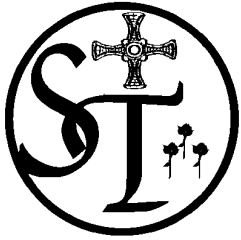


# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

*A Model Policy for Primary Schools*



## St. Teresa's RC Primary School



### Our Mission Statement

**We will learn, serve and pray in a Catholic community helping all children to become the best that they can be.**

To achieve this we will:

- strive to do the little things well like St. Teresa.
- value ourselves and one another.
- reach out to others.
- accept and forgive.
- worship together.

***'Let us do the little things well today.'***

St. Teresa of Lisieux



### **The Nature of Collective Worship**

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.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'<sup>1</sup>

### **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.

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, within Come and See RE curriculum.

### **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St. Teresa's RC Primary School**

Worship in St. Teresa'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;
- 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.

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

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

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit

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<sup>1</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using 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 St. Teresa's School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead worship;
- 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.<sup>2</sup> Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

### Planning, content and celebration

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Staff prayers are said at the beginning of each staff meeting. A staff Mass is celebrated as a Deanery cluster.

The timetable of Collective Worship (in most classes) is as below.

| Week Day  | Format of Worship  |
|-----------|--|
| Monday    | Whole School Collective Worship – Statements to Live By  |
| Tuesday   | Class Worship – Prayers and reflections – Statements to Live By discussed in class.                |
| Wednesday | Class Worship – The Wednesday Word reflections   |
| Thursday  | Liturgy Planning and Liturgy –age appropriate planning - based on Sunday Gospel readings or themes |
| Friday    | Whole School Collective Worship – themed to Church seasons and school needs                        |

### Eucharist

Masses Timetable (usually)

| Date                     | Format   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Beginning of Autumn Term | Whole School Mass - Welcome new children and staff |
| Closing of Autumn Term   | Whole School Mass – Christmas                      |
| Closing of Spring Term   | Whole School Mass – Easter                         |
| Closing of Summer Term   | Whole School Mass – Reflecting on the School Year  |
| Autumn Term              | Class 9 Mass                                       |
| Spring Term 1            | Class 8 Mass                                       |
| Spring Term 2            | Class 7 Mass                                       |
| Summer Term 1            | Class 6 Mass                                       |
| Summer Term 2            | Class 5 Mass                                       |
| Various Dates            | Feast Days and Special Events                      |

<sup>2</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

#### Assembly Timetable (usually)

| Date          | Format  |
|---------------|---------|
| Spring Term 1 | Class 4 |
| Spring Term 2 | Class 3 |
| Summer Term 1 | Class 2 |
| Summer Term 2 | Class 1 |

#### **Other opportunities**

We celebrate also Stations of the Cross, Mary in the month of May, a Nativity, a Leavers' Mass and liturgies which are themed based on Come and See units. We encourage family prayer through Wednesday Word, the Travelling Crib, Lenten bags and home/school prayer books.

Hymn practices are carried out when necessary.

Sacramental Preparation takes place according to Diocesan guidelines for Reconciliation and Eucharist. School also carries out the duty of parish responsibility regarding these Sacramental Preparation programmes. These classes may take place either after school or during the school day dependent upon staff commitments. School also carries the duty of preparing the Eucharist Mass.

#### **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded in Class Liturgy folders, RE Books and in Masses and Assembly folders.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Collective Worship is monitored at least yearly by observation and more frequently through scrutiny of liturgy planning folders.

Collective Worship is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form, (Appendix 1).

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform SEF 48.

#### **Resources**

Liturgy resources are stored in a Collective Worship box. Year six children dress the focal point for whole school collective worship. Resources are found on RE bookshelves and liturgy planning sheets are distributed on a termly basis.

#### **The learning environment**

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'<sup>3</sup>

Focal points 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.

#### **Retreats**

We are endeavouring to join the Diocesan retreat programme for year six children in the summer term (2014).

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<sup>3</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

**The coordinator for Collective Worship**

The coordinator for Collective Worship with a defined role and responsibility is Fiona Lindsay. A model job description is included in Appendix 2.

**Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator 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.

January 2014

## Appendix 1

Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Monitoring of Collective Worship

| Focus   | Comments |
|---|----------|
| <b>Planning (discussed with teacher before or after celebration)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have the children been involved in the planning?</li> <li>Has the Act of Worship been planned around a theme/feast?</li> </ul>  |          |
| <b>Structure (If Liturgy)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the four parts (Gather, Word, Response, Mission) be distinctly identified?</li> <li>How did children gather?</li> <li>Was the Word appropriate and treated reverently?</li> <li>How did children respond to the Word?</li> <li>Was there a clear Mission, an evident message at the end of the liturgy?</li> </ul> |          |
| <b>Leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child or adult led?</li> <li>Depending on the age of the children were they as involved as possible in leading?</li> </ul>   |          |
| <b>Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were children fully engaged and participating enthusiastically?</li> <li>Was it a prayerful experience?</li> </ul>   |          |
| <b>Creativity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How creative was the Act of Worship?</li> <li>Did it include different prayer styles/dance/music etc to enhance the experience?</li> </ul>   |          |
| <b>Prayer Space</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were children able to create focal point, atmosphere for prayer, appropriate for their age?</li> </ul>   |          |
| <b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were liturgical resources used appropriately eg correct liturgical colours, artefacts?</li> </ul>   |          |
| <b>ICT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was ICT used to support and enhance the Act of Worship or was it a distraction?</li> </ul>  |          |
| <b>Agreed areas for development</b>   |          |

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to the class teacher

Coordinator ...

Class Teacher ...

## Appendix 2

### **The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring 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'
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

#### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

#### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content 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 school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

#### **Professional development / Ongoing formation**

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- 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, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

*[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]*