



St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Collective Worship

Policy

For nothing will be impossible with God

Luke 1:37

St Joseph's is a place of learning where we grow in faith and feel safe, loved, and encouraged each day.

We value each and every one, knowing that we are stronger when we work together.

Through our virtues, we show care and respect for our family, our friends, our neighbours near and far and our Common Home.

We try to live like Jesus, with God and Saint Joseph by our side.

At St Joseph's, we aim:

- To encourage all the members of our community to grow daily in the knowledge and love of God
- To work to develop everyone as a whole person – spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, intellectually, and physically
- To strive to create a welcoming environment for each pupil with the love of Christ at its centre.
- To encourage an appreciation of the need for compassion and good citizenship within our society
- To serve the Gospel, while demonstrating that differences of place, language, race, and culture are gifts to be celebrated, not boundaries to divide.

We achieve these aims by:

- Creating a strong working and spiritual partnership between the governors, parish, staff, parents, and children of the school
- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum, working within the guidelines of the National Curriculum, and adhering to the Diocesan 'To know you more clearly' programme
- Aiming for every individual child in school to reach his or her full potential, with a fulfilling, happy and successful experience of school.

Rationale and Context of Collective Worship:

We recognise the legal requirement for all pupils to access a daily act of worship. This is not designated curriculum time and should not be subsumed under any subject area, including Religious Education. Worship is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of academy life and central to the Catholic faith.

We believe that prayer and Christian worship in a Catholic school is a loving response to God's invitation to us to enter a relationship made possible through the work of Jesus and the witness of the Holy Spirit.



We believe that Collective Worship should take into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- all 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, other faith backgrounds or none

Daily prayer is a way to foster and deepen our personal relationship with God and awakens us to His presence in our lives. Prayer should not be confined to a formal act of worship and is an integral part of school life. It may take many forms:

- prayers of silence
- spontaneous prayer
- praying through song, action, or gesture
- formal prayer
- Lectio Divina
- Visio Divina

Collective Worship: Aims and Objectives:

At St Joseph's, collective worship provides opportunities:

- to give thanks and praise to God
- To receive grace and sanctification through the sacraments
- to deepen the children's awareness and knowledge of the Liturgical Year and celebrate this
- to develop a community prayer life
- To experience a sense of belonging and community through a shared value system.
- to promote spiritual and moral values in accordance with the teaching of the Gospels and the Catholic Church and relate these to daily life in school
- to encourage the active participation of staff and children in the preparation and delivery of worship
- to celebrate cultural diversity in our approach to worship in the form of music, dance and drama
- We aim:
- to encourage and promote the relationship of each one of us with Jesus
- to promote Christian ethics and deepen our understanding of key elements of Catholic teaching
- to provide enriching and meaningful experiences of collective acts of worship that inspire the spiritual involvement of all
- to promote a sense of belonging to a secure, caring and active Christian community
- to share responsibility for the quality of our collective worship by involving and encouraging as many of the community as possible
- to share concerns and worries about local and global issues, placing them in a Christian context and praying together

Collective Worship - Implementation:

Prayer and worship are at the centre of the life of the school and our aims and objectives are achieved by:

- promoting personal reflection routinely in school - including through our approach to behaviour, worry, conflict and the celebration of our gifts – enhancing the ability of the children to participate more fully in collective prayer and liturgy
- providing regular opportunities to gather as a whole-school community to pray and celebrate in regular whole-school worship, in liturgies related to the Church's year like

Ash Wednesday, Daily Advent reflections, the Way of the Cross and the May liturgy for Our Lady, Feast Days.

- providing regular opportunities for children to prepare simple group or weekly class liturgical prayers, spiritual displays, and activities
- enabling the Chaplaincy team to meet in their prayer group fortnightly, lead liturgies and encourage other children in school to worship and reflect
- nurturing confidence, knowledge, and spiritual awareness amongst all teaching staff by sharing and leading in staff liturgies, staff prayers and retreat days.
- equipping all those involved with the provision of collective worship with the knowledge to plan their liturgy broadly in line with the four elements of 'Gathering', 'Word', 'Response' and 'Mission'.
- regularly providing the opportunity for the whole school community to share in the Holy Eucharist in school – feast days like St Joseph, beginning and end of year Mass, Class Masses, and our participation in the First Holy Communion Mass
- encouraging familiarity with the Parish by inviting them to worship and celebrate with us and by taking the children to visit St Joseph's Church, attending morning Mass on some occasions
- promoting and giving access to prayer opportunities in a wide variety of forms and style – traditional, repetitive, meditative, sung, processions, movement etc

Legal Requirements:

We acknowledge the legal statutory requirement that a daily Act of Worship is provided for all students on the academy's register.¹ (This can take place at any time during the day and can be either a single act of worship for all students or separate acts of worship in year 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.

The Role of the subject leader:

- produce and update the necessary policy documents within school
- keep up to date with Diocesan advice regarding collective worship in catholic schools and feedback to staff
- attend appropriate in-service activities and courses
- monitor standards of collective worship within school
- manage the purchase and deployment of resources for collective worship
- maintain and encourage a meaningful prayer and liturgical life within school
- Liaise with governors, parish priest and parish community and contribute to Parish life
- Involve parents in the religious life of the school
- Support all staff in respect or preparing and understanding collective worship.

The role of the Class Teachers

- To help maintain the spirituality and daily prayer life of the school through collective worship opportunities and periods of reflection.
- To actively promote the faith life of the school in accordance with its mission statement and Catholic ethos.
- To ensure that there is an area set aside in the classroom for a focal prayer and thoughtful interaction with relevant themes.
- Participate in staff opportunities to reflect on and understand spiritual matters.

Involvement of Parents



We aim to help parents and families to feel involved in the liturgical life of the school and support their children in experiencing the beliefs, practices and traditions of the Catholic Faith, as well as helping them to develop a personal faith where appropriate. They are invited to all school masses and liturgical prayer sessions, including instances where we visit the parish/ convent to worship.

The Role of the Chaplain

- To support liturgical prayer in school and enrich the school's relationship with the parish in respect of prayer and worship.
- To provide prayer and worship opportunities for the Chaplaincy Team and enable them to support others.

Recording:

Collective Worship is recorded:

- Through evaluations, observations and learning walks
- Through displays, Collective Worship files, prayers, books, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Resources:

- Each class has – or has easy access to – a set of Bibles or Bible Stories, at an appropriate level for the age of the children.
- Liturgy baskets/box on class prayer tables.
- Books for assembly ideas, posters, artefacts, and liturgical objects.
- Backing tracks for a wide selection of hymns for use in Collective Worship.
- Liturgical music to be used in lessons.
- Altar vestments belonging to school are stored in the staff room.
- Each week the Trust Chaplain (Jamie Agius) emails a prayer resource.
- Vision Divina resource
- Meditation guidance

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion:

All children are entitled to engage in an act of collective worship, irrespective of race, gender or ability. They are entitled to worship in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding.

Safeguarding

St Joseph's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

We work in full conjunction with the school's over-arching Child Protection Policy and other policies of relevance to spiritual matters in school:

- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Personal, Social and Health Education Policy
- School Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- RE Policy

We actively support the Government's 'Prevent' Agenda to counter radicalism and extremism. We also follow and use the guidance in the 'Keeping Children Safe' document.

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