



**St Mary Queen of Martyrs  
VC Academy**

# **Collective Worship Policy**

Be the best that you can be, Jesus loves you  
always.



**September 2022**

St Mary Queen of Martyrs VC Academy exists to help parents and carers educate children spiritually, morally, physically and academically as well as possible.

We aim to be a truly Christian community, where our relationships are built on encouragement, concern, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our religious life is rooted in the faith, practice and moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each person in our community is specially valued and has an important part to play in making sure that we live out our mission.

### **The Nature of Collective Worship**

We believe that Christian 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 Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School**

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.

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.

### **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 prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully

### **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;
- Develop in pupils, skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- 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<sup>1</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 minutes for Key Stage 1 and 7-10 minutes for Key Stage 2);
  - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Collective worship in our school will be:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- recorded
- monitored
- evaluated

Collective Worship takes place every day and fully supports and promotes our Catholic Christian traditions:

### **Organisation:**

Our Collective Worship is planned and led by the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, Chaplaincy Co-ordinator and Junior Chaplaincy Team. Class teachers also assist children in planning and leading class based liturgies. We try as much as possible to involve the children in planning and leading Collective Worship. Regular training is carried out to ensure staff are familiar with the essential elements of liturgical planning, notably new staff.



### **Collective Worship Timetable**

Our weekly timetable is usually as set out below:

#### **Monday – SM Quality of the week**

Based on our weekly quality and linked to World events and British Values.

#### **Tuesday – Gospel Liturgy**

Based on the Gospel, delivered in classes.

#### **Wednesday - Class Worship**

Planned, delivered and evaluated by children in classes, appropriate to their age.

#### **Thursday – Sing Your Praises!**

Hymn practice. Delivered in phases

#### **Friday - Praise Assembly**

A celebration of the week. With prayers led by our RE ambassadors.

### **Special Liturgies and Feast Days**

Other Liturgies vary according to the needs of the school and the season. During the year Liturgies celebrate:

- Harvest
- Advent, including reconciliation liturgy
- Lent, including reconciliation liturgy
- Holy Week and Easter
- Pentecost

Masses and other focused days

In addition to this, we celebrate our Catholic Faith in School Masses each term and through focused days led by the St Cuthbert's Chaplaincy Team through the year. Our Masses are celebrated by Fr Mullholland.

### **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship**

Each class has their own liturgy box which contains the basics for developing class based reflection areas and focal points for collective worship. The box includes the colours of the liturgical year to ensure that our seasons are easy to follow. It also contains a liturgy planning pack as introduced by the diocese to encourage confidence in pupils planning and leading their own liturgies. The children are now familiar with the four elements of liturgy planning: Gather, Word, Respond & Mission and this is evident in class files of Collective Worship.

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Liturgical year, 'Come and See', significant dates, Statements of Belief and the curriculum
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the Sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach, reflected in the progression of 'Come & See'.

### **The Role of Music in Collective Worship**

We as a school, recognise the value of liturgical music in the life of the school. We are keen to engage children in worship using a balance of traditional hymns and contemporary worship music. We discuss the nature of the music and the meaning of scripture within hymns and these form important ways of teaching about Christ.

### **The Coordinator for Collective Worship**

The coordinators for collective worship are Mr Micki Coyle and Mrs Duncan.

### **Voluntary worship and retreats**

- Rosary during the month of October
- Remembrance during month of November
- Stations of the cross during Lent
- Prayer Stations during Lent
- Yr 6 Reflection Days in September and July
- Junior chaplaincy team Commissioning day

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Collective Worship is monitored by the collective worship coordinators and the head of school. Collective worship is evaluated by children and staff on a regular basis.

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Coordinator(s) and is evaluated and reviewed by the Trust Directors every two years. Appendix 1 - 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 Directors, Executive Head and Head of School to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship.

### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation.
- Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship.
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship.

### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts 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 RE Centre.

### **Professional development / Ongoing formation**

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship.
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back.
- 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.

### **Appendix 2 - Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.) 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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, "on a special occasion".

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests 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.