

# St John's Catholic Junior School



## Collective Worship Policy

*"Love one another as I have loved you"*

*St John's Catholic Junior School is a happy, caring school that values the contributions of all, to grow together to achieve excellence and success.*

We work in partnership to develop the whole child;

- spiritually, morally, intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and artistically, to make the World a better place according to the values embodied in the Gospels.
- To provide fun and stimulating learning opportunities in a happy, healthy, caring learning environment.
- To build relationships and develop self-esteem, respect and a sense of belonging within our school, parish and wider community.
- To create experience that develop lifelong skills, and equip everyone to become learners of the future.
- To be responsible, face challenges with confidence and perseverance.

We aim to provide a warm, welcoming, happy and caring environment in which individuals can explore, express and develop their own personal relationship with God within the context of a worshipping community. Our faith is at the heart of all we do and the broad and balanced curriculum we aim to provide is within this context. The school encourages and values the role played by teachers, governors and parents and the wider community in supporting the spiritual, physical and educational growth of all our children. We would truly hope to be seen as a Gospel inspired community.

### 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 God made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

## Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayers, 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.

## St John's Catholic Junior School

At St John's Catholic Junior School, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Head teacher.

## 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. (see RE policy for further information)

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. Worship in this school 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.'

### 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. (Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9)

In order to do this, celebrations will be:

- Planned, wherever appropriate, to help to personalise the experience
- appropriately paced and age related

### Worship

Worship is seen as an essential part of Religious experience and is therefore an integral part of our school day. We aim to actively involve children in ways which are suited to their age and stage of personal, social and religious development.

Worship may take a variety of forms:

- Whole School Masses, in school and at Church
- Whole School Good Work Assemblies
- Class lead assemblies
- Class Liturgies
- Reconciliation Services
- In the school prayer garden and Faith room.

- Prayer trails, in classrooms during the seasons of Advent and Lent.
- Class or year group prayer trails.

### Masses

Close links are maintained with our parish priest who is actively involved in the planning of Masses. Children participate in many celebrations, both in school and in our churches, during the course of the year. Mass is also celebrated, in school, on Holy Days which occur within the school week, during term time. Y3/4 also take part in Masses for Advent, and Mothering Sunday whilst Y5/6 celebrate Mass for Remembrance and Lent, at church, to which parents and parishioners are invited. Other Masses include those for the start of the academic year, Christmas, New Year/Epiphany, Easter and Thanksgiving.

Year three children attend a 'Teaching Mass' as part of the Year 3 Sacramental preparation, at church with the Parish Priest. Year three children and families are invited to attend two Sunday parish Masses, in March and May, to allow the parish to support them with their prayers. Year three celebrate the Sacraments of First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion, at Mass, at St John the Evangelist church. We then gather together at School with the whole school community to celebrate Mass in school with Year three.

At the end of the academic year, Year Six pupils plan and lead a Mass to celebrate with their families at school. These celebrations allow children to be actively involved in the liturgy.

### Assemblies

A whole school assembly is held at the end of each school week, which is child lead and to which parents are invited. This is followed by a celebration of work, achievement and attendance. An adult lead assembly takes place every Tuesday morning. This is sometimes lead by visitors from organisations such as, CAFOD, NSPCC, Mission Together or Samaritan's Purse.

### Reconciliation

A reconciliation services take place during the seasons of Advent and Lent. The celebration includes readings, prayers and songs and the children are also given time for quiet reflection.

Y3 pupils and parents are shown and given, a prayer wallet to take home, and encouraged to pray together as a family. A prayer bag extends this home/ school

link. This is sent home, once per child, over the period of Sacramental preparation from January to May.

### **First Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion**

Sacramental preparation for all baptised Roman Catholic Year 3 children and their families, continues in the form of meetings for parents held during the evening in school led by Father Bernard, RE subject leader and SLT. These are prayerful, reflective, and educational occasions, involving music, prayer, Gospel reading and reflection; related to reconciliation and the Eucharist.

Y3 pupils and parents are shown and given, a prayer wallet to take home, and encouraged to pray together as a family. A prayer bag extends this home/ school link. This is sent home, once per child, over the period of Sacramental preparation from January to May.

Celebration of the sacrament takes place at St John's Parish Church in February. Celebration of the Sacrament of First Holy Communion takes place on two Saturdays in May, at St John's Parish Church.

### **Class Liturgies**

Daily prayers are said in each class, in the morning, before lunch and at home time. These will involve formal and informal prayers with time also given for private prayer. Each classroom also has a focal point for prayer in the form of a prayer table. This display changes as the year progresses and according to the season. Children play a vital role in the planning and delivery of collective worship in school. With increasing independence, throughout the school, children work in small groups to choose their own theme then plan appropriate activities to gather pupils together, select scripture, identify ways for the children to respond to The Word and plan a way to take the message forth within their RE lesson.

### **Additional Opportunities**

Our Year 3 and 4 children perform a nativity in the lead up to Christmas. Our Year 3 children attend a 'Teaching Mass' as part of the Year 3 Sacramental preparation, at church with the Parish Priest. Y3/4 also take part in Masses for Advent, Mothering Sunday whilst Y5/6 celebrate Mass for Remembrance and Lent. All children participate in Holy Week activities such as The Washing of the

Feet, class Passover feast, The Way of the Cross and Easter Mass. All children set up and take part in prayer trails, in their classroom during the seasons of Advent and Lent. Children have the opportunity to reflect and meditate during class meditation, in 'Jigsaw' time or through attendance of the Mindfulness group. Children have the opportunity make their own choices in their faith journey through attendance at Rosary Group during May and October.

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

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, linking with the R.E. scheme, The Way, the Truth and the Life or significant dates. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship.
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies.
- 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.
- Guest visitors and clergy members are also used to deliver assemblies on a variety of topics including supporting various kinds of charity work.

### Recording and Monitoring

Collective Worship is recorded and monitored via:

- in class collective worship book in Years 5 and 6 and in The children's RE Books in Years 3 and 4. These keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources.
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.
- learning walks
- children's RE books
- observations of child led collective acts of worship

### Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the RE co-ordinator and evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.