



Collective Worship Policy

January 2020
Review Date January 2022

Article 14 “Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights...”

Mission Statement

St Benet’s RC Primary School aims to develop each child to be part of “a happy and holy place of learning and the centre of a thriving community.”

The Nature of Collective Worship

Collective worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God’s presence in our lives. It 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.

‘The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.’¹

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily act of worship offered for all pupils. 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. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. 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. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will 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, within Come and See RE curriculum.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St Benet’s School

Worship is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

The Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship in St Benet's School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All acts of worship in St Benet's School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead worship;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Each class teacher takes responsibility for the planning, content and delivery of collective worship in their class. However, our children in each class play the leading role in the planning and delivery of their class collective worship. The RE Subject Leader, Head teacher and RE link governor are responsible for the monitoring of collective worship.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

The timetable of Collective Worship is as below:

Every Week:

Monday: 9.00-9.45am Whole School Collective Worship lead by Headteacher and pupils.

Each class has 30 minutes of Chaplaincy each week.

At the end of each Come and See topic, classes will celebrate the end of topic with a worship planned by the children.

Classes use Christian Mediation at the start of afternoon sessions as well children taking part in daily prayer four times a day.

During special Feast Days classes will take part in a simple collective worship e.g. Martin Luther King, Advent, Lent, Month of October/May.

Termly:

Each class leads a Collective Worship once a term – parents/carers are invited to join.

During the seasons of Advent/Lent there is prayer groups for children to attend outside of class time as well as opportunities to pray within our Peace Garden, which is situated at the front of our school.

Staff meet 3 times a week before school to join together for a moment of reflection and prayer.

Each Governing Body Meeting is opened with a prayer.

Leading collective worship

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead collective worship and in her absence, this is led by the Deputy Headteacher/RE Subject Lead. The class teacher will lead class collective worship. Children are taught to plan and lead worship according to their age.

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded by the Collective Worship Lead and includes (see Appendix 2):

- A folder in each classroom titled 'Collective Worship' to evidence planning, photos, readings and prayers used for class worships.
- Displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos

etc.

- Prayer Journals for each class are sent home daily and children then share their prayer with their peers the following day.
- Parent/Carer Feedback Slips from Advent/Lent boxes as well as at the end of Class Worships are kept in Collective Worship Leader's file.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Collective Worship is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form, (Appendix 1).

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform Diocesan Self Evaluation Form.

Resources

Each classroom has its own focal point, Bibles, artefacts, cloths and tealights to match Liturgical colours. We bring candles to our collective worship on Mondays which are linked to the liturgical colours. Other resources including topic boxes for other faiths are stored outside of Caroline's Library. Teachers reference/planning materials are held on the School internal OneDrive or in each teachers planning file. All classes have a set of resources with ideas for gathering, word, responding and going forth to be used by the children when planning own collective Word acts. KS2 classes have books with stories/prayers/parables suitable for Collective Worship Mass files /music CDs are held in Caroline's Library.

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'³

Retreats

Every Two years staff participate in spiritual days including visits to St Antony's Priory to deepen their own journey in faith. As well as a pilgrimage to Holy Island.

Whenever possible we will encourage and promote opportunities to develop this aspect of collective worship. This can be for staff and/or children.

Examples of this include: House Liturgies (St Aidan, St Bede, St Cuthbert, St Hilda) and using prayer stations during special seasons of the Church year. In preparation for transition to a new school, Year six pupils take part in day of prayer and reflection which includes prayer, liturgical dance and a chance to reflect on scripture.

Other opportunities

Every Wednesday there is either a Service of the Word/Eucharist or Mass held in school as part of the Parish Family.

We join the two schools within our Parish to celebrate Mass together in St Joseph's Church, Birtley twice a year. This is usually for our annual Harvest Mass and again in the Summer Term for Pentecost.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will be celebrated by all pupils. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for young adults to participate will be maximised. We believe that all pupils are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach. Eucharistic Celebrations are held at least once a month within school for pupils to attend alongside the Parish Family. The school fully supports the work of St Joseph's Parish in preparing the children for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Sacrament of Eucharist when pupils are in Year Four.

The coordinator for Collective Worship

Mrs Claire Canham, RE Subject Lead, is responsible for co-ordinating collective worship at St Benet's, in liaison with the Head teacher other teaching staff.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator 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.

Policy Written by: Mrs Claire Canham, January 2020

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Appendix 1

Year Group: _____ Date: _____

Monitoring of Collective Worship

Focus	Comments
<p>Planning (discussed with teacher before or after celebration)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the children been involved in the planning? • Has the Act of Worship been planned around a theme/feast? 	
<p>Structure (If Liturgy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the four parts (Gather, Word, Response, Mission) be distinctly identified? • How did children gather? • Was the Word appropriate and treated reverently? • How did children respond to the Word? • Was there a clear Mission, an evident message at the end of the liturgy? 	
<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or adult led? • Depending on the age of the children were they as involved as possible in leading? 	
<p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were children fully engaged and participating enthusiastically? • Was it a prayerful experience? 	
<p>Creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How creative was the Act of Worship? • Did it include different prayer styles/dance/music etc to enhance the experience? 	
<p>Prayer Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were children able to create focal point, atmosphere for prayer, appropriate for their age? 	
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were liturgical resources used appropriately eg correct liturgical colours, artefacts? 	
<p>ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was ICT used to support and enhance the Act of Worship or was it a distraction? 	
<p>Agreed areas for development</p>	

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to the class teacher

Coordinator ...

Class Teacher ...

Appendix 2

The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith 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 headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Collective Worship
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]