

Collective Worship

Introduction

The Governors of St Anthony's School are fully aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to Collective worship and they take account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, Education Act 1996 and the School Standards Framework Act 1998.

As a Catholic Voluntary Aided School the Governors of St Anthony's take account of the Diocesan Trust Deed which states the acts of worship shall be consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church. The Foundation Governors have particular responsibility for seeing that the Catholic character of the school is reflected in Collective Acts of Worship and are in accordance with the Trust Deed.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and cannot be subsumed under any part of the curriculum. It is distinctive and meets legal requirements.

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

Definitions

Collective Worship 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. Worship is at the heart of St Anthony's School.

Prayer may be an individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.

All **liturgies** involve the praise, thanksgiving and adoration of God and are, therefore, acts of worship. However, not all worship will be liturgy as it may or may not include symbol and action.

An **assembly** is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship but the difference between worship and assembly is always made clear.

Character of Collective Worship

In keeping with the Section 7 (1) of the 1988 Act and the ethos of our school, our Collective Worship is "wholly of a broadly Christian character." Without being rigid or unfeeling towards the minority or non-Christians among us, we chiefly pray the Christian prayers, sing the Christian hymns and take our readings from the Holy Bible. Our aim is for our Collective Worship to be prayerful and relevant and as essentially a part of the day as any other school activity. It takes various forms (e.g. structured services, directed reflection (from our own resources or from visiting speakers) plays/assemblies, songs of praise etc.) and student participation and preparation is greatly encouraged and

implemented. The liturgical year gives our Collective Worship its framework while the needs and events of our worlds of home, school, town and society, make up its content.

Aim of Collective Worship Policy

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for pupils to

- Worship God
- Reflect on values that are of a Christian nature and on their own beliefs
- Develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- Consider spiritual and moral issues
- Respond to the worship offered

Principles of Collective Worship Policy

1. Every effort will be made to give pupils positive experiences, based on sound educational, pastoral and liturgical principles.
2. Acts of Worship will prepare pupils for the liturgical life of the Church
3. Acts of Worship will take into account, as far as possible, the age, aptitudes and backgrounds of the pupils.
4. Eucharistic celebrations will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with those pupils whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage
5. Acts of Worship will usually follow the basic structure of Christian Worship.

School vision and ethos

As a Mercy school our education vision and ethos is:

- **Christ centred**

The Mercy school recognizes the dignity of the human person and the command of Christ to love and care for each other. We aim to build up self-esteem among individuals and create a community marked by, caring and belonging that leads to personalized learning.

- **Faith enlightened**

In the Mercy school, faith, culture and life are in dialogue and harmony. The Catholic faith is at the heart of the school life and is integral to its liturgies, rituals, symbolism and prayer spaces.

- **Shows concern for the poor especially women and girls**

The Mercy school sets as its clear aim to work towards eradicating suffering and its causes. It seeks to create compassion as the driving force in the search for justice for those at the margins of the community. Students should be educated to questions the status quo and to be active for social change and the promotion of equal opportunities.

- **Builds communities**

The Mercy school shows social responsibility for the world we inhabit. It should work towards creating a world where everyone can live lives of dignity and decency with respect for life. The school is a community where parents, staff and students share a common vision as a community of warmth and love.

- **Pursues excellence**

The Mercy school enables every student to achieve her potential. It is committed to high quality teaching and learning and to building a community of reflective learners working to the highest standards. Respect is at the heart of the school community. There is a commitment to inventiveness and change.

Organisation and Management of Collective Worship

The overall responsibility for Collective Worship lies with the Headteacher in consultation with the governors. The following structure and system has been approved.

- 8.40-8.45 am - The school Chaplains lead the staff in prayer at the beginning of the Headteacher's briefing to staff each morning.
- 8.50-9.10 am. - Every day the Pastoral Leader, in conjunction with the Deputy Pastoral Leader, assembles the year group in a designated area for morning prayers. The structure of the assembly is left to the expertise of each Pastoral Leader based around themes connected to the Church's Liturgical Year. (See appendix). Pupils are encouraged to take part in assemblies/readings.
- Mass is celebrated every Friday at 8.30 am. And on Holy days of Obligation. Attendance is voluntary. The priests from our parishes offer Mass in turn and each Religious Studies group has an opportunity to prepare Mass. Anyone who wishes to serve, read, help with the music or prepare the hall for Mass is very welcome.
- Each year we have Leaver's Masses for years 11 and 13.
- Each year the whole school (separately/simultaneously) meets together for Collective Worship for such important event as the School Mass on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, Advent Assemblies, Lenten Assemblies and Staff Leavers' Mass. These events are coordinated by the school Chaplains in conjunction with the 2nd Deputy Head, Pastoral Leaders and Subject Leaders of Music and RE.

Policy monitoring and review

- The monitoring of Collective Worship forms part of the school improvement plan
- The Governing body include the monitoring of Collective Worship on their agenda
- Issues raised in the monitoring process will be used to further develop Collective Worship

- Monitoring of Collective Worship includes observations of collective acts of worship, discussions with those who lead worship, discussions with those who experience worship (pupils, parents, governors and other members of the school community).
- Monitoring will check on resources, visual aids, etc
- Staff development and in-service training will be recorded
- From time to time a school audit for collective worship will be conducted to assist in monitoring Collective Worship
- When the monitoring of Collective Worship has been completed it will lead to an evaluation of the current position and plans for the further development of Collective Worship within the school.