

**St. Edmund’s Catholic Primary School**

**Collective Worship Policy**

**Intent**

St. Edmund’s is a Catholic Primary School in Skelmersdale, serving the parish of St Richard’s, Skelmersdale. We work in partnership with the parish and parents to provide the best possible education for our young people aged between 3 and 11, building on the foundations laid in Early Years and preparing for their future development at High School.

We believe that the ethos of the school must in all its spiritual, moral and cultural aspects reflect the teachings of Christ in the Gospels, in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Our intent is to provide a high-quality Christian Education based upon the teachings of Christ in the gospels, recognising the uniqueness of each member of our school, enabling every one of them to develop his or her gifts and talents to the full.

**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 Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School**

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

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

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff to:

* Contemplate something of the mystery of God
* Reflect on spiritual and moral issues
* Explore their own beliefs
* Respond to and celebrate life
* Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
* Develop a common ethos and shared values
* Enrich religious experience
* Grow in liturgical understanding and development
* Reinforce 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.’

**Principles**

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

* Give glory and honour to God;
* Be an enriching experience, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
* Develop in pupils’ skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
* 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.

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 (children’s attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life i.e., 5-6 mins. For Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins. For Key Stage 2);
* be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings (for example, the classroom, hall, school grounds)
* be held in a special, prayerful atmosphere.

Collective worship in our school will be:

* properly planned
* adequately resourced
* recorded
* monitored
* evaluated

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| Day | Grouping | Topic / Celebration |
| Monday | Whole School Collective Worship | Led by Mrs Birmingham (Headteacher)  Sunday Gospel readings |
| Tuesday | Classroom Collective Worship | Planned using Collective Worship Planning formats. Linked to the weekly theme. |
| Wednesday | Classroom Collective Worship | Planned using Collective Worship Planning formats. Linked to the weekly  theme. |
| Thursday | Classroom Collective Worship | Planned using Collective Worship  Planning formats. Linked to the weekly theme. |
| Friday | Celebration Assembly | Prayers, singing, coming together to celebrate. |
| Daily prayers also take place at the start and end of the school day and before lunch time as part of  the life of our school. | | |

**Resources**

All classes have a Collective Worship box of resources: including all liturgical colours and a Good News Bible. Each classroom has a Collective Worship table, including St Edmund’s Prayer Book. A collective Worship CD of resources has been shared with the staff, the Wednesday Word are used to plan the Monday worships. There is also a termly planner of themes upon which to base classroom worship. The planner gives guidance when choosing scripture readings, resources and correct liturgical colours.

**School Masses**

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and include the children of an age appropriate to attend this celebration.

When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to the ‘Directory for Masses with Children’ as a basis for our practice.

**The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship**

Mrs Georgia Buckley is the co-ordinator for Collective Worship and Religious Education. (Appendix 1 contains the ‘Roles and Responsibilities of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator)

**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 two years.

**Appendix One**

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

* Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
* Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan
* Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family 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

**Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

* Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
* Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship
* Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

**Communication**

* Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts 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 Archdiocese

**Professional Development / On-going formation**

* Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
* Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
* 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

**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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, “on a special occasion”.

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

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 that those which are specifically structured.