



**St. Mary's Catholic Academy and  
Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy**



**Collective Worship Policy**

*"Through the strength of God's love and the power of prayer  
we are guided to do whatever He tells us. Many hearts,  
one accord, we grow and learn together for life to build the kingdom of God."*

**(School Mission Statement)**

**Mission Statement**

This policy document should be considered in the light of our School Mission Statement which outlines all that underpins our work at St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace:

*"Through the strength of God's love and the power of prayer  
we are guided to do whatever He tells us. Many hearts,  
one accord, we grow and learn together for life to build the kingdom of God."*

St. Mary's Motto: *'Many Hearts, One Accord-We are the many hearts, that follow Jesus, the one accord'*

Our Lady of Grace Motto: *'Do whatever He tells you'*

**Introduction**

St Mary's and Our Lad of Grace are caring, Catholic school communities, and we teach our children that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. We aim to foster an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each individual child's life and to encourage a personal response to that presence. Our children are helped to achieve their full potential through a Christ-centred creative curriculum that values equality and diversity and seeks to allow each child to develop their conscience and make sound moral judgments based on commitment to following Christ.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving praise, thanks and reverence to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into communion with Him, made possible through the human and divine work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Collective worship, however, should also be used as a vehicle to promote the teachings of the scriptures, consider how to care for and respect our environment, recognise our God-given gifts and talents and understand how to live as Christians in love and peace, by valuing the diversity and unity of humankind, through loving tenderly, acting justly and walking humbly in the footsteps of Christ.

## **Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. Collective worship is not designated curriculum time and will not be assumed under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education. At St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body; however, in the life of the school, it is predominantly led and managed by the RE Leader in consultation with the Head teacher, with each staff member and child taking some ownership and responsibility for collective worship.

## **The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of Our School**

Collective Worship is central to the faith life of our school. We believe that Collective Worship should take into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

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

## **Rationale**

Collective worship will be an educational and spiritual experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. At St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace, we will continue to foster and deepen our children's personal relationship with God our Father daily in prayer. We do this by helping them to become aware of God's presence in their lives and of His love for them, by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age. This may be in one of the following ways:

- Prayer of silence
- Spontaneous prayer
- Praying through gesture or action

- Formal prayer
- Guided Meditations

Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship. Children are encouraged to pray in the morning and in the evening. Worship in St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition and faith system.

### **The Aims of Collective Worship**

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

- To contemplate the mystery and transcendence of God
- To reflect on spiritual, moral and ethical issues
- To explore, reflect upon and act on 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 Christian values
- To enrich religious experience
- To develop a liturgical understanding of the Catholic Church's context and structure
- To teach the meaning and purpose of prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition
- To take a full and active role in collective worship
- To value the wonder and awe of God's creation

### **Principles**

*All acts of Worship in this school will:*

- Give glory, honour, thanks and praise to God
- Be a spiritual experience, 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.
- Be appropriately paced and offer a range of spiritual and reflective experiences offered in a variety of groupings and settings.

*In order to achieve the above, Collective Worship is organised as follows:*

*\* RE lead, along with Father, will implement a timetable prior to the start of term highlighting all dates, responsibilities and themes and advise scripture / hymn selection*

### St. Mary's

**Monday** - Whole School Assembly, Scripture linked, based on the current Virtues and Values planned and led by Head of School

**Tuesday** - Whole School Assembly (Wednesday Word), to enable all children to access and reflect upon the forthcoming weekend readings, planned and led by SLT.

**Wednesday**- Mass - themes to be planned by Father and RE Lead to reflect the calendar of the church and school saint foci. Masses to be planned and led by year groups, children and staff (Three weekly rota - Whole school, Foundation Stage/ Key Stage One, Key Stage 2)

**Wednesday** - \* Collective Worship when Key Stage are not attending Mass based on the theme of the Mass and/or Virtues and Values planned and led by appropriate key stage staff (not SLT)

**Thursday** - Key Stage 'Songs of Praise' Hymn practice, led by Key Stage lead and supported by Key Stage staff (hymns practised are linked to forthcoming Mass and the liturgical calendar)

**Friday** - Key Stage or Class 'Celebration Assembly'- whole school, recognising children's God-given gifts and talents

### Our Lady of Grace

**Monday** - Whole School Assembly, Scripture linked, based on the current Virtues and Values planned and led by Head of School.

**Tuesday** - Mass - themes to be planned by Father to reflect the calendar of the church and saint foci. (Three weekly rota - Whole school, Foundation Stage/ Key Stage One, Key Stage 2).

Whole School 'Songs of Praise' Hymn practice, led by Music lead and supported by Key Stage staff (hymns practised are linked to forthcoming Mass and the liturgical calendar).

**Wednesday** - Whole School Assembly (Wednesday Word), to enable all children to access and reflect upon the forthcoming weekend readings, planned and led by all teaching staff.

**Thursday** - Key Stage Collective Worship based on the theme of the Mass, Saints and/or Virtues and Values planned and led by appropriate key stage staff.

**Friday** - Whole School or Class 'Celebration Assembly'- Whole school, recognising children's God-given gifts and talents

### *Liturgical Assemblies*

During Advent and Lent, additional liturgies, led by classes, are held three times per week, to enable children to experience a fuller understanding of these seasonal times of preparation for Christmas and Easter.

## **Planning**

Collective Worship at St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, significant liturgical dates and the curriculum.

Each act of collective worship follows a 4-part structure:

- 1) Gather
- 2) Listen
- 3) Respond
- 4) Go Forth

Staff and Key Stage 2 children are expected to follow this format for every assembly/ liturgy and are encouraged to record this on a Liturgy Planning sheet, available from the RE Leader.

- Scripture will be the focus for most acts of worship
- Collective Worship will relate to the school community in the light of the school's aims and mission, the Virtues and Values, class saints and the liturgical calendar.
- There will be flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- The school will aim to teach children the skills to enable them to prepare, organise, lead and evaluate worship.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of collective worship will be evaluated annually to consider how it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school. The RE Leader, link governor and/or the members of the Worship Committee, may evaluate the quality of collective worship in the school by conducting informal evaluations, with the permission and consultation with staff members throughout the school year. Staff are always invited to observe Senior Leader's assemblies as good practice.

## **Resources**

There are a wide range of resources available to aid planning for Collective Worship, such as assembly books, DVDs, etc. These can be found in the RE cupboards in the school hall. There are also several Internet sites that are also a useful resource for planning; these links have been distributed to all teaching staff, with recommendations to support planning and delivery of Collective Worship.

## **Mass and the Eucharist**

Eucharistic celebrations are a crucial element of our *Collective Worship* at St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace.

Opportunities for children to participate in the Mass are given two out of every three weeks, parents and other members of the school and Parish communities are encouraged to attend.

Eucharistic celebrations will take the following forms:

- Whole school Masses every 3 weeks and for Holy Days of Obligation and special feasts
- Class Liturgies
- Key Stage Masses and Liturgies
- Children will be encouraged to participate in several school-lead Sunday Masses throughout the year
- Mass of Commitment for all of the children preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion and Confirmation
- Our school also take representatives from Key Stage 2 to the annual North Staffordshire Combined Schools Mass and Good Shepherd's Mass and often have an active involvement in these Masses

**This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.**

**Agreed by Staff on: November 2018**

**Agreed by Governors on: November 2018**

**RE leader: Mrs Scattergood/ Mrs Rigby/ Mrs Catalano**