

St. Theresa's Catholic Primary School

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Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Worship Policy

“We learn together, we play together, we pray together, we grow together in the love of God”

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Validation grid

Title	Prayer and Worship Policy
Author	Caroline O'Brien
Associate Author	
Target Audience	All staff
Stake holders consulted	All staff
Curriculum/ non curriculum	
Associated Policies/ Documents	Religious Education Policy/ RSE Policy/ PSHE Policy
New Policy or Review of existing policy	New policy
Date of Submission	December 2023
Date of Review	December 2024

The recognition of the significance of Religious Education in the classroom is expressed in the Bishops Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools as:

‘Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.’

‘Religious education is then, the core subject in a Catholic School.’

Headteacher

Barbara Costa

Barbara Costa

Chair of Governors

Fiona Kerin

Fiona Kerin

Principles:

St Theresa's Catholic School believes that collective worship is an important part of a Catholic school's distinctive ethos. Collective Worship allows us, as a school community, to explore and understand the values at the heart of the ethos of our school, that we are made in the image and likeness of God; that every individual has a God given gift and that we are to recognise it and use this gift. At St Theresa's we want our children to discover and develop their gifts (whatever they may be) and fulfil their potential to the **best** of their ability. As the adults in the school community, we too have a responsibility to do this and will act as examples to others. We are striving for a school where the children, and adults, aim for excellence.

During the school day, Collective Worship allows pupils a space and time to reflect on following Jesus Christ as our role model. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved and engaged in daily worship. It is crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development.

As a Christian school, it is a legal requirement that all our registered school age pupils take part in a daily act of Christian worship.

Aims:

Through our collective worship we aim to support children to:

- Develop a sense of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and the wider community.
- Develop relationships based on mutual respect, trust and compassion.
- Develop a shared language of values to build a close-knit cohesive community.
- Show an understanding of the feelings and beliefs of other people.
- Communicate their feelings effectively, using appropriate language.
- Develop their spiritual awareness e.g. a sense of wonder at creation.
- Confidently participate in child-led Acts of Worship to others (in a group, class or whole school gathering).
- Respond to religious and/ or spiritual stimulus.

Prayer, worship and liturgy

Children participate in class based prayer at key times throughout the day. Each class should have a prayer focus reflecting either the current topic studied or the liturgical year.

The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for timetabling a diary of dates, liturgies and whole school Masses.

There are whole school Masses at the beginning of the school year, St Theresa's feast day and Holy Days of Obligation are also marked by a Mass, which are mostly celebrated in the school hall. Non-Eucharistic liturgy – e.g.: Distribution of Ashes, Reconciliation, lighting of Advent candles etc. are also honoured.

The whole school attends a twice-weekly assembly involving collective worship and a celebration of pupil achievement. The whole school celebrates Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day, Advent, Lenten assemblies.

Liaison between priests in our local parish churches, as appropriate, and the RE Co-ordinator ensures the preparation of Masses and Services in the Liturgical Year. In each celebration, all year groups will be actively represented or involved by assuming a role of ministry, (e.g. by serving, reading, singing, and responding)

The school holds an annual Spirituality Day in the Summer Term (linked to Pentecost), in which the children have time to consider the presence of God in their lives.

The classes take part in learning during the day including:

- Visiting the prayer room.
- Visiting the prayer garden (Jack's garden).
- Art activity using Religious pictures as a focus.
- Activities in class based on the Year which the church is celebrating e.g. Adoramus, 'Our Eucharistic Journey'.

The Prayer Room

There is a prayer room where teachers are encouraged to take their classes to the Prayer Room for the opportunity of meditation and prayer. The Prayer Room is open and available to all members of the school community. There is a lunchtime rota that has been implemented for children to use under supervision of the Mini Vinnies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents of a pupil have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher. This policy is shared with all staff and parents are advised of the policy.

Additional Guidance on Planning and Conducting Assemblies

In planning Assemblies, a range of methods are used, including:

Sacred and secular stories/readings linked to PSHE

Dance/drama

CAFOD resources

Prayer/meditation/songs/hymns/music

Artefacts/natural materials

Visual aids/focal points/PowerPoint presentations

Dialogue/creative silence

Visitors from charities are invited to speak at assemblies e.g. CAFOD, Catholic Children's Society.

Music from a variety of cultures is used on occasions e.g. Irish music is played with children performing Irish dancing at the St. Patrick's Day Assembly, children and their families celebrate International Day sharing their traditions and customs.

Resources

- Resources such as display cloths, posters, candles and artefacts are stored in the Religion area in the library or in the communal area outside Y5 and 6

classrooms. These can be used to support the delivery of assemblies and the topics of the scheme, feast days or liturgical themes.

- A selection of books, music and DVDs are available for teachers' use.
- Artefacts to support designated Other Faith studies are located in the Religion area.
- Pupils have access to a Catholic Holy Bible when studying the stories of the Old and New Testament. The studied texts should be accurately set in context.

Review date

This policy is regarded as a working document and is therefore to be reviewed yearly, updated if necessary, and re-issued with the date of the current year.