



St. Winefride's Catholic Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Every Catholic and religiously sponsored school should have a vibrant worship life, with ample opportunities for student liturgies, time of prayer and reflection and be suffused with religious symbols that nurture the faith identity of students.”

(Thomas Groome)

2. AIMS AND PURPOSE

- To provide opportunities for pupils to worship God.
- To consider spiritual and moral issues.
- To meet the living God.
- To explore their own belief.
- To encourage **full, conscious, active participation** and response through active involvement in the presentation.
- To develop community spirit.
- To promote and reinforce common ethos.
- To express, in a variety of ways, the distinctive values that underpin the school's existence, vision, outlook against the background of its Mission Statement.
- To offer opportunities to explore the Spiritual Dimension in ways that enable, empower, uplift, ponder, reflect and empathise.
- To provide moments of reflection.
- To offer opportunities to ponder the Word of God and basic religious concepts.
- To enable pupils to come into the fullness of Trinitarian life.

3. LEGISLATION FOR WORSHIP

1989 legislation laid down the following criteria:

All schools must begin the day with an act of worship, which should be:

- Inclusive,
- Educational,
- Contribute to Spiritual Development,
- Have a sense of occasion.

4. CATHOLIC TRADITION

At the heart of Catholic life is the practice of starting each day, or beginning any new piece of work with prayer. We make a point of dedicating our day and work to God, who is **at the heart** of the school.

5. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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 in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

6. ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. This takes place through hymn practices, infant and junior assemblies, Masses and Prayer services, collective worship groups and a whole school assembly in St Stephen's Church.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The Head Teacher or other members of staff conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups or other organisations conduct them instead.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. St Winefride's School is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of all the children in assemblies.

We invite parents to assembly on a weekly basis and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

Each KS2 class participates in a phase mass every half term. KS1 classes have a prayer service led by the parish priest in their classroom every half term. All classes come together

for whole school masses every term. Parents are invited to attend all class and whole school masses.

7. RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

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

The Head Teacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the head teacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

By order of the Governing Body of St Winefride's Catholic Primary School

(Signed) _____
(Head Teacher)

(Signed) _____
(RE Coordinator)

Policy Date: May 2015
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