



St Monica's Catholic Primary School Collective Worship Policy

Status	School need
Policy reviewed	Spring 16 (Revised Summer 19)
Date presented to Education Committee	Summer 19
Date approved by Governing Body	Summer 19
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Date of next review	Summer 22

1. Rationale

At St Monica's the Mission Statement commits us to making Christ known to all people, to fostering communion with the Parish, to developing our relationship with Christ in order that the children can experience true freedom and fullness of life. Collective worship is an important way in which we fulfil this aspect of the school's mission to enable children to develop a personal relationship with God and with each other.

2. Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- To provide an opportunity for children to worship God;
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- To enable children to begin to explore their own beliefs;
- To encourage participation, response and active contribution;
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- To promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes which arise from Christ's teachings;
- To teach children how to worship;
- To provide an opportunity for the children to deepen their understanding of the Catholic traditions.

3. Definitions

3.1 We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating fully in an assembly or act of prayer and reflection as a whole school, key stage or class.

3.2 While acts of worship in our school are Catholic, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

3.3 Assemblies are gatherings of the school community and they include an act of worship. They may also have a section before or after the act of worship for giving notices, presenting prizes etc.

4. Organisation of collective worship

4.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship. This may be part of a whole school assembly, Key Stage assembly, class assembly, worship with music which includes opportunities for prayer and reflections or prayer and reflection in the classroom setting.

4.2 Collective worship is regarded as a special time at St. Monica's, and we expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully to

the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create a spiritually evocative atmosphere by using music, and candles or other objects in order to enhance the children's attentiveness and responsiveness. All staff are expected to model these attitudes.

4.3 Whole school assemblies are conducted by the head teacher, the deputy head teacher and class teachers. Collective worship with music is led by staff with a particular interest in this aspect of school life. The Parish Priest and representatives from local Churches and Charities are regularly invited into school to speak to the children.

4.4 We take the themes of our collective worship from the Way the Truth and the Life scheme of work, the Statements to Live By scheme, the Gospel of the Week, our Mission Statement and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. We plan our collective worship in advance and keep a record of themes covered in order to provide progression and continuity.

4.5 Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised.

4.6 Children are involved in planning class based Collective Worship using a resource developed by the Diocese which involves children choosing the elements of the Worship: Gather, Listen, Respond, Going Forth; from a set of options printed on cards. These cards are fixed to a planning sheet and can be copied as a record of the Act of Worship. **The school has further developed the cards to suit our needs by producing a set of cards to help children choose readings from the Bible.**

4.7 There is a liturgy group made up of upper Key Stage 2 children who support the collective worship in the school in the following ways:

- Set up displays for whole school collective worship: finding artefacts to match the theme, and using the correct colour drape for the time of the liturgical year.
- Choose music for whole school collective worship.
- Support Years 1 and 2 children to plan their class collective worship.

4.8 Parents and governors are regularly invited to attend class assemblies, Nativities and Passion Plays. Dates of all class assemblies are communicated to parents and governors at the start of the year. Reminders are given in newsletters. We encourage their attendance as this promotes community spirit and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements.

5. Guidelines for collective worship

5.1 The following elements should be included in most acts of worship:

- A clear focus or theme
- A passage from scripture
- Some time for listening
- Some time for reflecting
- Prayer
- Some time for stillness and silence
- A 'mission' / task to take away

5.2 The following considerations should be made:

- The importance of establishing a time and sense of occasion for worship
- Worship needs to have a clear beginning and end.
- The act of worship should be separated from other day to day information given out in Assemblies.
- A choice of theme and language appropriate for the age group

- The theological content/ message (what is being said about God, His people and His world) which should be backed up by illustrations from the life of Christ
- The use of different approaches and media, so that children experience a variety of worship experiences

6. Sacramental Preparation

6.1 Collective Worship plays an important part in our preparation with the children for the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. At the beginning of both programmes a Mass of Enrolment is held on Sunday in the parish church, where each class leads the worship and is presented to the congregation as candidates for the Sacraments. The preparation for the sacraments is presented through the form of Circle Time lessons, which culminate in a prayer service to which parents are invited. Through incorporating collective worship into every stage of the children's preparation we hope to show the children that these Sacraments are part of their Christian lives and not one off events.

7. Right of Withdrawal

7.1 We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

7.2 The head teacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

7.3 As a Catholic school we would hope that the parents of children attending our school support our Catholic ethos and, therefore, would not wish to withdraw their child from this very important and special experience in the daily life of the school.

7.4 Whilst maintaining the Catholic ethos the school will be sensitive to the fact that not all children will come from religious or practising families.

8. Monitoring and review

8.1 The policy is monitored in accordance with an annual timetable of monitoring, in Whole Staff meetings. This monitoring schedule is sent to staff each year.

8.2 The Subject Champion keeps a frequently updated file covering monitoring of policy implementation, planning and standards.

8.3 A named governor, Mrs. Barker, is responsible for the monitoring of religious education, and will visit the school for this purpose. The governor concerned discusses issues with the HT or DHT before reporting to the governors.

8.3 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

Signed:

Chair of the Education Committee

Date: