

**St James' R C**  
**Primary School**

**Policy for**  
**Collective Worship**

# **St James' R C Primary School**

## **Policy for Collective Worship**

### **Introduction to Collective Worship at St James' School**

At St. James' RC Primary School the daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life. Collective worship provides us with an opportunity to further develop our relationship with God. It is a time where we come together to share our love of God giving him glory, honour, thanks and praise.

### **The Aims of Collective Worship**

We believe that collective worship in our school community gives us the opportunity:

- To contemplate the mystery of God;
- To unite our worshipping Eucharistic community;
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development;
- To reflect the Catholic nature of the school;
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;
- To provide opportunities to celebrate the liturgical season and special feasts through liturgy, ritual, symbol and prayer;
- For the school community to celebrate, to give thanks, to wonder, to acknowledge success, applaud achievement and to respond to loss and difficulties;
- To develop the necessary skills of reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy and meditation.

All of these opportunities will enable our relationship with God to be deepened and enhanced.

### **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 by either the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement.

At St James', collective worship is more than a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic tradition.

### **Implementation**

All acts of worship should:

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be carefully structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants;
- Be clear in their liturgical focus and varied in their delivery.

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 should be linked with Feast Days and with the liturgical seasons of Advent, Lent, Christmastide and Easter.

Those organising prayer, liturgies and assemblies encourage the children to participate as actively as possible and inspire in them deep thought and a heartfelt response. Pupils are also encouraged to contribute their skills and gifts to the planning and leading of prayer and worship at every opportunity.

Prayers encourage us to remember that God is at the centre of our lives, at the beginning and end of our days and in the decisions we make. Therefore, the pupils and staff of St James' say prayers at the beginning of the day, at lunchtime and at the end of the day.

Writing individual prayers in the St James' Prayer Book and quiet reflection opportunities in the KS2 Peace Garden enable pupils to value and participate in voluntary acts of worship.

Prayers are also shared at staff meetings, governors meetings and parent gatherings.

Whole school assemblies take place on Mondays and Fridays. The Monday assembly is led by the Head Teacher and is centred around the Gospel readings. The Friday assembly is our award assembly, which offers us an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. It plays an important part in promoting the ethos of the school; that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

KS1 and KS2 assemblies take place at different times of the day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. KS2 Wednesday assembly focuses on the "Wednesday Word."

Father David, our parish priest, celebrates class Masses in the school with the children, staff and parents every half term. The Parish community of St James the Great are also invited to attend.

The pupils attend whole school Masses at our parish church, every half term and on Holy Days of Obligation if they occur in school time. St James' pupils contribute to the order of the Mass.

### **Format for Collective Worship**

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion the purpose of which is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating. Collective worship in our school may follow the pattern or a variation of the pattern detailed below

- **Gathering** - how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet/reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc);
- **Word** - a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), explaining the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;
- **Action** - a ritual movement that everyone can join in that fits with the theme (gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers, etc);
- **Mission** - 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.

### **Resources**

There are many resources available for planning collective worship. These are stored with the Head Teacher. Further resources are kept within each class. They are reviewed regularly as part of the RE Subject Leader's monitoring role. There are several Internet sites that are also a useful resource for planning. Examples being:

- [www.assemblies.org.uk](http://www.assemblies.org.uk)
- [www.eteach.com](http://www.eteach.com)
- [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

This policy is to be monitored by the RE Subject Leader and evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff every two years. We will use a series of factors to evaluate our acts of collective worship such as:

- How collective worship is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc. Are they appropriate?
- The opportunities for pupils to plan and deliver quality prayer and worship celebrations;
- The involvement, enjoyment, attention and reaction of the pupils at St James' ensuring collective worship has a clear purpose, message and direction.

By monitoring and evaluating this policy we aim to ensure that the collective worship experienced within the school is a relevant, meaningful and positive contribution to the religious, spiritual and moral development of all members of the school community.

M Wilson  
RE Subject Leader

Policy Reviewed Summer 2017      Next Review Summer 2019

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