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**ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

<b>Date of Approval</b>	<b>September 2023</b>
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>September 2024</b>
<b>Review led by</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Full Governing Body</b>
<b>This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents</b>	<b>RE policy</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>Two Yearly Review</b>



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**School Mission Statement**

**Our Mission statement demonstrates our commitment to inclusion at English Martyrs school:**

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**To accept each individual as they are and to enable them to develop their full potential within a Christ-centred, worshipping community in a spirit of love, happiness and understanding**

***'A Learning Community in Christ'***

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

### **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. However, our wider curriculum affords children the opportunity to develop their relationship with the world around them; it enables children to experience a wide range of people, to appreciate the world that God has created, and to understand their role as its stewards. Therefore, where appropriate, we may draw upon links to our wider curriculum within acts of worship.

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.

### **Collective Worship: Intent**

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

Worship at English Martyrs Catholic Primary 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.

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

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

Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- to contemplate something of 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
- to develop a common ethos and to learn about and grow our school values; 'community', 'respect', 'inspire' and 'belief'
- to develop the skills of reverence, contemplation and reflection
- 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.'
- to develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ and God our Creator.

### **Principles**

All acts of worship in this school will:

- give glory and honour to God;
- be a quality experience, 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
- be appropriately paced and engaging
- include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings

Assemblies are an experience of worship and can be presented in a variety of forms. They are prayerful and encourage openness to God. All assemblies begin with the Sign of the Cross, lighting of a candle and include elements of prayer and praise.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

Central to the Catholic faith is the understanding that although we are all different, God loves each one of us equally, regardless of background, gender or ability. In our worship, we seek to recognise and cater for the individual needs of children, acknowledging that all children have different gifts and talents and that these should be celebrated. We aim to help children develop to their full potential and to develop a positive self-image.

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

## Collective Worship: Implementation

### **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'To know you more clearly' Religious Education Directory, the 'Come and See' RE programme, feast days, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will often be the focus in acts of worship and a variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Acts of worship will develop in pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship in a meaningful way.

Parents and parishioners are invited to participate in some celebrations.

Each week class, key stage and whole school worship are timetabled. In a typical week, this will be:

*Monday: Celebration assembly.* We start the week with 'Time to Shine' where we celebrate the gift, talents and qualities of individuals from each class, as identified by the other children and their adults. We also celebrate where children have worked hard in their learning as part of being our 'learning community in Christ.'

*Tuesday: Class worship.* For those year groups where the new Religious Education Directory (RED) is being introduced (in 2023-24 this is Early Years, Year 1 and Year 6), class worship will be planned to explore the 'celebrate' lens of each branch. Where classes are still using 'Come and See' (in 2023-24 this is Years 2 – 5), there will be a rota for class worship where two pupils, with the support of their teachers, plan a liturgy based on the four-part act of worship. They will have a bank of resources to draw upon and opportunities to create their own.

*Wednesday: Hymn Practice.* We gather together as a school to sing hymns that link to the themes of the liturgical year and in preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist in school. We reflect on the meaning of the words of the hymns and why they are important to us.

*Thursday: House assemblies / 'SALT' (Social Awareness and Liturgy Team) assemblies.* The children are led by house captains or the SALT team to reflect on school, local or world issues, to consider how these relate to the teachings of Jesus and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, and how we can put our faith into action by responding to them.

*Friday: Gospel assembly.* The whole school gathers to listen to the Gospel that will be read in the coming Sunday's Mass. We reflect on the important parts for us, what it reveals about God's love for us, and how the words of the Gospel can shape our lives in the coming week.

The Format for Collective Worship in our school will be:

**Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)

**Listen** – liturgies will normally centre around a text from the Bible; the Word of God will be proclaimed from a bible or lectionary, or it may be presented in words or pictures on a whiteboard screen to increase its accessibility to all

**Respond** – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, music, drama, art, poetry etc.) We place our needs before God (intercessory prayers)

**Go Forth** – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

## **Recording**

Collective Worship may be recorded in the following ways:

- on a liturgy planner to keep a note of themes, leaders and resources
- through displays, reflections, photographs, prayers, leaflets, powerpoints, class spiritual journals etc
- through pupil response/in discussion or written comments

## **Eucharistic celebrations**

Eucharistic celebrations will highlight a special occasion or feast day. Typically, these will include Mass to celebrate the start and end of the school year, and also key points in the liturgical year such as Lent, Easter, Advent and holy days of obligation that fall on a week day.

They will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. Children may animate the Eucharist by preparing readings and intercessions, singing hymns and psalms, preparing offertory processions and serving.

## **Prayer and Collective Worship in the Classroom**

Each class has a Class Worship Box which contains a collection of drapes in seasonal liturgical colours, candles, crucifixes, statues, rosaries, icons, prayer pebbles etc. Copies of the relevant 'Come and See' Handbook, God/Church Story, RED and bibles are also available in each classroom. Additional resources are housed in the RE resources in the Hub and under the prayer table in the hall.

'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 / RED branches. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Class prayer tables will always feature a bible and a candle. There should also be a crucifix in all classrooms.

Children are given the opportunity to pray together throughout the day in their classrooms.

These opportunities are:

- Start of the day prayer
- Lunchtime prayer
- End of the day prayer

Other prayers that the children learn and may pray together in class or during wider gatherings are 'The Our Father', 'Hail Mary' (particularly during the months of May and October), 'Glory Be' and prayers written by the children.

## **Collective Worship: Impact**

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

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

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. Consideration will also be given to any training needs identified.

### **The Coordinator for Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is co-ordinated by the RE Subject Leader in consultation with the Headteacher and the Music Subject Leader, liaising with the Parish Priests as appropriate.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the RE Subject Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years.

### **Useful links and websites**

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton: Collective Worship and Prayer Life:

<https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/education/re-catholic-life>

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton Policy Guidance for Collective Worship, August 2020:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gXZgT946Jb3kSCiFaDSetqimg1p12eK/edit>

Ten Ten Collective Worship Resources (all teaching staff have a log in):

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/>

Cafod Prayers, Liturgies and Reflections:

<https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources>

Mission Together Prayer Resources:

<https://missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources/>

The Bible in a Year podcasts:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheBibleinaYear>

The God Who Speaks resources:

<https://www.godwhospeaks.uk/primary-collective-worship-resources/>

The Mark 10 Mission:

<https://www.themark10mission.co.uk/>

As one of the Worthing Deanery Schools, we also can gain ideas and support from **David Beresford**, the Chaplain at St. Oscar Romero Catholic Secondary School:

[dberesford@stromeros.school.uk](mailto:dberesford@stromeros.school.uk)

