

# OUR BLESSED SAINTS FEDERATION

## Collective Worship Policy



# Policy for Collective Worship



## 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 the 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. 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 need to 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. It 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.

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.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

### **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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship in St. Luke's is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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

As a Catholic school, we must:

- Build upon our faith through example, teaching, prayer and worship;
- Give children positive experiences based on sound educational, pastoral and liturgical principles;
- Lead the children towards an understanding and deeper appreciation of prayer and the sacraments;
- Gather together to praise and worship God;
- Listen to Scripture;
- Celebrate our successes, eg giving thanks for our gifts/talents;
- Seek forgiveness and guidance for our failures;
- Develop the School's Christian Ethos and shared values;
- Learn more about other World Faiths especially their great festivals;
- Develop moral awareness.

We believe that Collective Worship at St Luke's 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 enrich religious experience;
- To reinforce positive attitudes;
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

## Principles

All Acts of Worship at St Luke's will:

- Be at the very heart of school life and must reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities;
- 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 kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
  - be short and appropriately paced based on children's short attention span;
  - Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

## School Organisation

- Monday and Tuesday - Collective Worship in Class
- Wednesday - Collective Worship Assembly, with a focus on the previous Sunday's gospel and hymn practice, as it is regarded as an important time for praying in the form of praising God through music and song.
- Thursday - Class assemblies led by staff/pupils
- Friday - Celebration assembly

## The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship:

- Follows a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'WTL', significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in appropriate acts of worship;

- Involves consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies;
- Allows flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community;
- Develops in pupils, skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way (Area to develop):
- Follows a format that usually includes:
  - Music playing as the children enter the hall in silence;
  - Lighting a candle;
  - Saying a prayer;
  - Singing a hymn/song;
  - Music playing as the children leave the hall in silence;
  - All teachers and children attending when appropriate.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in **organising** and **leading** worship in line with the Governors review of the curriculum and RE.

## **Resources**

- A display will be maintained in the hall reflecting the Liturgical Calendar which will act as the focal point for collective worship;
- Key Stage 1 and 2 'Acts of Worship' sent by RE adviser and distributed to staff by RE Co-ordinator;
- Scripture and a range of commentaries are located in the Resources Room;
- Prayer books, CDs are also kept in the Resources Room;
- Candles are kept in the hall display unit;

## **Voluntary Worship**

- A quiet place within class for contemplative worship

## **Eucharist**

Eucharist celebrations in St. Luke's will highlight a special occasion and will be celebrated as a whole school in Church. 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.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach, with all age groups taking an active part.

Worship for both Key Stages includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety;
- School Masses to include the Eucharist.

### **The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship**

Stacey Beale

### **The Governor responsible for Collective Worship**

Fr Bill FitzGerald

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every 3 to 4 years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

**Reviewed and revised by staff September 2014**  
**Approved by Governing Body September 2014 see minutes of Curriculum Committee**