



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC FIRST SCHOOL

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Statutory Duty of School

All maintained schools provide daily collective worship for registered pupils (apart from those who have been withdrawn by their parents - see below). This is usually provided within a daily assembly.

The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Daily collective worship must be of a Christian character. The precise nature will depend on the family background, ages and abilities of the pupils. However, if it is inappropriate for some or all of the pupils to take part in Christian collective worship, the head teacher may apply to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for a determination to have this requirement lifted.

Collective worship in foundation schools with a religious character and voluntary schools will be in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified for the school.

The right of parents to withdraw their child.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from Religious Education (RE) and collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE or collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn.

A school remains responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from RE or collective worship, unless the child is lawfully receiving RE, or taking part in collective worship elsewhere.

Parents do not need to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal. The DfE recommends that, to avoid misunderstanding, a head teacher may wish to clarify with any parent wanting to withdraw:

- The religious issues about which the parent would object their child being taught
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- The circumstances in which it would be reasonable to accommodate parents wishes
- If a parent will require any advanced notice of such issue in the future and if so, how much.

Educational benefits

- Collective Worship is of educational value to children, young people and adults within our school community. It provides a means of developing an appreciation that goes beyond the material world, fostering a concern for others and providing a forum for exploring shared values.
- It is important that children and young people become familiar with the language and silence common to many forms of public worship. They are all likely to attend, at the very least, at some point in their lives, a funeral, a wedding or a baptism.
- Collective Worship is a shared experience. It offers children, young people and adults an opportunity to participate in humanity's shared search for God, and in doing so builds community in and beyond the school.
- Collective Worship in most schools also provides the opportunity for pupils to gain an awareness of worship practices of faiths other than their own.
- Collective Worship offers opportunities for co-operation and the fostering of strong relationships between individual schools and the local communities they serve. Local faith leaders should be utilised as a resource and invited to play a part in Collective Worship in schools in their own localities.

Spiritual benefit

- Collective Worship contributes towards schools' statutory obligation to provide opportunities for students' spiritual and moral development. It helps to equip young people to understand more about themselves, foster a sense of the aesthetic and to cope with life-changing moments. Collective Worship provides experience of meditation, reflection and prayer as spiritual resources.

Implementation

- There will be whole school acts of collective worship twice a week. These will be on Monday at 9.10a.m. and Friday at 1.20p.m. The theme for the Monday act of worship will come from the previous Sunday Gospel and will be the theme for the week.
- There will be Key Stage assemblies once a week – on a Thursday (KS1 will be at 10a.m. and KS2 will be at 10.50a.m). These will be led by the Head Teacher or a teacher from that key stage. At the end of each 'God matters' topic this will take the form of a Renew assembly based on sharing and reflecting on the work that has been accomplished. There will be a monthly Mass for KS2 children and a monthly Liturgy, based around the Mass or major Church seasons for KS1 and Foundation Stage children.
- There will be Monday morning Family Assemblies once a month, on the last Monday of the month. All parents / carers invited.
- There will be class assemblies twice a week.
- Whole school Masses will be held on Feast days if a priest is available.

The act of worship may be in school or in church and may be the celebration of Mass.

Format of the act of worship

- The children will gather singing a hymn from the 'Great Big God' collection or an action hymn.
- When all the children are present and quiet they will be greeted and will greet all present.
- The act of worship will begin with the Sign of the Cross
- The candle will be lit as the children say 'Jesus is the light of the world...'
- There will be a bible reading, drama or story. This should involve the children in some way.
- Next will be a short explanation of the text
- The children will be invited to pray - first as a whole group with the school prayer and then in a period of silence.
- There will be a mission/sending out – this may be something to do during the day, an object or their class folder on Mondays which will contain a picture or text to put on their class prayer table.
- There will be a hymn linked to the theme.
- Finally the children will be asked to give each other the Sign of Peace before making the Sign of the Cross.
- The candle will be extinguished.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy every 3 years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Signed: (Chairs of Governors)

Date:October 2010.....

Review on:October 2013.....