



Company number 8180450

Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Umbrella Trust

Collective Worship Policy



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Policy for Collective Worship

1. The Nature of Collective Worship.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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.¹

2. Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (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.

Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Head Teacher/Head of School.

3. The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our Schools

We endorse the belief that 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
- Those from other faith backgrounds – or none

¹ It is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of 'Collective Worship' in schools. 'Collective Worship' is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

² 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 need to 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.

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

Worship in school is more than just a legal requirement; it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

4. **The Aims of Collective Worship.**

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

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs, and understand Catholic belief
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce 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.'

5. **Principles**

All Acts of Worship in these schools will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.³ In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept 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.
 - Draw on the full range of catholic liturgical and devotional tradition.

6. **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'Come and See', significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies

³ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupils, skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

7. **Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

8. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

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.

9. **Voluntary Worship and Retreats**

There should be scope for voluntary worship opportunities.

For instance, there may be Lunchtime Rosary during October or during Holy week there may be a chance for pupils to visit the Stations of the Cross.

There will be an opportunity for Y5 and 6 pupils to voluntarily attend the Hallam Padley Pilgrimage. This will be a walking event with stations for prayer and reflections.

Y6 pupils from the three schools in the Umbrella Trust will take part in a one day retreat; other year groups will aim to come together to worship collectively.

10. **Eucharist**

Eucharistic celebrations in the schools will highlight a special occasion (e.g. the leavers' mass, Feast of St Peter & Paul) and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. At present, our schools believe that all pupils can take part in Eucharistic celebrations, aided by older pupils. 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. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to "***The Welcome Table. Planning Masses with Children***" which contains the complete text of the Church's '***Directory for Masses with Children***' as a basis for our practice.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or aspects of the Eucharistic liturgy; and/or the Communion Rite.

11. The Coordinator for Collective Worship

Collective Worship in each school is coordinated by the RE Coordinator and the Senior Leadership Team.

12. Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the RE Co-ordinators and is evaluated and reviewed by the Umbrella schools' staff and Governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

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