

St. Joseph's RC High School
Ysgol Uwchradd Gatholig Joseff Sant

Collective Worship Policy

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This policy was updated October 2023 by Mrs K Burke

This policy was presented and accepted by the Governing Body November 2023

Staff were made aware of this policy and or updates: November 2023

This policy will be reviewed September 2024 (awaiting collaborative review with Diocese, expected Spring 2026)

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INTRODUCTION

The governors and staff at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic High School see the main purpose of the school as providing an excellent education within a Catholic context in accordance with the school mission statement:

"Serving God Through Learning Together". Collective worship helps to focus on this mission statement and helps to implement it. We seek to offer an education in the practice of the faith, in prayer and worship, which puts God first. It is the aim of St Joseph's RC High school to create an ethos in which the school community has the opportunity to grow together in their faith. Worship and the religious life of the school is a **shared responsibility of all** those involved within the community of St Joseph's RC High School.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

The wording of the 1998 Education Act states: The daily Act of Worship is to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character." Worship in faith schools is in accordance with the religious tradition of the school and controlled by the Governing Body. Worship in such schools is not under the control of the LEA. Worship is more than a legal requirement; it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic faith.

THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective worship and assembly are not the same thing, but it is usual for an act of collective worship to take place during an assembly. Although collective worship is part of the school's contribution to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every child, its main function is to worship and give praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with God, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

An assembly is a gathering of part or all of the school. It is concerned with administrative matters and other announcements about school life. **It is of the utmost importance that collective worship is seen as distinct from those parts of the assembly that are concerned solely with administration.**

CURRENT ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT ST. JOSEPH'S RC HIGH SCHOOL

An intrinsic part of the school day is Collective worship. It is an outward expression of our inner journey towards a full relationship with God. Collective Worship is an opportunity for pupils and staff to explore their own spirituality and contributes towards our school's statutory obligation to provide opportunities for the school community's spiritual and moral development.

Currently, throughout the key stages, assemblies are held each day. Year group assemblies will usually be led by members of SLT, Head of RE and the Head of Year. Prayer is to be included as an integral part of every assembly. It is the responsibility that the person leading the assembly to emphasize the importance of prayer by creating a conductive atmosphere. This will be achieved by:-

- Beginning and ending the assembly with the sign of the Cross.
- Encouraging pupils to be still, bow heads and have a moment of silence.
- All business matters to be addressed before the Act of Worship has begun.

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It is the responsibility of every member of staff present in the assembly to support the importance of worship by helping to create a conducive atmosphere. This will be achieved by: -

- Directing pupils into the assembly in an orderly and quiet manner
- Sitting with the pupils and sharing in the act of worship and supervising them during this time.

On the days where no assembly takes place, the students have form reflection in which the teacher or student is to lead an act of worship. It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to ensure the legal requirement of the daily act of worship is given to their form each day. It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to emphasise the importance of prayer by creating a conducive atmosphere in the classroom. This will be achieved by: -

- Beginning and ending form reflection with the Sign of the Cross.
- Encouraging pupils to bow their heads in prayer and offer a moment of silence.
- All administration matters to be carried out before the act of worship begins.

Form reflection includes the four areas of collective worship: gathering, prayer, scripture and "Go forth". Form reflection makes reference to the Catholic pupil profile and every half term the proposed Archdiocesan virtues are encouraged to be carried out. The main focus of the prayer will be related to the theme of the week as identified on the Form Reflection resources. Collective prayers are also available in student planners.

DELIVERING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT ST. JOSEPH'S RC High School

At St. Joseph's RC High School, a wide range of people are encouraged to lead collective worship. Heads of Year take an active role in leading worship, along with the Head teacher and other senior staff. Involvement by the students is encouraged in the year-based assemblies. Visitors are also invited to lead assemblies, for example, in Racial Justice Week.

In order to help those who are leading assemblies a theme is introduced each week and is published for all staff in the half termly prayer resources. The theme is based on the Church's Liturgical Year. The Head of RE, with the help of members of the Chaplaincy Team, is responsible for preparing the weekly prayer resources. The outcomes of collective worship at the school will be evaluated through the process of teacher observation, pupil feedback, parental feedback.

CONCLUSION

Our school worship is about praising God and sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives. The governors and staff at St. Joseph's RC High School are committed to ensuring that every student in the school will derive some benefit from collective worship and will come to realise that each one of us is a gift of God's love, that each one of us is gifted and that we all have the responsibility to use these gifts to build up God's kingdom on earth.