



# ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL WORSHIP POLICY

## Mission Statement

As the parents, pupils, staff and governors of St. Patrick's School

## Our mission is to follow the loving example shown by Jesus Christ

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement; it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

## Aims

- ✦ To promote spiritual development through meaningful participation in forms of group worship from within the Catholic tradition
- ✦ To provide an opportunity for children to have an input into worship and draw from them a response of faith and love
- ✦ To promote familiarity with an appreciation of Catholic liturgical life

## Objectives

- ✦ To provide a daily act of worship
- ✦ To familiarise the children with some of the traditional formal prayers of the church
- ✦ To encourage informal and personal prayer
- ✦ To develop the experience of reflection by using artefacts, music, symbols, focal point, scripture, movement, participation
- ✦ To foster the experience of silent reflection
- ✦ To support all staff, Catholic and otherwise, with resources and to ensure they have adequate knowledge and understanding of the doctrines and liturgical norms which underpin Acts of Worship
- ✦ To provide examples of good practice by arranging Acts of Collective Worship for the staff
- ✦ To involve clergy by inviting them to attend prayer times and involving them in preparation of liturgies
- ✦ To be ready to listen to the children's own responses to Acts of Collective Worship
- ✦ To support parents to participate in worship

## PRINCIPLES

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be short and appropriately paced i.e., 5-6 mins. for EYFS and Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins. for Key Stage 2;
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings
  - Where possible the parish priest should be actively involved in the preparation with the staff and children

Collective worship in our school will be:

- properly planned following the process of:
  - Gather
  - Focus - Scripture
  - Explanation
  - Response
  - Thanksgiving
  - Common Prayer
  - Going Forward
- adequately resourced
- monitored (RE Governor)
- evaluated

The theme for each year group's Collective Worship will either focus on :

- God Matters Unit
- An appropriate theme

or

- Events in the Liturgical Calendar

### Weekly

There will be four class Acts of Collective Worship/daily prayer per day changed for different seasons

One key stage/whole school Act of Collective Worship

The Parish Priest leads an Act of Worship once a week for KS2, where children take part. In the key stage gathering, prayer is often more formal, but it is essential to focus on the school as a Catholic Community, to celebrate and share together all the special times and successes of the school following the traditions of the church.

Classroom Worship is more relaxed and children will have the opportunity to become increasingly involved as they move through the school. As they become involved in prayer and reflection in a more personal way, they will also be able to value the views of others and the teacher will be able to create a secure and supportive atmosphere to match the children's ages and abilities. During the year the children will be encouraged to lead the Collective Worship themselves.

## **Prayer as part of 'God Matters'**

Children have a natural aptitude for prayer. The religious programme of the school offers opportunities to sustain and deepen this natural aptitude.

### **Informal Words for prayer**

These are the ordinary, everyday language of praising, asking, thanking, saying sorry. The children are able to explore their feelings, thoughts and attitudes in a quiet and peaceful atmosphere.

### **Formal Words of Prayer**

These are gradually introduced as part of 'God Matters' and may be learned by heart or regularly used and therefore familiar.

These include:

The Sign of the Cross

A simple Grace before meals

A simple morning and evening prayer

A sign of peace – 'Peace be with you'

The Glory be to the Father

An Act of Sorrow

The Lord's Prayer

The Hail Mary

Act of Contrition

Responses used in Mass e.g. Holy, Holy

The Rosary

Gloria

The Apostles Creed

The Hail Holy Queen

### **The Sacraments**

Preparation and celebration of the Sacraments is linked closely with our Liturgical celebrations and form an inherent part of the 'God Matters' Programme and its teaching. Eucharist, Baptism, Confirmation and Reconciliation are focused on every year. Greater emphasis is naturally placed upon Reconciliation and Eucharist in Year 3. The school links with our local parish to provide support for the children and their families as they prepare to receive their First Holy Communion.

In June each year, a Mass is held in school for the children who have made their First Holy Communion in the different parishes that children belong to. In addition to this, Mass is celebrated with all of the school community at the start and end of each academic term.

The Parish Priest also invites all classes to attend Mass in the Parish Church once a term throughout the year. Classes help to plan the Mass and the children take an active part. Members of the church community join with the children in these celebrations.

As a Catholic school, we also encourage children to learn Mass responses and sung prayers, such as the Our Father, Alleluia, Holy Holy etc.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the R.E. Leaders and Governors RE Committee and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole staff and governors every two years.

Date Agreed: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

Review Date: March 2025