build up their attendance during the Mass celebration during their first year in school and have their own liturgy for part of it. From the end of Early Years or the beginning of Year 1, as appropriate they attend the full Mass as celebrated in school.

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word.

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.

## The Coordinator for Collective Worship

The coordinator of collective worship is the school RE Leader, although the coordinator manages and plans for these occasions, different staff through devolved leadership opportunities lead and plan for collective worship. At English Martyrs we see this as part of a teacher's professional development and support all teaching staff in this area of their professional training.

## Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and 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.

Reviewed – March 2016  
Next Review – March 2018