

St. Alban's Catholic Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

MISSION STATEMENT



St. Alban's School will educate our young children within a happy, caring environment and Christian atmosphere, thus their whole lives may be inspired by the Spirit of Christ they experience.

The Nature of Collective Worship

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.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

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. Collective worship at St. Alban's School 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 traditions - or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

The Aims of Collective Worship

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

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore 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 values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

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.¹ 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
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Collective worship in St. Alban's School will be:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- recorded
- monitored
- evaluated

Pupils will be exposed to a regular schedule of acts of collective worship during a typical week, which will include:

- Opportunities for daily prayer
- Class based Liturgy
- Key Stage Gatherings
- Whole School Gatherings including celebration of achievements and class-led liturgies.

Parents, family members, parishioners, clergy and friends of the school will be welcomed at the Wednesday class-led whole school liturgy.

Resources

Resources will be managed by the RE coordinator and made available to staff as needed. A supply of general resources supporting class prayer and liturgy can be found in the cupboard next to the staff room door.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

These will be offered as and when staff or a responsible adult is available to coordinate such opportunities. The Diocesan Youth Centre and other organisations will be contacted to support this dimension of life at St. Alban's School. (The Year 6 pupils will experience a 5-day residential visit at The Briars Diocesan Youth Centre before they leave St. Alban's School)

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to the *'Directory for Masses with Children'* as a basis for our practice. We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

Mrs McNamara and Mrs Johnson, the RE coordinators, are the designated coordinators for Collective Worship at St. Alban's School.

¹ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.
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Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. (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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, “on a special occasion”.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to ‘timetabled slots’ but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

Date:

Signed:

Appendix 1

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family 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

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts 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 RE Centre

Professional development / Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- 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

Appendix 2

Recommended Resources for Collective Worship in Catholic Primary Schools

A First Look- Prayer. Lois Rock. Lion Hudson Plc (1997) ISBN: 0745937519

And the Children Pray: Janaan Manternach. Ave Maria Press (1989) ISBN: 0877934126

Assemblies for liturgical seasons & school occasions, Volume One : Jude Groden and Christ O'Donnell :McCrimmon :0-85597-615-2

Celebrating the Mass. Bishop's Conference. Catholic Truth Society (2005) ISBN: 1860822908

Children's Daily Prayer:: Elizabeth McMahon Jeep : Liturgy Training Publications : 1-57854-375-1 (Published annually for the beginning of the academic year).

Classroom Prayer Services for the Days of Advent and Lent : Gwen Costello :Twenty-third Publications : 0-89622-737-5

Don't just do something - Sit there (Developing children's spiritual awareness) : Mary K. Stone. An RE-ME Enquiry Service Publication : ISBN 1-897-805-01-2

Enjoying the Mass. Joan Brown. Kevin Mayhew Ltd (2002) ISBN: 1840039736

Fifty Masses with Children : Francesca Kelly : Columba Press : 1-85607-043-3

Guided Meditations for Children 1,2 and 3 - How to teach Children to Pray using Scripture: Jane Reehorst, B.V.M.

In Joyful Hope - Advent Prayer and Worship in the Catholic Primary School : Carmel Hanley fcj and Rita Tunstall : available from Sr Carmel FCJ, 214 Barton Road, Stretford M32 8DP

Looking Beyond: Jill Giles. Kevin Mayhew Ltd (2002) ISBN 1840039841

Masses with Young People. Sr Jude Groden and Father Christopher O'Donnell. McCrimmon Publishing Co Ltd (2006) ISBN 0855976802

Multi- Sensory Prayer. Sue Wallace. Scripture Union Publishing (2000) ISBN: 1859994652

New Ideas for Creative Prayer. Judith Merrell. Scripture Union Publishing (2002) ISBN 1859995896

Our Poems and no messin'. Margaret Cooling. Scripture Union Publishing (2002) ISBN: 1859995896

Poems and Prayers for a Better World : compiled by Su Box and Felicity Henderson : Lion : 0-7459-3886-8

Prayer of a Fragile World. Carol Watson. Lion Hudson Plc (1997) IBSN: 0745937055

Praying with Children - Some ways and means: Jenny Pate : McCrimmons : 0-85597-546-6

Seasons of Celebrations - Prayers, Plays and Projects for the Church Year : Patricia Mathson : Ave Maria Press :0-87793-566-1

Spirit of the Season: a free to use/copy classroom resource : at www.liturgy.demon.co.uk

Spiritual Garments. Julie McCann. Decani Books (2006) ISBN: 1900314177

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The Lord Be With You - Introducing the Mass to Children: Jenny Pate : McCrimmons : 0-85597-579-2

Volume Two - Assemblies for Feasts, Mary and the Saints: 0-85597617-9

The Welcome Table - Planning Masses with Children (Contains the complete text of the Church's *Directory for Masses with Children*) : Elizabeth McMahon Jeep : Archdiocese of Chicago. Liturgy Training Publications : 0-930467-38-8

Ways to Pray with Children (Prayers, Services and Activities): Barbara Ann Bretherton. Twenty-Third Publications : 0-89622-670-0

Welcome: Celebrations for young children for the Church's year: Jenny Pate. McCrimmons: 085597642-X

Whispering in God's Ear. Alan Macdonald. Lion Hudson Plc (2004) ISBN: 0745936725

You're Special. Julia Giles. Kevin Mayhew Ltd (2002) ISBN: 1840039841

Prayer and Worship Resources

Prayer Themes & Guided Meditations	B.A. Bretherton
With the Word of God	J. Groden & C. O'Donnell
Directory on Children's Masses	Congregation for Divine Worship
Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children	"
Marking the Liturgical Year	Diocese of Portsmouth
With Hearts and Minds	Bishops' Conference