

Charlton House Independent School



‘Love One Another’

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

**Reviewed and approved by the full governing body January 2024
To be reviewed by FGB January 2025**

Date	01/07/22	Jan 24		
Reviewed by	FGB	FGB		

Charlton House Independent School Collective Worship Policy

Aims

At Charlton House Independent School, our Collective Worship Policy supports our Mission Statement to 'love one another', sharing the core messages of scripture so that our pupils can learn from the teachings of Christ. Collective Worship in our school aims to provide the opportunity for all members of our school community to spiritually develop, become familiar with traditional forms of worship in the Catholic Church and to experience a sense of belonging and community spirit.

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.

Purpose of Collective Worship

We believe that all acts of worship should give glory and praise to God; be truly inclusive and be clear in its liturgical focus. We recognise that there are many varied forms of worship and strive to incorporate these into our collective worship provision with the purpose of

- Deepening relationship
- Developing the skills of reverence, contemplation, reflection, mediation, empathy and making connections
- Making sense of the world
- Developing a sense of mystery
- Developing religious imagination

Throughout the school year, we also strive to mark the important major feasts and liturgical events in the calendar, This includes inviting parents and members of the community in to celebrate Masses and liturgies. In addition to this, we support the ongoing catechism of our pupils and celebrate key milestones with them, including marking First Holy Communion and providing opportunities for Reconciliation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body:

- Review of the Collective Worship and associated policies detailing responsibilities to ensure the above aims are met
- Supporting the religious nature of the school and participating in this
- Contributing to the Section 48 and general school self-evaluation forms

- Conducting an annual ethos walk, providing feedback to RE leader and Headteacher
- Consulting with diocesan guidance regarding leadership appointments to the school
- Monitoring and taking necessary action to promote and encourage Catholic staff and pupils

Headteacher:

- Ensuring all decisions support and promote the Catholic ethos of the school
- Leading or delegating to a member of SLT, a weekly whole school collective worship, for staff and pupils
- Communicating the policy to all relevant parties
- Communicating with the Diocese regarding any school related concerns which are contrary to the Catholic faith
- Keeping the governing body informed of relevant issues and information from the Diocese
- Support and monitoring the RE leader in line with role and responsibilities

RE Leader (Collective Worship Lead)

- Ensuring that there is a Collective Worship schedule for the year and that this is followed
- When planning the collective worship schedule, making appropriate links to the liturgical seasons and key feasts and events in the liturgical year. Working with the school priest to ensure this
- Ensure there are opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of stewardship (discipleship)
- Provide a clear programme of induction for all new staff, which enables them to participate in, plan and deliver acts of worship with confidence
- Cascading all relevant Diocesan/Catholic information and initiatives to governors and staff
- Take a lead role in providing a programme of good quality, ongoing, CPD for all staff, linked to developments identified through monitoring and to diocesan initiatives. Ensure high quality feedback and review is built into the programme to promote improvement and development.
- Act as a key source of information for other staff on the delivery of collective worship
- Contributing towards the school newsletter and other appropriate communications
- Being a role model for high quality collective worship delivery

Planning and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned by considering five key elements to the structure. These are:

- Gather
- Listen
- Reflect (explanation and quiet time)
- Respond (action and prayer)
- Going forward (leaving and living the message in our lives)
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Listening to scripture is the focus in all acts of collective worship and this is done so with reverence. Readings from the bible are introduced and concluded using the appropriate formal responses for these. Pupils are involved in the planning and delivery of collective worship, following the high quality

models provided by adults in the school. The RE lead is responsible for ensuring that pupils are provided with appropriate and authentic opportunities to do this and that opportunities include a wide and varied form of worship.

Collective Worship in the Life of our School

We endorse 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 or only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none
- Those from other faith backgrounds. It is an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Equal Opportunities

Parents have the right to withdraw children from daily Collective Worship, but as a Catholic School, it is hoped that our acts of Worship are seen and accepted as an intrinsic part of school life.

Appendices:

- 1. Diocesan guidance on planning and leading collective Worship**
- 2. Diocesan guidance on Pupils leading collective worship**

Appendix 1

GUIDANCE ON PREPARING AND LEADING WORSHIP IN OUR SCHOOLS

Purpose of Worship

- Means of communication.
- Deepening of relationships.
- Development of skills – reverence, contemplation, reflection, meditation, empathy, making connections.
- Making sense of the world.
- Developing a sense of mystery.
- Developing religious imagination.

All acts of worship should:

- Give glory and praise to God.
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants – *truly inclusive*.
- Be kept to the point – *less is more*.
- Be clear in its liturgical focus and varied in its delivery.

Key Elements that Guide the Liturgy

- Scripture readings.
- Season of the liturgical year/feast.
- Particular events or concerns for the class/school and/or wider community.
- Nature of the ritual.
- Nature of the school/participants.
- A variety of forms of liturgy offered across the school/liturgical year.
- Theme is clear and reflected in all key elements, e.g. scripture reading, focal point, task/message to take away.
- Enables growth in understanding of a community worshipping together.
- Content, form, organisation and presentation varies.
- Quality use of artefacts for focal point.

Preparation

- Creating a 'sacred space' both in terms of location and time in the day.
- Try to alter the normal lighting to show that we are gathering for liturgy.
- How will you create a focal point? Before or during the liturgy? How will it reflect the theme/scripture?
- Think about the cultural backgrounds of children and staff. Can this be incorporated into particular liturgies? Use fabrics from other countries?
- Develop a repertoire of music – joyful, sorrowful, reflective, participatory, signed/gestured
- Think about how the pupils will enter for the liturgy – moving from the everyday to the sacred.

STRUCTURE/KEY ELEMENTS

- Gather
- Listen
- Reflect (explanation and quiet time)
- Response (action and prayer)
- Going forward (leaving and living the message in our lives)

Gather

- Sense of order on entering.
- Different arrangements for different times of the liturgical year.

- Clear and appropriate focal point.
- Music to set the atmosphere.

Scripture

Hear God's word that lifts us up, instructs us, corrects us, trains us in holiness' (2 Tim 3:16-17)

- Draws attention to the need to be serving and loving.
- Reminds us of God's loving kindness which surrounds us and continually leads us to God.
- Guides us in our actions.
- Appropriate text, length, version for participants.
- Who shares it?
- Use of formal responses.
- How is it best shared?
 - Visual?
 - Auditory?
 - Kinaesthetic?

Explanation

- BRIEF
- Relates to the pupils' own experiences.
- Contributes to pupils' living and understanding of the Christian way of life.
- Respects the age and development of the pupils.
- Reinforces the key message of the scripture.

Quiet Reflection

- Opportunity for those participating to reflect on the message of the scripture and how that message will help them be better Christians.
- Time dependent on age and previous experience of quiet reflection.
- Children may benefit from a physical object to hold or to look at as an aid to concentration.

Response, including prayer

- Grows from the whole worship.
- There is a high level of participation.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of liturgical celebrations.
- Students know how to respond and behave during worship.
- Invitation and response.
- Approaching God through prayer.
- Giving praise and thanks.
- Saying sorry.
- Needs of others.
- Our own needs last of all.
- Bringing joys and sorrows.

Going Forward

- Children have a deep understanding of the revelation of God's presence.
- Clear message/task to take away, ideally linked to the living out of the message of the scripture in their everyday lives.
- Integration of worship and life.
- Clear sense of order/purpose on leaving.
- Revisit the message later in the day or next time you come together for worship and encourage the children to reflect on how they lived out the message.

‘Pupils are confident in planning and leading meaningful and high quality worship’ – extract from outstanding judgement descriptor for spiritual development in the Handbook for the Self Review and Evaluation of Catholic Education by Schools in the Diocese of Portsmouth

Key Principles

- Pupils need to regularly experience high quality worship to provide a role model for their own worships.
- They need to have a clear understanding of the structure/elements of a worship. Especially the central place of scripture and the need for stillness/reflection within the worship.
- Understanding they are creating a ‘sacred space’
- Will need time, support and assistant in planning the worship.
- Access to a template to follow.
- Access to appropriate resources. Consider providing a budget for additional resources.
- Ensure their understanding of the difference between worship, assembly and an RE lesson.
- Prayer not performance.
- Understanding of need to engage the whole group.
- Entitlement to constructive feedback on their efforts in order to learn and improve.

Expectations

- Pupils to be actively involved in worship in all year groups/classes in the school.
- School to have a planned and progressive approach to involving children in the planning and leading of worship in the school.
- An increasing involvement in taking ownership for parts of the liturgy as they move through the school, e.g. choosing appropriate cloth/objects for the focal point in early years, preparing prayers of thanksgiving linked to the theme in lower key stage two.
- In upper key stage two, pupils, with support from an adult if necessary, regularly plan and lead worship for their peers.
- Classteacher retains ownership of and responsibility for the quality of worship in their classroom, regularly planning and leading worship in order to provide a high quality role model for the children in their class. In addition, they provide constructive feedback and guidance to any of their pupils planning and/or leading worship.
- Pupils to have access, if required, to a template to follow and to a range of suitable resources.

Best Practice

- Able to move away from the ‘formula’ once they have this secure.
- Children take the lead for prayer at other times of the day.
- Children take the responsibility for planning and leading other forms of liturgy, e.g. holy week liturgies, class mass, welcome liturgy.
- Older children offer to lead worship in younger classes or in year partner classes. Becoming role models themselves (Prayer Leaders or Prayer Ambassadors)
- Plan, lead larger groups, e.g. key stage or house worships.
- Child led Rosary Club established and well attended.
- Children take ownership of the class prayer area.
- Children regularly benefit from participating in high quality worship led by adults in the school.

- Evaluation of worship, including getting the them to self-evaluate, is used effectively to support and develop the children's skills in preparing and leading worship in the school.
- Best scenario - evolves into an independent pupils' prayer or liturgy group who also take a lead in whole school liturgies/masses etc.