

# ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



### *"Loving, Learning and Laughter Together with God"*

Article 14: "Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights"

**This Policy supports our Mission Statement:**

St John's Catholic Infant School  
is a welcoming, caring community  
and an extension of the  
home and parish.

The children experience the Gospel  
message of God's loving care through  
the worship, relationships and teaching  
of the Catholic Church.

The curriculum is rich, broad and  
balanced reflecting the distinctively  
Catholic nature of the school.

We will offer *every* child - whatever their  
individual characteristics -  
the chance to achieve their  
full potential, feel secure and  
enjoy growing up.

**Our Christian School Values are embedded into the heart of the school:**

*"The fruits of the Holy Spirit are: Love, Peace, Faithfulness, Joy, Goodness, Gentleness, Patience,  
Self-Control and Kindness" (Galatians 5, 22-23)*

**As Catholic educators we are privileged to fulfil the mission Jesus gave us:  
'Go out and teach all nations.'**

## **Introduction:**

Collective worship in St John's Catholic Infant School is the coming together of children and staff for the purpose of worshipping, praising, thanking, celebrating and deepening our relationship with God.

Collective Worship is more than a legal requirement; it is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic tradition. Whilst respecting diversity of belief and commitment; it reflects and follows the traditions of the Catholic Church and has Christ at its heart.

The worship includes all those who seek to explore and deepen their spiritual beliefs, enabling all members of the community to express and reflect their shared understanding. We believe that Collective Worship in our Catholic school 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 a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Collective worship in our school takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those from supportive Catholic homes.
- Those for who school may be their first and only experience of church.
- Those from other Christian traditions.
- Those from other faith backgrounds

## **The Aims of Collective Worship:**

- To provide an opportunity for children to worship the mystery of God.
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs.
- To respond to and celebrate life.
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop a community spirit.
- To promote a common ethos, with shared values and positive attitudes.
- To encourage participation, reflection and response.
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.
- To introduce children to important aspects of the Gospel message, reflect on and celebrate the Word of God at their own level of understanding.
- to take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

## **Objectives**

To fulfil these aims, St John's Catholic Infant School will provide opportunities for our community to: -

- celebrate life and learning
- give worth to
- wonder at
- contemplate something of the mystery of God
- enrich the religious experience of children and staff
- pray together
- take part in worship through prayer, drama and song
- follow in the footsteps of Jesus, keeping the Gospel values at the heart of everything

## Legal Requirement

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. Children are encouraged to participate in a variety of celebrations developing their sense of belonging to the community. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all children or separate acts of worship in year or class groups. Prayer and worship opportunities enable children to develop their own abilities to deal with the experiences of daily life with growing personal insights, expressing their own thoughts and feelings. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and is not to be subsumed under any part of the curriculum including religious education.

## Organisation of Collective Worship

In order to do this, celebrations will –

- Be kept small where possible, or appropriate, to help personalise the experience.
- Be short and appropriately paced: 5-6 minutes for Foundation Stage, 6-7 minutes for KS 1.
- Be simple, including a range of experiences, offered in a variety of groupings and a variety of settings.
- Give glory, praise and thanks to God.
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of our school and its Catholic character.
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, ability and family background.

## Guidelines for Collective Worship

Collective Worship in our school will be:

- Properly planned
- Adequately resourced
- Recorded
- Monitored
- Evaluated

All acts of worship in this school should be inclusive:

- Child-centred, related to children own experiences and relevant to their lives.
- Acknowledge diversity.
- Involve children as active participants.
- Match the needs of children.
- Foster a sense of community.
- Respect the freedom of children and adults in the invitation to prayer and worship.

They should be spiritual:

- Time for stillness and reflection.
- A special time – conducive to worship.
- Children should feel calm, relaxed and secure.
- Include a variety of words, music and images.
- Provide opportunities for children to take part in a variety of spiritual opportunities.
- Provide opportunity for children to take an active part in worship.

Collective Worship could be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain:

- Related to learning experiences across the curriculum.
- Related to children own life experiences.
- Celebrate educational achievements and talents.

## Planning for Collective Worship:

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, The Way, Truth and Life, significant dates and the curriculum. It will be flexible, to respond to changing situations within school and the wider community as well as local, national and global issues. It should involve the children in deciding the stories, songs, poems, prayers, music etc. and give opportunities for stillness and quiet reflection.

It will encourage children to realise that we can turn to God our Father to pray in good and bad times and give children the experience of being part of a Community of Faith.

The format for Collective Worship in our school will be: -

**Gather** – how we come together, the setting, environment, music, icons, candles etc.

**Listen** – who will read?, scripture, poem, prayer, story etc.

**Respond** – the response – prayers, reflection, questions, discussion etc.

**Go Forth** – something to take away or hold on to from this act of worship, into their daily lives.

A Collective Worship Planner is to be completed on a regular basis, copies of which should be kept in individual class Collective Worship Files monitoring purposes.

## Strategies

### 1. Daily Collective Worship in Class

Each class gathers together for a period of Collective Worship on days when no whole school or key stage Collective Worship is planned. The duration of this gathering depends on the age of the child. A guide for this would be approximately one minute for the age of each child. All classes have a focus area. Children are encouraged to lead and plan as far as possible using a range of resources to encourage reflection, appropriate to their age.

Teachers may wish to include themes from “The Way, Truth and Life” Jigsaw, the Liturgical Year, events within our school and classes, national or world events, or any other appropriate areas.

### 2. Class prayer time.

Children also pray together in class at the beginning of the school day, before lunch and the end of each day. Formal prayers or children's own prayers can be used. (See Teach us how to Pray booklet)

‘Special Friend’ time. Each child in Year 2 is matched up with a child in one of the F2 classes to support and encourage the younger members of the school. At least once every term these children meet together.

### 3. Whole School Assembly

The whole school, including staff, gather in the hall on a Monday morning for the Gospel Collective Worship, which is led by a class and their teacher and focuses on the Sunday Gospel that week.

On Friday, there is a “Golden Book” celebratory assembly led by different staff where the children from each class are chosen to share their achievements that week (Golden Book, Attendance etc.). There is a great emphasis on moral development through sharing examples of kindness, consideration and good behaviour. Self – esteem and responsibility are promoted.

The whole school gathers for prayer on a Wednesday morning. This is followed by a theme based on specific areas of focus e.g. PSHE / Gospel values and how we share our lives together. For some assemblies, staff may be required to attend depending on the theme.

Whole school assemblies, including worship are planned throughout the year to celebrate special events in the Liturgical Year, such as Easter, Feast Days, or local and national events, such as Chinese New Year as well as our School Mission Days.

#### Class Assembly

Each class prepares one assembly per year which is presented to school and their parents. This may be on a theme from ‘The Way, The Truth & The Life’, or another area of study, but will always contain worship through prayers, readings and songs. Most class assemblies take place on Wednesday mornings at 9:15am.

### 4. Masses / Celebrations

#### Monthly/Termly Year Group Family Masses

Each year group prepares a Family Mass once per term in school and once per term at St John's Church. They should be related to themes for 'The Way, The Truth & The Life' and relevant readings for the week. Parents/Carers, Governors and members of the parish community are invited to attend.

Assemblies, including worship are planned throughout the year to celebrate special events in the Liturgical Year, such as Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Easter, or local and national events, such as Remembrance Day, Chinese New Year and our School Mission Days (see list of Celebrations/Masses Appendix 2)

A Welcome Mass takes place for all Reception children and their families at the start of the academic year.

## 5. Stay and Pray Reflections

Parents/Carers and parishioners are invited to special prayer times and quiet reflection during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

## 6. Staff Spirituality

Staff are invited to participate in "Collective Worship" in order to support and develop their own spirituality. This may be through the "The Way Truth Life" reflections, attendance and participation in school Masses and liturgies, diocesan training and in spirituality INSET.

Weekly staff meetings and all training sessions begin with a quiet reflection/ prayer time for staff

## Resources

Each class has an altar draped in the colours of the liturgical year, a class bible, a cross, appropriate statues and a candle. A class Collective Worship box contains a wide range of resources that can be rotated on a regular basis and a small section kept on each class altar to form a focal point for class collective worship. Every classroom also has a picture of the Pope and a large cross on display. There are also other books available e.g. prayer books, Praise, Listen

## Monitoring:

Each class collective worship and assembly is evaluated by the class teacher and children are encouraged to play a part in this process knowing that their views are valued and respected.

Examples of Collective Worship Files and photographs are to be given to the RE Coordinator on a regular basis as part of the monitoring process. Observations of Collective Worship will be undertaken by the Headteacher and RE Coordinator once a year, to consider whether it meets the needs of our children and whether it reflects the aims and mission of the school.

Training for Collective Worship will be part of the induction process for all new staff.

This policy has been presented to the Governing Body and will be reviewed every two years.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner if necessary.

*The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that all our school policies take account of the nine protected characteristics. We strive to do the best for all of the children and staff irrespective of age, disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender reassignment, religion/belief, marriage/civil partnership or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.*

*We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of our policies on equality and the possible implications for pupils with these protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.*

Agreed by Governors on: 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2018	Reviewed: 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
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## ASSEMBLY GUIDELINES

The focus of the assembly should arise out of a topic you have explored – e.g. a theme from ‘The Way, Truth and the Life’, Liturgical Feast or Season or other work the children have done.

Parents should be invited with a written invitation.

Ensure that seating is made available for visitors and have someone ready to welcome them and offer them a seat.

The celebration should be relevant to the topic and be no longer than 15/20 minutes of quality celebration.

Where display is used it needs to be appropriate to the assembly and of a high quality.

A reflective focal point – e.g. flowers, candles, and artefacts should be arranged.

Atmosphere should be created by a suitable piece of music as people enter the hall.

### THE ASSEMBLY SHOULD INCLUDE: -

A welcome for everyone

Several elements to put across the theme, these can include story, drama, dance, movement, poetry, reflection, music, singing, Bible readings and most importantly **PRAYER**.

These can be offered by individuals, parts of the group, or the group as a whole.

Children should be encouraged to speak out clearly, confidently and loudly.

Audience could be involved in some way e.g. prayers and song.

The assembly should conclude with a piece of music or hymn or appropriate way of leaving assembly.

### Central Resources available for Assemblies

Cross  
Candles  
Plants  
Materials  
Selection of music  
Listen! – Songs and Poems from the Bible  
Praise! – Themes from the Bible  
The Way, Truth and the Life Programme  
Assessment Resource Books  
IWB  
Piano  
Hymns  
Posters  
Selection of Artefacts

### **YEAR GROUP MASSES**

There is a year group mass held on a Thursday every month. Each year group is responsible for the preparation of this mass. Fr Paschal leads the celebration. There is also a Family Mass once per term on a Tuesday at St John's Church led by Fr Bernard. Support and help should be sought from the RE Leader.



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP BOX CONTENTSDrapes for the Liturgical Year:

Green – Ordinary Time

Purple – Advent and Lent

Red – Pentecost, Easter, Epiphany

Gold – Easter and Christmas

White – Easter, Christmas, Baptism

Collective Worship File

Records of Collective Worship

Colour coded cards – Gather, Word, Response, Go Forth

A3 Laminated Collective Worship Planner/ A4 Collective Worship Y2 Planner

Living the Seasons of the Liturgical Year Information Booklet

Seasons of the Liturgical Year

Artefacts

Cross

Candle

Holding Cross

Statues

Rosary

Bible

Prayer Book

Pictures

Prayers

Music (Network)

Pebbles, stones, feathers, hearts, shells

Chime/ Handbells

## Seasons of the Liturgical Year

(Using the correct colours and symbols  
when creating focal points)

**Advent:**

**Colours:** Purple – representing Expectation, Purification, or Penance.  
*Bible, Candle and Advent Wreath, Jesse Tree.*  
*use a small plant or flowers in bud to represent waiting' for the birth of Christ.*



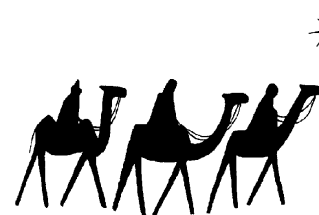
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**Christmas**

**Colours:** White or Gold – representing Joy and Triumph.  
*Crib, Holy Family, no Kings yet, shepherds, (cattle, sheep optional). Holly to speak of Crown of Thorns to come, ivy to represent The Trinity.*

**Epiphany:**

**Colours:** Red, representing Royalty, Fire and Martyrdom. *Three Kings in crib with gifts, stars.*

**Baptism of Our Lord:**

**Colours:** White or Gold  
*Bible, candle, water. Could use flowers or plant with white and yellow colours to represent innocence and kingship.*

**Ordinary Time:**

**Colours:** Green – a sign of Life and Growth.  
*Bible, candle, seeds or glass tube with growing plant in to show growth. Or anything from nature or human life showing the promise of growth.*

*Another focal point could show further growth and individuality by having different heights of candles set in a bowl of sand, or adding to the glass tube theme with another single plant showing the root etc.*

**Ash Wednesday**

**Colours:** Purple – penance  
*Bare rough cross draped with purple cloth.*

**Lent:**

**Colours:** Purple – penance  
*Take a theme from one of the Lenten Gospel Readings and use symbols mentioned in the reading to describe the story e.g. Lazarus.*

**Holy Thursday – Last Supper**

**Colours:** White or Gold  
*Use the Gospel reading and have a cross, bowl of water,*

**Washing of the Feet :**

*towel and sandals to highlight the reading with bible opened at that Gospel.*



**Easter Sunday -  
Beginning of the**

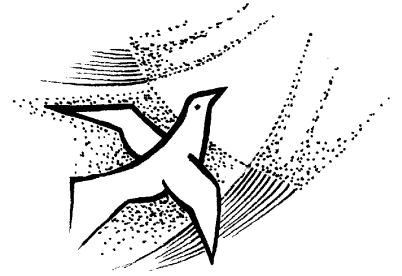
**Colours:** White, Gold

*Use symbols representing the Risen Christ, e.g. an Easter Season: picture of the Resurrection, white and gold cloths, Paschal Candle, bible, flowers. For children use small Easter chicks coming out of their eggs.*

**Pentecost Sunday:**

**Colours:** Red, representing Royalty, Fire and Martyrdom.

*Use a picture of Pentecost with flowers, cloth, representing fire.*



**Ordinary Time:**

**Colours:** Green – a sign of Life and Growth

*Follow the theme of 'growing' using nature, objects, craftwork, pottery, unfinished needlework, schoolwork.*

**Holy Days:**

**Colours:** White and Gold – Joy, Triumph.

*Bible, candle with display taken from the Gospel of the Day.*

**Feasts of Mary  
May & October:**

**Colours:** Blue and white.

*Icon – Mary Mother of Jesus, Rosary, flowers, candles.*

**All Souls:**

**Colour:** Purple

*Paschal Candle, purple cloth, Holy Water as a Sign of Baptism and linked with final sprinkling of the coffin.*

# Year 2 Collective Worship Planner

Y2M

Date

Led by

Our chosen theme is ...



Our chosen value is ...



Our chosen song is ...



How shall we **gather** together?

What Bible reading shall we  
grow into?

How shall we **respond** to God's  
goodness?

What will our **mission** be from  
today's worship?

Questions we thought of ...



Any links we made ....



## Class Collective Worship

Class  
Led by,

Date

Gather

The Word

Response to the  
Word

Go Forth—Mission

What we thought

## ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE ACTS OF WORSHIP

Day	Collective act of worship	Group	Time
Monday	<u>Gospel Collective Act of Worship led by Class &amp; Class Teacher</u> This assembly involves a sharing of this week's Gospel story and message with prayers and songs. Teaching Staff to attend. (TA's where appropriate)	Whole School	10.10 10.30 am
Tuesday	<u>Class Collective Act of Worship</u> Each class timetables at least 10 minutes during the day for a reading, prayer and song based on an appropriate theme (Day/time may vary if assemblies change)	Individual Classes	10 minutes during the day when appropriate
Wednesday	<u>Whole School Assembly</u> The whole school gathers for prayer. This is followed by a theme based on specific areas of focus e.g. PSHE / Gospel values and how we share our lives together led by an appropriate member of staff. For some assemblies, staff maybe required to attend depending on the theme.	Whole School	10.10 – 10.30 am
Thursday	<u>Year Group singing</u> The whole school has 20mins singing time to teach new songs related to The Way, The Truth, The Life; or new hymns for special occasions / assemblies, or general song time.	Whole school	1.00 - 1.20pm
Friday	<u>Golden Book/ Attendance Assembly</u> This assembly begins with readings / prayers. Followed by a celebration of achievements of the week – those children whose names are in the Golden Book. The children are presented with stickers / certificates to celebrate achievement and raise self-esteem. Assembly starts/ends with a song.	Whole School	10.10 – 10.30 am

### Daily Prayers

All children participate in daily prayers in their own classrooms. These are first thing in the morning, before and after lunchtime and at the end of the day.

### Class Assembly

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### Monthly/Termly Year Group Family Masses

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