

St Cuthbert's 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 Academy'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 Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves.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 Academy 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 Academy 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 worshiping accordance with the tenets and practices of the specified religion or religious denomination of the Academy.'

c) the Company shall ensure that all quality of.....the Academy's collective worship...are inspected. Such inspection shall be conducted by a person chosen by the Company and the Academy shall secure that such inspection shall comply with the requirements set out in any statutory provision and regulations as if the Academy 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, at 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**.

Emma Daly (Deputy Headteacher)

Organisation of Collective Worship

The organisation of collective worship is detailed at **Appendix 2** (each school to complete).

Policy Monitoring and Review

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

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.]

Organisation of Collective Worship

- There will be whole school collective worship every Monday morning led by a senior leader (Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher). This will be based on Sunday's Gospel and our whole school mission.
- There will be Key Stage collective worship each Tuesday led by teachers on a rota system. This is an introduction to the statement to live by of the week. Each class displays the current statement close to their focal point.
- On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings, all pupils participate in short collective worship (15 mins) in their class groups.
- Pupils lead worship at the end of each topic three times a term to remember, rejoice and renew. Parents are invited. It is expected that the children will take an increasing lead in the planning of these liturgies. Records of collective worship are kept in R.E. books and in RE floorbooks.
- Let us pray (2003) resources are used to plan liturgy by pupils.
- Daily opportunities for prayer take place at the beginning and end of each day and before lunch. These include formal and informal prayer, periods of stillness and silence. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own prayers which are role modelled by the adults working in that room.

Planning, content and celebration

Collective Worship is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, Let us pray materials and weekly gospel, significant dates and the curriculum.
- Scripture will be the focus in all acts of worship.
- 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.
- Liturgical Collective Worship follows the structure: -
- Gather, Word, Respond, Mission/ Go forth.

Recording

- In the Collective Worship/Catholic Life floorbook on altar in school hall noting of themes, leaders, pupil group, age and resources
- Through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- To ensure our pupils are participating in high quality, meaningful worship the RE Leader follows Diocesan guidance. Collective Worship is evaluated through pupil voice.
- Modelled by Headteacher and/or DHT – termly observation of SLT (HT observes DHT and vice versa) and observed by Chair of Governors Once termly
- Collective Worship is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form.

Appendix 3 monitoring form from Diocese model

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

Developing Parish Links

- Part of Holy Family Parish, Hartlepool
- FHC programme with Catechists in Holy Family Parish
- Attend masses on designated occasions
- Remote masses in school facilitated by Priest from Parish (time permitting)
- Ric Slatter as Youth Ministry and Coordinator – organises chances to plan and deliver Worship based liturgical seasons in school and remotely

Prayer

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

- Daily opportunities for prayer take place at the beginning and end of each day and before lunch. These include formal and informal prayer, in line with expectations for prayers taught at each key stage, periods of stillness and silence. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own prayers which are role modelled by the adults working in that room.

Daily Worship

- On Wednesday and Thursday mornings all pupils participate in short collective worship (15 mins) in their class groups (Mon, Tues whole school or key stage).
- Daily opportunities for prayer take place at the beginning and end of each day and before lunch. These include formal and informal prayer, periods of stillness and silence. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own prayers which are role modelled by the adults working in that room.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Retreats / Pilgrimages

- Every year we hold a day retreat for year 6 pupils at the Youth Village as part of our Youth Mission (Diocesan Wide).
- Children's Services, organised by Parish Catechists and the children preparing for the First Communion Programme, are held at Christmas and during Lent. Stations of the Cross for Children are held on Good Friday.
- The parish and school come together in October to take part in the yearly family retreat at the Youth Village

Feast Days / Holy Days of Obligation

- We highlight to community and to children if church is open on Holy Day of Obligation. If so we attend from school but this is not always the case so we make parents aware they can attend mass on these days at designated Church's in the Holy Family Parish (times/Church).

Sacred Spaces (Primary)

- A wide range of assembly resources and liturgy ideas are kept in the R.E. focal points cupboards in the school hall and in KS2 upper stairs cupboards
- Coloured cloths for each season are available in each classroom. (a box for each classroom).
- Each classroom has a focal point (Sacred Space) designated in the classroom – this is monitored by Co-ordinator
- 'God's Story' and 'Church Story' resources are available in each classroom and in digital format on the school IT network.
- A good selection of bibles is available and are stored in KS2 library in top corridor of school for KS2 and in classrooms for KS1.
- Joint resources, such as books, and resources from other faiths, are stored KS2 library areas, in Coordinators office bookshelves which staff can borrow and in cupboards in hall under altar space.
- Useful website addresses have been distributed by the RE Leader - "Come and See logins, TenTen Worship resources and links from sites to support Collective Worship
- R.E. provided resources' are held in the staff shared area on computer.
- Staff have passwords for access to Come and See website
- Staff have access to TenTen website for Collective Worship and Liturgy/Prayer support and this will form CPD for staff in 2021/22 academic year

Charity

We support the following charities in school each year

- St Cuthbert's Care
- CAFOD
- Macmillan

- Hartlepool Foodbank

Holy Mass & Celebration of Sacraments

- Children's Services, organised by Parish Catechists and the children preparing for the First Communion Programme, are held at Christmas and during Lent. Stations of the Cross for Children are held on Good Friday.

Sacramental Preparation: Supporting Parishes

- Holy Family Parish, Hartlepool work in conjunction with each other to support and deliver Sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion

Resources

Audit for Collective Worship

	Comment on Present position	Maintain present position	Improve/Change present position	Action to be taken
<p>Do we have an updated policy for Collective worship/liturgy?</p>				
<p>Is a variety of pupil groupings used?</p>				
<p>Do we offer a range of experiences? E.g. songs, reflection, silence e.t.c.</p>				
<p>Do we acknowledge and accommodate the variety of faith traditions or lack in pupils and staff gathering for worship?</p>				
<p>Are the resources adequate for CW?</p>				

Has we provided staff with CPD in CW?				
Do we provide opportunities for voluntary worship and retreat experiences?				
Do we involve pupils in the planning and presentation of CW?				
Is there a development plan for collective worship and does it form part of the S.D.P.?				
Do we monitor and evaluate collective worship?				