

St Peter's R.C. Primary School

Collective Worship Policy



Policy	Collective Worship
Date	September 2020
Date of review	September 2022
Signed Chair of Governors	<i>Eugene McCarthy</i>
Signed Headteacher	<i>Clare Scott</i>

We, the family of St Peter's, united in faith by God strive to learn and grow together to be the best we possibly can every day.

AIMS

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To consider spiritual and moral issues
- To meet the Living God
- To explore their own belief
- To encourage full, conscious, active participation and response whether through active involvement in the presentation
- To develop community spirit
- To promote and reinforce common ethos
- To express in a variety of ways the distinctive values that underpin the school's existence, vision, outlook against the background of its Mission Statement
- To offer opportunities to explore the Spiritual Dimension in ways that enable/empower/uplift/ponder/reflect/empathise
- To provide moments of reflection and prayer
- To offer opportunities to ponder the Word of God and basic religious concepts
- To enable pupils to come into the fullness of Trinitarian life.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective worship is a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school community. Our school begins the day with an act of worship which is inclusive, educational and contributes to spiritual development.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act which states that collective worship should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", we usually base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ, Gospel stories and teachings and the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school community. We promote tolerance towards other religions and beliefs.

While the majority of acts of worship in the school are Christian, we hold assemblies that reflect moral values and which reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and in the wider community.

ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The worshipping nature of St Peter's is expressed in a variety of ways.

Among these are:

- Prayer (*See Diocesan handbook*)
- Assemblies (*see Appendix 1*)
- Eucharist
- Sacraments
- Alternative Liturgies
- Classroom Prayer/Worship.

All classes participate in a daily act of collective worship; this may take the form of class prayers, liturgies or assemblies led by the Head Teacher, Senior leaders, class teachers or visitors. At the heart of our Catholic school is the practice of starting and ending each day, with prayer. We also pray together before and after lunch every day.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies and prayers, to display their work to other children and to raise issues which they may have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and that all achievements are recognised. In both whole class and whole school collective worship, we encourage children to lead prayer and reflection.

We invite parents to assembly on Friday afternoon, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the partnership between the home and the school working together to support our children.

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

As we are a Catholic school, and parents have applied to the school knowing our distinctive Christian ethos, we expect all children to participate in prayers, assemblies, liturgies and masses.

However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship.

Appendix 1

Practical guidance for assembly preparation

Assemblies require careful planning if they are to be meaningful events. We cannot, however, ensure that these occasions will be religious experiences, that is the work of the Holy Spirit, but we can create the conditions and bring children to the threshold of worship.

TEN TIPS:

1. Favour a holistic approach (cross-curricular, and take account of the cultural richness of participants).
2. Decide on the appropriate strategies to present the assembly; prepare the venue creating a sense of occasion.
3. What will the focus be: artefact, candle, drape, poster, art display, symbol etc?
4. Maximise pupil involvement and ensure staff presence and participation.
5. Content should be Scripture based, to ensure good doctrine and sound teaching (use a translation appropriate for participants).
6. Include some intercessions that reflect current situations, the reality of pupils' lives. Such prayers can be educational in teaching us how to pray in a way that fosters extended love of our neighbour.
7. Use various forms of prayer: formal, personal, reflective, liturgical.
8. Choose hymns that are God-centred and balance the participative and reflective.
9. Build into assembly a quiet moment/silence to allow God to speak, teach, draw and love us. It is a time as Cardinal Hume cites when two silences meet: the silence of God and the silence of the individual.
10. The assembly should last ten to twelve minutes.