

# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

*Here at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we learn and grow through the love of Jesus.  
Our community is a safe, caring and happy place where everyone is supported and valued.  
We encourage and challenge everyone to achieve their full potential,  
spiritually, academically, morally and socially.  
We inspire others with a love of learning and aim for excellence in everything we do.  
Through our own faith, we treat one another the way we would like to be treated.  
We help every child to be gentle and fair: to always do their best.*

*'Learning through the Love of Jesus Christ'*

### **Introduction**

Here at St Joseph's we are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations of all the children. The achievement, attitude and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied needs. The mission statement of St Joseph's values the individual as a child of God. As a Catholic school we believe that everyone is equal in the eyes of God and we respect and value the diversity of God's family. At St Joseph's we seek to ensure prayer and worship is central to life in our School.

St Joseph's is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for its pupils and staff. The governors and staff are committed to promoting British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles.

### **Aims and objectives**

The aims and objectives 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 explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to develop an understanding of the Catholic faith
- to enable children to grow in liturgical understanding;
- to promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship.

### **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. Collective worship is when we honour, praise and give thanks to God. We expect everyone to take an active part in collective worship.

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

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### **Other Faiths and Traditions**

We also hold collective worship that reflects the traditions of other cultures that are represented in the school and the wider community such as Black History Month or Judaism.

### **Organisation of collective worship/Assemblies**

We hold a daily act of collective worship. This forms part of a daily assembly, which can be a whole-school, Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 or a class assembly of prayers in class.

We conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that collective worship 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, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

Collective worship is normally conducted by the headteacher or other members of staff, but can be led by local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups.

We take the themes of our collective worship from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our collective worship are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies well in advance of the day they take place.

Our collective worship reflects 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. St Joseph's School is a successful school, and we shall continue to celebrate the successes of all our children at our assemblies.

Every Friday the school holds a 'Liturgy Assembly' that is led by a different class and parents and carers are invited to attend. 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.

Governors' attendance at our collective worship and assemblies is always welcome.

### **Right of withdrawal**

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 and carers 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.

The headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

### **Monitoring and review**

Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of a named school governor, who is also responsible for religious education. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher before reporting to the governors.