

ST CHARLES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

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1.Introduction

Regular liturgical celebrations and daily prayers in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church, should be at the heart of school life. (A7.7) The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of learning and teaching should create time for the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and develop a mature spiritual life. (A8.7)

[From Christ at the Centre: A Summary of Why the Church Provides Catholic Schools, Rev Marcus Stock STL MA, Director of Schools, 2005](#)

The Catholic School is essentially different and distinct from other institutions in both philosophy and practice. Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust recognises the importance of emphasising this distinctiveness in our acts of collective worship. To this end, our acts of worship are designed to:

- Foster and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ
- promote an appreciation of prayer, worship and liturgy
- encourage the participation of pupils so as to reinforce the unique worth of each individual within our community and also;
- in line with the Liturgical Calendar, the directives and the translations of the liturgical books of the Roman Catholic Church.

In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation and the Diocesan Memorandum of Understanding each school in the Trust must provide religious education and collective worship in accordance with the teachings, rites and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church and will be subject to the authority and direction of the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. The key areas of the distinctive nature of Catholic education are recorded in 'Principles, Practices and Concerns' as supplemented by 'The Common Good in Education' (Bishops Conference 1996), focusing particularly on the search for excellence as an integral part of the spiritual quest within oneself and within the wider community.

The Right to Withdraw

An School's Funding Agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for Acts of collective worship. Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and are not required to provide a reason for doing so.

Parents will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the **headteacher** following a request of withdrawal in terms of:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part in.
- The practical implications of their withdrawal.

Alternative provision will be arranged for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

- Alternative provision may involve religious worship relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:
- The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational collective worship with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.

Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative provision will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

The Trust's Funding Agreement also states that: 'Where a Mainstream School is designated with a religious character in accordance with section 124B of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) or further to section 6(8) of the [Academies Act 2010](#):

b) subject to clause 28, the Company shall comply with the requirements of section 70(1) of, and Schedule 20 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as if the School were a foundation school with a religious character or a voluntary school, and as if references to 'the required collective worship' were references to collective worshipping accordance with the tenets and practices of the specified religion or religious denomination of the School.'

c) the Company shall ensure that all quality of.....the School's collective worship...are inspected. Such inspection shall be conducted by a person chosen by the Company and the School shall secure that such inspection shall comply with the requirements set out in any statutory provision and regulations as if the School were a foundation or voluntary school which has been designated under section 69(3) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 as having a religious character.

Collective Worship in a Catholic school is, however, more than just a legal requirement. It is central to Catholic education and is an essential part of the Trust's overall provision for prayer and worship. We are proudly Catholic in both senses of the word. Everyone in our community is invited to contribute to it and gain from it, regardless of faith, level of belief and commitment.

The inspection of the Trust's arrangement for the inspection for collective worship and RE shall be through Section 48 Inspections. The report on Religious Education is produced for the Bishop of Hexham & Newcastle, who under Canon Law 804 and 806, as the Diocesan Bishop he has responsibility for the schools in the diocese, and for the Governing Body of the schools concerned. *"The formation and education in the Catholic religion provided in any school is subject to the authority of the Church....the diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of Religious Institutes"*. ([Canons 804, 806 Code of Canon Law](#)).

The Trust is a Eucharistic Community this means that we are a community rooted in the Catholic tradition, which gathers to celebrate Eucharist on a regular basis. The word "Eucharist" is a translation of the Greek word eucharistia, which means thanksgiving. Through sharing liturgical life and mutual support for one another, the trust is strengthened to live Christ- centred lives dedicated to spiritual growth and social commitment.

The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch." ([Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324](#))

In accordance with the [1988 Education Act](#) and the [DfE Circular 1/94](#), collective worship within the Trust provides opportunities for pupils and staff to come together as a community through daily prayer in the

classroom, through participation in weekly assemblies and through other liturgical celebrations. Furthermore, through collective worship we are able to encourage pupils and staff to reinforce positive attitudes they may have within their community. We also highlight and try to change negative attitudes within our society to encourage a common ethos and shared values amongst all.

In accordance with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Local Governing Committee after consultation with the Principal/Headteacher.

Aims

The Trust aims to provide opportunities for pupils and staff to come together in community to worship God and to respond to the invitation from God to be in relationship with Him. Collective Worship reflects the traditions of our Church, taking into account the spiritual and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church.
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church.
- Those from other Christian traditions, faith communities or none.

We endeavour to do this by:

- Helping to develop the faith of each individual within our community;
- Promoting the belief that our Trust is a caring community;
- Giving pupils an insight into and understanding of Gospel values;
- Developing an understanding of the responsibilities the Gospel values place upon each individual within the community;
- Developing a sense of mission;
- Encourage those who form part of the worshipping community in church;
- Help those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Include pupils from other Christian traditions, or none or from other faith backgrounds; and
- Provide an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Therefore, the start of each day the staff in all of the Trust schools gather as a community and briefing begins with a prayer and a reflection to remind us all of God's presence among us.

2. Vision and Values of Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

The Trust has adopted the following vision and values to guide us in our mission and to underpin all that we do:

Our Vision:

Our schools will be places of excellence – providing service and witness to children, their families and the wider Catholic community, adding value as a family of schools and enriching the learning and experience of all our young people so they may achieve their full potential.

Our Values:

The following values underpin everything the Trust and our Schools will do:

BEING Just and Responsible: We seek to act justly, fairly and responsibly in all our relationships to ensure ‘The Common Good’ is upheld.

PROMOTING Spiritual and Human Development: We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

ACHIEVING Quality in Teaching and Learning: We believe everyone should gain dignity and self-worth through quality teaching and learning which allow all in our school community to excel.

SHOWING Respect for Every Person: We believe that all are created in the image of God and therefore we will respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person, promoting equality and celebrating diversity.

CREATING Community: We believe our schools to be faith communities where Gospel values of truth, honesty, forgiveness and reconciliation are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

COMMUNICATING: We value the views and opinions of the communities whom we serve and will actively engage and respond.

3. The Aims of Collective Worship at Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

- To reflect upon the mystery that is God;
- To provide opportunities for students and staff to come to know Jesus Christ through prayer and action;
- To heighten pupils’ awareness of questions related to the ultimate mysteries of life and to explore the beliefs and commitments made by themselves and others in response to such questions;
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development with specific reference to the Catholic tradition;
- To respond to life’s challenges, celebrate life’s wonders and comfort and console at times of difficulty;
- To celebrate the richness and diversity of our God given creation and the responsibilities we have for its stewardship;
- To give opportunities for silent contemplation, reflection, personal response and prayer;

- To explore, reflect on, express, affirm, or challenge commonly accepted personal and social values and individually held beliefs;
- To express our faith as a Christian community thus reinforcing the sense of belonging, the development of community spirit, the promotion of a common ethos and the reinforcement of positive attitudes;
- To provide staff and pupils with opportunities to worship God hence enabling individual spiritual moral development; and
- To offer pupils the opportunity to prepare themselves for challenges in their adult life.

To fulfil these aims we will:

- Ensure the Act of Worship is seen as part of the total curriculum, an integral part of the life of the school and seen to be important;
- Adopt an approach that is based on educational principles which aid the spiritual development of individuals. Therefore the form, shape and content will be educational;
- Respect the integrity of the individual, to give the opportunity to participate creatively and encourage each to make an individual response to a shared experience;
- Build up accessible resource materials for use in assemblies and the daily act of worship;
- Experiences of prayer and worship will be high quality, reflecting the liturgical seasons and feasts of the Church.
- Endeavour to provide a physical environment that is conducive to the above;
- Involve a wider combination of staff, pupils and relevant members of the community in assemblies; and
- Provide an opportunity to review Collective Worship.

Role of Trust Head of Catholic Life

The Trust Head of Catholic Life acts as a resource to support to Lay Chaplains and Chaplaincy Teams. Their role is to provide:

- Training and support
- Point of contact
- Identify and meet the training needs of those involved in chaplaincy in our schools
- Oversee spirituality timetables
- Assistance with sacred spaces
- Opportunities to meet and discuss ideas and problem-solve together
- Assistance with the planning and preparation of key Liturgical celebrations including major feasts and seasons across sectors
- Resources for websites

The Trust Head of Catholic Life will work with school Chaplains and those with responsibility for co-ordinating collective worship to develop ideas to:

- Make prayer engaging and meaningful
- Increase involvement of our young people in the prayer life of their school
- Develop whole Trust MAT spirituality events including retreats and liturgies

The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship

The role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship is detailed at **Appendix 1**.

Louise Maitland

Organisation of Collective Worship

The organisation of collective worship is detailed at **Appendix 2**

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator. It is evaluated and reviewed by the Headteacher, members of Senior Leadership Team and the Collective Worship Co-ordinator with the whole school teaching staff and Governors every two years.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Collective Worship
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]

Appendix 2

Organisation of Collective Worship

Planning, content and celebration

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See (primary), feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in First Friday Mass, Harvest Celebrations and Charity events.

The timetable of Collective Worship is as below.

Monday and Friday - Teacher led, Tuesday and Wednesday - Child led. Thursday - Whole school worship

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion. Whole school collective worship takes place at least once a week and is led by one of the SLT. Daily collective worships take place in the classrooms and/or during family group sessions which are led by staff and pupils. Mass is celebrated on the first Friday of every month (where possible). The school also attend masses at St Charles Church, Tudhoe and lead masses at the church.

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded in R.E. books, on collective worship templates or in a way that is appropriate and suitable for the children who are leading their own worship time. Where PowerPoints are used, these may be printed off and used as evidence.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Collective Worship is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form adapted from the material published by Hexham and Newcastle Diocese. Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform SEF 48.

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'¹

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Developing Parish Links

The whole school will join parish masses for specific celebrations such as Ash Wednesday, feast days School masses will take place in the parish for Year 6 Leavers' Mass and start of the year mass.

Prayer

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Staff and pupils pray together daily and opportunities are provided for Staff prayer and reflection during the Liturgical seasons.

Daily Worship

All children say daily prayers, Morning, Grace before and after meals and evening prayer. A daily Liturgy is celebrated in each class led by a mixture of staff and pupils with age appropriate involvement for planning and leading following the 'Minimum Requirements for Collective Worship' document.

A whole school worship takes place at least once per week. Children also plan and lead liturgies at the end of their RE units of work based on the topic studied.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Feast Days / Holy Days of Obligation

School will join with our Parish Community for the celebration of Mass where available in St Charles Church. If Mass is unavailable our current Parish Priest has given permission for the RE-Co-ordinator to lead Eucharistic Services to mark these obligations with children.

Feast days will be celebrated either with whole school Liturgies or within a class setting.

Sacred Spaces (Primary) / Chapel (Secondary)

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Charity

We support local charities within our community including the local foodbank, our Parish SVP group for Harvest festival and Catholic charities including Cafod. We work together with our parish community to support these groups. We also support national events including the MacMillan Coffee Morning.

Holy Mass & Celebration of Sacraments

Sacramental Preparation takes place during Year 4 and the units of work are led by the class teacher. The parishes lead the programme overall.

Holy Mass is celebrated in school with our parish community on the first Friday of each month where the first Friday falls during term time.

Sacramental Preparation: Supporting Parishes

Sacramental Preparation for Reconciliation and Holy Communion is currently taught in Year 4. Parish sessions are led by the parish catechists in St Charles Tudhoe and All Saints Ferryhill. The Sacrament of Reconciliation takes place during the season of Advent and the celebration of the Eucharist in May and June. School support both parishes in the full delivery of the programme.

Resources

All classes have worship resource boxes, including, as a minimum, Liturgical cloths, Bible, candles for Advent, Lent and Ordinary Time. Banners and liturgical cloths are resourced for the hall and main entrance showing the prominence of worship and prayer.

Prayer and Liturgy artefacts will continue to be replenished and reviewed through careful budgeting each year.