

THE FEDERATION OF ST JOSEPH'S JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOLS



‘Together we can, with Christ by our side’

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Compliance statement

Every policy is reviewed at regular intervals and where applicable, as stipulated by law. Each policy is also available in additional formats including Braille and in additional languages upon request, within reasonable timescales as stipulated by the school.

Approved by:	Ethos
Last reviewed on:	November 2022
Next review due by:	November 2024

Mission Statement

The Federation of St Joseph's Catholic Junior, Infant and Nursery Schools belongs to the local Catholic Communities and exists to educate their children with the gospel values, traditions and beliefs of the Catholic Faith in partnership with the Parents and Parish Communities. This Ethos is central to everything we do.

We strive for excellence so that every child develops spiritually, socially and academically to his or her full potential regardless of nationality or background. We aim to develop an awareness of every child's physical health and well-being.

We wish to promote a fostering of talents, a sense of caring for those who have particular needs and a concern for justice in all who work here.

The Nature of Collective Worship

"For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them" Matthew 18:20.

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.

A variety of opportunities for worship are provided, including individual prayer, group prayer in both formal and informal styles and settings, and the celebration of the Eucharist which is the centre of worship for the Catholic community. Opportunities for worship are linked with Feast Days and with the liturgical seasons of Advent, Lent, Christmastide and Easter.

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**
- **To 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**
- **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. 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.**

Collective worship in our schools will be:

- **thoughtfully planned**
- **adequately resourced**
- **recorded**
- **monitored**
- **evaluated**

ORGANISATION

Schedule is as follows:

Weekly collective worship – Infant School

DAY	FOCUS	AUDIENCE	LED BY
Monday 10:20	Assembly based on Sunday Liturgy	KS1 & EYFS Worship time	HT/DHT/Middle Leaders
Tuesday 10:20	Class assembly/class-based service	Whole school Class worship time	Class teacher
Wednesday Morning time varies	Hymn practice	Whole school	Music staff
Thursday Morning time varies	Class-based service	Class worship time	Class teacher
Friday 9.00	Celebration assembly	Whole school	HT/DHT

Weekly collective worship – Junior School

DAY	FOCUS	AUDIENCE	LED BY
Monday 9.00	Assembly based on Sunday Liturgy	Whole school	HT/DHT/Middle Leaders
Tuesday 9.00	Class-based service	Whole school	Class teacher
Wednesday Morning time varies	Hymn practice	Teachers	Teachers
Thursday 10:20	Class-based service	Class	Class teacher
Friday 10:20	Celebration assembly/class assembly	Whole school	HT/DHT

Resources

Both sites are well resourced with appropriate books, CDs, and web links to support senior leaders and class teachers with collective worship.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

The beginning of the school year is celebrated with a prayer service or a Welcome Mass for staff on September's INSET day. Members of staff attend the annual Croydon Deanery Mass for staff working in Croydon Catholic Schools. Each year, Year Six pupils visit Aylesford Priory which provides them with a meaningful experience and opportunity for reflection.

Eucharist

Eucharistic 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 Eucharistic 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 *'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.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

The RE Subject Leaders have responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of collective worship within the schools.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the RE Subject Leader 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.

Appendix 1

The Role of the RE Leader - Collective Worship

- To formulate a written policy for Collective Worship
- To ensure that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan
- To ensure that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils
- To ensure 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'
- To organise themes for Worship
- To assist the governors and headteacher in carrying 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 parish priests
- 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 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.

