



Collective Worship Policy

I am a
child
of God
1 John 3:1

St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

Guided by God, St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve."

"St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment"

At St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we believe that Christian worship in a Catholic School is concerned with giving glory, honour, and praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response in word and action to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with God made possible through the work of Jesus and witness of the Holy Spirit. The school affirms that all children and staff are unique and should have opportunities to achieve their full potential to learn or to teach and to experience success in a broad, varied and balanced curriculum. The school aims to value all members of the school community including staff, children, parents, governors, parishioners and visitors.

“When you enter the school grounds there is an atmosphere of spirituality and you see, hear and witness this in the surroundings, both internally and externally. Everyone in the school shares responsibility for prayer and worship.” – CSI Report (June 2023)

Collective Worship

Collective Worship is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a loving relationship with God. This is made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and witness of the Holy Spirit.

At St Gerard's, Collective Worship is an integral part of the school life. It gives children the opportunity to 'Live the Faith'. We gather as a community to listen to the teachings of the Faith, pray and reflect on our own lives.

The daily acts of Collective Worship at St Gerard's follow the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Aims and Objectives

- To reflect on the mystery of God.
- To consider spiritual and moral issues.
- To respond to and celebrate life.
- To explore their own beliefs.
- To experience a sense of community and belonging where a common ethos and set of values and attitudes are developed and shared.
- To develop children's sense of awe and wonder about the world that they live in.
- To celebrate the glory of God and have the opportunity to reflect on questions of meaning and worth.
- To grow in a liturgical understanding of the Catholic Faith.

Classroom Worship

It is our policy for classes to pray together each day. Classes usually pray at the start of each day, at lunch time and at the end of the day. Each class has its own set of prayers and uses them regularly. Teachers are encouraged to employ a variety of styles of prayer within their classrooms. Progressively, pupils will be helped towards experiencing short periods of meditation and reflection. Each class will rejoice and celebrate the various topics that they have studied in RE. This enables them to develop the capacities and skills to grow in the awareness of the spiritual dimension of life and actively respond to it.

Liturgy

At St Gerard's, we hold masses throughout the year, led by our parish priest, Father Mark Moran. These take place during special occasions and we often invite parents and governors to share these with us. The parishioners and governors are involved with preparing children who are receiving the gifts of First Holy Communion, Confirmation and Reconciliation. We also provide opportunities for non-sacramental liturgies led by both teachers and children. Staff and governors are invited to liturgies at key points throughout the year, led by the subject coordinator, to renew their own faith. Parents and governors are invited regularly to 'Stay and Pray' sessions that are held in school.

Adapting Styles

The religious experiences and backgrounds of our children vary considerably. Therefore, we ensure that stimulating and engaging methods are used and that children are invited to participate in a way that is suitable for them. When gathering for worship, children gather in classes, key stages and as a whole school. When children gather as a whole school, this is an opportunity to gather as a loving and learning community and to celebrate the life of the school. When children gather in smaller groups, this supports them to develop an age-appropriate liturgical understanding of the life of the Church. During worship, children are encouraged to be responsible, resourceful, reflective and reciprocal. A range of strategies are used such as music, singing, individual prayer and collective prayer. Opportunities are also provided for stillness, silence, reflection and reverence.

Purpose and Content of Assemblies

Whole school assemblies take place each Friday. This is usually a praise assembly. Some weeks, the assembly will be led by a class and be part of their end of topic 'Rejoice' celebration. Opportunities are provided for pupils and staff to gather together in reflection on the Word of God through scripture and to respond in communal prayer and praise. Staff and pupils are encouraged to contribute their appropriate skills, gifts and experiences in a spirit of offering and sharing. We

explore the beliefs of our Christian tradition and other world religions. We also welcome visitors to share their experience and expertise.

Resources

“Pupils commented that they highly value the quality of resources because they can choose from a wide range to support them in their worship.” – CSI Report (June 2023)

Staff have access to a range of resources to support high quality worship each day. In all classes, staff use resources to create a suitable, enriching focus table that supports the delivery of meaningful Collective Worship. Worship is resourced through artefacts, candles, cloths, statues, bibles and other religious books. A range of resources from Cafod, Mission Together and Missio are also used.

Planning and Monitoring

Planning

Teachers deliver Collective Worship daily. They plan worship that enables children to celebrate the aspects of life experience that have been recognised and reflected upon. They plan worship that fosters an atmosphere which may evoke responses of joy, sorrow, thanks and praise. When planning, teachers are encouraged to use the Collective Worship planners suggested by the Archdiocese when planning class and key stage Collective Worship. When planning, teachers use the Collective Worship Handbook as a guide as this contains suggested themes, scripture and feast days. Teachers also use worship to link ideas with the children's own lives and the wider community. Teachers encourage children to be involved in the planning process of worship and use the steps of prayer progression to support this. Staff and governors are also given time to reflect and staff take part in liturgies to reflect and revitalise their own faith.

Monitoring

The Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for monitoring worship across the school as per the monitoring cycle. Throughout the year, she will experience Collective Worship within all classes, monitor evidence through Twitter and complete Pupil Voice.

Policy Updated

Date: February 2024

By: Miss L. Sanders (Collective Worship Coordinator)