



# St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

September 2023

<b>Approved by:</b>	Stella Oladinni	<b>Date:</b> 9/5/2023
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	9/5/2023	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	

## INTRODUCTION

What is 'worship?' Worship is defined as *the reverence we show to God*. We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response – in word, thought and deed – to God's invitation to enter into a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and through the witness of the Holy Spirit. Worship in the Catholic school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. When we come to truly understand what it means to worship God; with our spirit and in truth; above everything else, God will be pleased, but most importantly, our lives will also be transformed. May God help us all to be the true believers who will worship in spirit and in truth.

## STRATEGIC GOAL

Our main aim is to provide opportunities for children, Teachers and all who work at St Edmund's, to be given the chances and tools to support them in developing their spirituality, and to accompany them on this journey to:

- contemplate the mystery of God;
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- explore their own beliefs through responding to, and celebrating life; thereby experiencing a sense of belonging;
- develop community spirit;
- develop a common ethos and shared values through enriched religious experiences;
- re-enforce prayers that are a part of our Catholic tradition;
- give thanks to God;
- nurture and educate pupils on their journey towards full and active participation in the liturgical life of their faith; and
- take time 'to wonder at,' 'to come to terms with,' and 'to give meaning and worth' to life.

## CONSEQUENCES

Worship is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic way of life and tradition. *Collective worship* and *assembly* are two distinct activities; they may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two should always be explicit.

We subscribe to the belief that Collective Worship takes into account the religious 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 backgrounds;
- those from other world faith backgrounds; and
- those from other backgrounds who are admitted to the school under the categories agreed by the Governing Body as the admission authority.

## PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

All Acts of Worship at St Edmund's will:

- give glory and honour to God;
- be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the School and its Catholic identity;
- give students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church; and
- be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute, and from which all can gain at a level or faith background appropriate to them.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

We acknowledge the legal statutory requirement that a daily Act of Worship is provided for all students on the school's register. This can take place at any time during the school day, and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship in school groups.

We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer; said either by the Teacher or everyone present; does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

The Act of Worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations, and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education Curriculum.

In Catholic voluntary aided schools' responsibility for the provision of collective worship, along with the logistics for the provision for collective worship rests with the Governing Body and is normally delegated to the Head Teacher and RE Co-ordinator.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

In general, Acts of Worship will:

- follow a structure with reference to the Church's liturgical seasons, Religious Education curriculum, significant feasts, and events;
- have scripture as the main focus;
- involve consultation with appropriate parties, i.e. local priest, staff within the school [RE Co-ordinator and Head Teacher], and in the context of school's aims and policies;
- have flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community; and
- develop in pupils, skills that enable them to prepare, organize and lead worship rather than just contribute in a token way.

## PLANNING, CONTENT AND DELIVERY

The Head of School, together with the RE Co-ordinator Team take responsibility for the planning, content and delivery of collective worship.

## RECORDING

Collective Worship is recorded by the RE Co-ordinator and includes:

- a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources; and
- displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be formally evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether they are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organizing and leading worship.

## RESOURCES

A full list of resources and their locations is located on the Teacher Shared Drive. Artefacts, books and images are located in the RE cupboard in the Resource Room.

## VOLUNTARY WORSHIP AND RETREATS

Whenever possible we will encourage and promote opportunities to develop this aspect of collective worship. Examples of this include: the participation of Upper KS2 pupils in the Good Shepherd Mass at Westminster Cathedral; and Christian Unity week celebration with other Christian denominations. We have also created a Prayer Garden in the EYFS Playground, which all are encouraged to use for quiet contemplation. This area is resourced with a selection of rosary.

## CELEBRATION OF MASS

Eucharistic celebrations in school and in Church will highlight special occasions. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship; therefore, opportunities for pupils to participate will be maximized.

We believe that all students are best introduced to prayer, the Sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step-by-step approach, and the RE Co-ordinator and the team will work very closely with the Parish Priest in this matter. In school, the 'Liturgy of the Word', will be the norm, though regular Eucharistic celebrations take place.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The RE Co-ordinator, is responsible for co-ordinating collective worship at St Edmund's.

Collective Worship is recorded by the RE Co-ordinator and includes:

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- displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

## POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Head of School, along with the RE Co-ordinator and the team will hold responsibility for Collective Worship and monitor the policy. It will be evaluated and reviewed by the school staff and governors every two years.

The Foundation Governors (in the name of the Diocesan Trustees) will have a particular role and responsibility for this review. The overall responsibility of Governors from a statutory perspective and Foundation Governors from the canonical perspective needs to be clearly stated in the context of the denominational nature of the school.