



St John Vianney Catholic School
Love one another as I have loved you



Collective Worship Policy

“St John Vianney School is an academic community which is characterised by the Gospel Spirit of Peace, Justice and Love. All that we do and say in our school will be dominated by Jesus’ words “Love one another as I have loved you”. Our school rules are based on this statement and carried in “our hearts and our heads” and reflected in the life and work of our school”.

St John Vianney Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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 Godself, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.¹

Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (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
- 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 positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out ‘to wonder at’, ‘to come to terms with’ and ‘to give worth to.’

Collective worship in our school may follow the pattern or variation of the pattern detailed below:-

Gather - how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet/ reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc.);

Listen - a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), breaking the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;

Respond - a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme (gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers, etc.);

Go forth- the sending out from the celebration, giving the children something to hold onto from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

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.

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.
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

The Organisation of Collective Worship

At Saint John Vianney

Throughout Foundation KS1&KS2 children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through:

- Participation in Morning Prayer, grace before and after lunch, and home time prayers.
- At appropriate stages in the R.E programme each class participates in prayerful reflection and prayer services based on topics outlined in the scheme of work.
- Each child is encouraged to develop personal prayers according to their own experiences.
- A copy of 'Creating the environment for prayer' has also been studied, encouraging the use of symbol and prayer corners, with appropriate pictures and colours, linked to the liturgical calendar, in each classroom.
- Following the Virtues during the Year of Mercy
- The children are encouraged to take active participation in religious celebrations. These are planned in advance by priest, head teacher and R.E co-ordinator, so they may be included in teachers planning.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum.
- Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- 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 to be recorded:

- On a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources.
- Through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Resources

Each class has resources, relevant to the age of the children. In each class a folder is in place which is updated at regular intervals, with new documentation, as it is given. A resource folder for Key Stage One and Key Stage Two is kept by the co-ordinator. Books, videos, pictures and posters are also kept under the R.E section of the resource area. On implementation of the new strategy the necessary resources were put in place.

Policy Monitoring and Review

In this Voluntary Aided School it is the overall responsibility of the governors, in consultation with the head teacher, to ensure that legal requirements are met and that opportunities for quality Collective Worship are being offered. This may be delegated to the head teacher or the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship. Those responsible will ensure that the acts of worship are in accordance with the School's Trust Deed and consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church.

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.

The following will be monitored:-

- Time set aside for collective worship;
- Whether the observed practice is consistent with agreed policy;
- Whether collective worship is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc.;
- Staff development on collective worship and its impact;
- Prayer focus and its effectiveness in drawing pupils into prayer;
- Impact on pupils and members of the school community;
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills to access worship and prayer;
- Records of themes and teachings of the Catholic Church covered

Observation and monitoring records should be kept and should form part of the self-review process.

Outcomes of monitoring will be communicated to staff and governors with recommendations for future action.

A school audit for Collective Worship is also provided. This may assist governors as well as the Collective Worship co-ordinator to monitor Collective Worship in the school.

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

- 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
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and head teacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship.

The right of withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education; however, given the importance of Collective Worship in our Catholic school, parents and prospective parents are 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.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to:

- All members of the school community via the school website
- Parish priests or members of pastoral areas as appropriate;
- New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
- New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards collective worship.