

Aquinas Catholic Academy Trust

Policy Document

All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. Isaiah 54:13

Policy: Collective Worship Policy
Prepared for: All Saints' Catholic Voluntary Academy

Approval

Approved by	Approval date	Review Date
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1 The nature of Collective Worship

Worship in the Catholic school/college, is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving worship, 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.

2 The place of Collective Worship in the life of our School

Collective Worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share and participate in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community of church;
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Those from other Christian backgrounds;
- Those from other world faith backgrounds;
- Those from other backgrounds who are admitted to the school under the categories agreed by the Governing Body as the admission authority.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain at a level or faith background appropriate to them.

3 The aims of Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship in our schools' 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 and reflect on their own beliefs and value systems;
- To respond to and celebrate life;
- To experience a sense of belonging and community;
- To develop a common ethos and shared value system;
- To enrich religious experience and the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the students;
- To grow in liturgical experience, understanding and skills;
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;
- To reinforce positive attitudes;
- To nurture and educate pupils/students on their journey and towards full and active participation in the liturgical life of their faith communities through as full as participation as possible;
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give meaning and worth to' life.

4 Principles

All acts of worship in the school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Give pupils/students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- Be appropriate to help personalize the experience;
- Be reflective, engaging and clear, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

5 Organisation of Collective Worship

- Themed acts of worship, based on the Church's liturgical calendar, are held in the Drama Hall and other identified venues each morning on a rota basis for Year groups, Monday-Thursday. The assembly rota is maintained in the chaplain's office.
- Voluntary Mass is celebrated every Friday during an extended break period.
- Prayers are offered every day in form groups during morning registration and at the end of the day.
- Specific masses to celebrate key events in the life of the school, e.g. All Saints' Day, Y11/13 Leaver's Mass, End of Year celebration plus masses in response to specific needs.
- Prayers are said each day in Form Tutor time unless students are in an assembly or Act of worship.
- All of these are supported and guided by the School's lay Chaplain

6 The planning, content and delivery of Collective Worship

- Masses are student-led supported by the Chaplain. Use is made of curriculum time in PSHE for preparation.
- Regular meetings of Chaplain and students at lunchtimes to plan liturgies.
- An assembly rota, including themes and leaders is planned at the start of each academic year and relates to the Church's seasons.
- Staff are supported by the assistant chaplain as required.

7 Legal requirements

We acknowledge the legal statutory requirement that a daily Act of Worship is provided for all pupils and students on the school's register. 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.

8 Provision for Act of Collective Worship post 16 (school leaving age)

Subsequent to the 2006 Education and Inspection Act the situation in relation to student post formal school leaving age in school or college if they are beyond formal school leaving age is:

Based on the 2006 Education Act on “Right of sixth-form pupils to be excused from attendance at worship”

(1) Section 71 of SSFA 1998 (which, in relation to religious education and attendance at religious worship, makes provision for exceptions and special arrangements and for special schools) is amended as follows:

(1A) If the parent of any pupil, other than a sixth-form pupil, at a community, foundation or voluntary school, requests that he may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at the school, the pupil shall be so excused until the request is withdrawn.

(1B) If a sixth-form pupil requests that he may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at a community, foundation or voluntary school, the pupil shall be excused.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including curriculum Religious Education.

In Catholic voluntary aided schools and colleges within the state sector, as with any all voluntary aided school, responsibility for the provision of Collective Worship along with the logistics for the provision for Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body and is delegated to the Head of School.

9 Recording

Collective worship is recorded:

- In a liturgy folder (Chaplaincy/Liturgy folder) to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- Through displays, collections of pupils’ contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

10 Monitoring and evaluation

An evaluation form is completed regularly. At least once a year the school’s provision of worship will be formally evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils/students and whether they are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

11 Celebration of Mass

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with pupils/students 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 young adults to participate will be maximized.

Students and staff will have the opportunity to celebrate Mass every Friday. Fr. Frank Higgins is welcomed into school to celebrate and often other members of the clergy concelebrate.

12 The coordinator for Collective Worship

Miss Vicki Mullen as Academy Chaplain will work with the Chaplain in:

- Coordinating, developing, supporting and preparing liturgy and prayer in the life of the school;
- Supporting tutors and pastoral staff;
- Liaising with local clergy and organisations;
- Arranging residential retreats;
- Being a focal point for spirituality in the school;
- Developing opportunities for pupils to put their faith into action and raising awareness of justice and peace.