



English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

Collective Worship

Our English Martyrs' School community aims to follow the example of Christ in welcoming, recognising, fostering and developing each individual as a unique and special gift of GOD with value and dignity

Date reviewed: July 2017
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POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

This policy is designed to reflect and support the school's Mission Statement:

To follow the example of Christ in welcoming, recognising, fostering and developing each individual as a unique and special gift of God with value and dignity.

The Nature of Collective Worship.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanksgiving to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship with him, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

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.

At English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the head teacher.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

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 the 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.

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

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.

The Aims of Collective Worship.

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

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- 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 with others in prayer and worship.
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All Acts of Worship at English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School 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. (Directory for Masses with children para 9).

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be short and appropriately paced;
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Collective Worship at English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

At different times the school community engages in various assemblies, acts of worship and liturgy in a variety of contexts.

The week begins with an Act of collective worship held in the hall of each building. Each day begins and ends with a class prayer/act of worship. At key points in the Church's Liturgical year there are special liturgies to help the school community focus more clearly on the meaning of the particular liturgical season.

Eucharistic Celebrations

The Eucharist is the focus and source of Christian life. Throughout the school year on Friday mornings, half of the school community celebrates the Eucharist with parishioners in the parish church. This group is made up of one class from each year group in the school. Each group celebrates the Eucharist on alternate Fridays as arranged at the start of each term. The theme of the Masses is normally based on the R.E. programme and

the Church's liturgical time. Planning and preparation for the Mass is done by the Headteacher or the R.E. Subject Leader in consultation with the parish priest. Whole school masses are held at the beginning and end of each term and on holy days of obligation.

Our aim is to lead all the children to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations especially the Holy Mass. Every effort is made to increase the children's participation and make it an intense experience.

When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to 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. In school, therefore, the 'Liturgy of the Word', rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

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 the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.

Music and Song

In music it is necessary to recognise that there is rich variety to be enjoyed. The social and cultural mix of the children has to be recognised and the particular needs of all those whom it includes met. It is important that no cultural group is made to feel excluded from worship. Hymns are chosen which express the mood or theme of the Mass. The use of musical instruments can be very valuable especially when played by the children themselves.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' programme, 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
- 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.

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.

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.

Resources

The resources for collective worship include a variety of Bibles, stories with a biblical theme, Prayer books, posters, artefacts, ideas for services and assemblies, tapes and music. These are stored in Building one (first floor). The RE Subject Leader is always willing to help teacher's select suitable resources.

In each classroom there should be:

- A focus for prayer/class assemblies /worship.
- A copy of the Bible
- A crucifix
- A selection of religious books – including for example, God's Story, The Church's Story, books on the lives of Saints etc.