



Collective Worship Policy

‘United in Christ, One Family in God’s Heart.’

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Introduction

Policy Review

<i>Date Issued</i>	<i>September 2024</i>
<i>Date of Review</i>	<i>September 2025</i>

The school supports the aims of the UNICEF charter on Rights and Responsibilities of the child with respect to education. In Articles 28 and 29 of the charter it states that all children have a right to an education but with this comes the responsibility to make the most of that education and to ensure that others are able to make the most of their education also.

Teaching and learning at Saint Mary's aims to provide pupils with numerous opportunities to engage with different aspects of the curriculum, both independently and working in groups. Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the social benefits of engagement with the curriculum and will take part in activities that will allow them to explore and develop an understanding and awareness of different cultures. This again links to the UNICEF charter and the mission statement of the school which highlight the need for all children to develop mutual respect and understanding.

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.

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, within 'Come and See' RE curriculum.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of Saint Mary's

Worship in St Mary's 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.
- For whom school may be their first and only experience of church.
- From other Christian traditions – or none.
- From other faith backgrounds.

In light of the upcoming Prayer and Liturgy Directory 'To Love You More Dearly', we also acknowledge the change in language and therefore we are beginning to transition away from the use of the term 'Collective Worship' in our school, with the exception of when discussing or referring to it in its legal capacity, and we are beginning to more commonly refer to 'prayer and liturgy', which as the directory states 'more fittingly describes its role in a Catholic school' (To Love You More Dearly, 2023).

The Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship in St Mary's School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff to:

- Contemplate the mystery of God.
- Reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
- Explore personal beliefs.
- Respond to and to celebrate life.
- Experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit.
- Develop a common ethos and shared values.
- Enrich religious experience.
- Grow in liturgical understanding and development.
- Pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.
- Reinforce positive attitudes.
- Participate fully.
- Take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'.

Planning, Content and Celebration

Collective Worship is planned in accordance with the seasonality of the Church, Feast and Holy Days, the Come and See programme of study, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day and Holocaust Memorial Day etc.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations at school or Church.

Collective Act of Worship

The 'Collective Act of Worship' is an integral part of our school day. We gather together at some time each day for Prayer. On occasions, children are encouraged to experience silent and reflective prayer. Worship may take a variety of forms:

- Sacramental Celebrations.
- Other Liturgies, including whole school and class Assemblies.
- Hymn Singing.
- Celebration Assembly (Shining Lights Assembly).

Monday	Celebration of the Word - Gospel based and planned and led by our Chaplaincy Team and Lay Chaplain.
Tuesday	Hymn Singing.
Wednesday	Class Celebration of the word (led by pupils).
Thursday	Statements to Live By/Rights Respecting/Other themed assemblies.
Friday	Shinning Lights Assembly (led by Y6 pupils).

Collective Acts of Worship usually takes place in the school Hall, classroom or Parish Church. The whole school celebrates the Eucharist at Saint Mary's Church at various points in the school year, including at the start of the school year, during Advent, during Lent and for the end of the academic year. We also celebrate Holy Days which occur within the school week, usually through a whole school Mass at church. When these fall outside of school time, we aim to recognise these through a Celebration of the word instead.

Each Wednesday, classes lead liturgies in their classrooms using the NDCYS Extra-ordinary resources which plan out themes each week based on Word of the Week. Children use the 'Let Us Pray 2gether' resources to support them to plan their class liturgies.

On a rota basis, each class celebrates their class liturgy in the hall with family, friends and members of the parish. These liturgies link to the RE Curriculum, 'Come and See', which celebrate the end of their unit of learning.

The children also have the opportunity to lead assemblies when they wish to make an appeal on behalf of other children e.g. Children in Need, CAFOD or as a reaction to a disaster in another part of the world. We also have regular speakers to lead assemblies where appropriate e.g. from Boston Foodbank, Centrepont and CAFOD.

Shining Lights Assemblies

Two children from each class are chosen to receive a Shining Light award every week. This can be for academic effort or success, or for living out our school Gospel Values. One child is chosen by their teacher, and one is chosen by their classmates. Parents are invited to our weekly shining lights assemblies which take place in the hall. Pupils within Year 6 regularly support staff and their peers with our Shining Lights celebration assembly each Friday morning, where the achievements from both in and outside of school are shared and celebrated.



Heart Which Sees Award

Introduced initially as a Year of Mercy legacy project, this special award recognises those children who are outwardly living our Gospel Values. As recognition and thanks for their exemplary behaviour, the child who has been chosen for the award from each class will be invited to attend Hot Chocolate Club with our Head Teacher. This is announced in our Shining Lights assembly's fortnightly.



Mass

Mass is celebrated at least every half term in school or church and attended by staff, students and members of the local community. The dates of whole school mass are planned and published as part of the whole school calendar at the beginning of the academic year and on the newsletter for parents weekly. On Holy Days of Obligation two Masses are celebrated and the parish community are invited to join us. Mass involves all members of the community and where appropriate parts of the liturgy will be led by different members of the community. Appropriate time is always given to prepare and practice music as this is an integral part of the worship.

Prayer throughout the Day

Staff will ensure that a prayer is said at the start of every day, before going to lunch, after lunch and at the end of day. Staff and Governors' meetings and staff briefings will also start with a time of prayer and all those present will be invited to share in whatever way they feel comfortable. We have a prayer jar in the staffroom which parents and staff add to, and these are shared on Wednesdays during staff briefings. The prayers are then added to a school scrapbook of evidence. Opportunities for personal prayer for children are planned for in each class in a creative way. All teaching staff new to the school are trained on how to deliver different types of prayer and liturgies and on how to use the Let us Pray resources. Our parish priest also offers prayer club each Friday to children in both key stages.

Chaplaincy Team

As a Catholic school we encourage our children to take ownership of Collective Worship. At Saint Mary's, we have our own Chaplaincy Team made up of children from Years 4, 5 and 6. These children help to prepare and lead prayer and liturgy in school. They have a good understanding of the lenses (Seasons, Scripture, Senses, Structure) and enjoy using their liturgical awareness and creativity to continuously develop Collective Worship at Saint Mary's. They prepare resources and help to set up the hall. This includes choosing and laying the correct liturgically coloured cloth on the table and displaying the crucifix, candle and open Bible with care. They may also choose to add additional items based on seasonality and theme. Our Chaplaincy Team meet regularly with our Lay Chaplain to discuss and plan our weekly Celebration of the word for Mondays. These are just some of the ways in which we develop our young children into future leaders.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the year, as part of the school's monitoring calendar, the school's provision of prayer and liturgy will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school. Governors are invited in to observe Collective Worship to support the monitoring of this.

Resources

There are many resources available for planning Collective Worship:

- Children's Lectionary
- 50 Masses for Children
- Statements to Live by
- Come and See Resources
- Let us Pray and Let us Pray 2gether resources
- CAFOD
- Mission Together
- Websites e.g. openbible
- Catholic Children's Bibles
- The Lion Read and Know Bible
- Chaplaincy.Space
- YouTube (child friendly videos of Bible stories and hymns)

The Learning Environment

Focal points (sacred spaces/prayer areas) in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way, they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Around school, there will also be places available to support and encourage spontaneous prayer e.g. prayer trees, prayer boards, prayer gardens (currently being created) and the Reflection Room.

Sacramental Preparation

Children will be prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, usually from Year 4 onwards. Classes take place within the Parish and are arranged with our local Parish Priest, Father Dominic. These classes usually take place during the weekend.

Training

Staff are given the opportunity to attend training to enhance professional development. On occasions, training takes place at school for all staff to attend to help promote Collective Worship. This is usually led by our lay chaplain, Collective Worship lead and/or the RE subject leader. When necessary and/or appropriate, staff also attend training either in person or virtually which is often held at the Diocesan Centre in Mackworth and offered by the Diocese or by Tom Baptist, the Director of Chaplaincy for our CMAT.

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.

Planning Sheets used in School

Celebration of the word

Theme / Event / Season

Time / Date

Space

Group

Liturgical Colour

See

Hear

Think

Do

Scripture

Reference

Key themes

Key words / quotes

Turn over

Celebration of the Word



Gather



Blank space for notes under 'Gather'.

The Word



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Response



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Mission



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Evaluation

Celebration & Growth



Things to celebrate...

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Ways to grow...

Blank space for notes under 'Ways to grow...'.



One idea for next time...

Blank space for notes under 'One idea for next time...'.



Did you find..?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Sign of the Cross | <input type="radio"/> Signs & symbols |
| <input type="radio"/> Scripture | <input type="radio"/> Liturgical colours |
| <input type="radio"/> Responses | <input type="radio"/> Music & song |
| <input type="radio"/> Silence | <input type="radio"/> Links to scripture |
| <input type="radio"/> Seasonal prayers | <input type="radio"/> Everyone included |
| <input type="radio"/> Movement & actions | <input type="radio"/> A call to mission |

Blank space for notes under 'Did you find..?'.



Comments & thoughts...

Blank space for notes under 'Comments & thoughts...'.