



**St Augustine of Canterbury
Catholic Primary School**

Collective Worship Policy

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“Created by God to love and learn”

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Document Information

Author	Head Teacher <i>M Hillman</i>	Review Frequency	Every 2 years Subject to local education authority and/or national policy change
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Collective Worship Policy 2023

Mission Statement

St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School provides an education that inspires and nurtures God's children to succeed to their full potential as we are...

“Created by God to love and learn”

Collective Worship is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic tradition.

1 The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship.

1.1 The main aims of Collective Worship times are to provide the opportunity:

- To worship God.
- Participate fully.
- Enrich the religious experience of children and staff.
- Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- Encourage and develop a common ethos and shared values.
- Build a firm foundation in liturgy.
- Respond to and celebrate life.
- Contemplate something of the mystery of God.
- Explore and reflect on personal beliefs, spiritual and moral issues and reinforce positive attitudes.
- Reinforce prayers, which are a part of the Catholic tradition.
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'
- Support the broader curriculum through the use of art, music, dance, poetry, story, drama and other visual and oral means of communication.

2 Collective worship

- 2.1** We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school/ Key Stage/ class coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.
- 2.2** In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’, we normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of our faith. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.
- 2.3** While most acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions and their festivals that may be represented in the school and certainly in the wider community.
- 2.4** Mass celebrations will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. Opportunities for children to participate and plan parts of a mass will be encouraged.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

At Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word.
- Each class will celebrate an annual class liturgy

From Year 3 upwards worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite. Each class will celebrate an annual class mass

Whole school worship includes:

- Mass celebrated usually in church at the beginning and the end of each old term and on days of Holy obligation.
- Members of the school community – parents, governors, parishioners – are invited and are always welcome to attend our school masses and services held in the church.

3 Organisation of collective worship

- 3.1** We hold a daily act of collective worship. This forms part of each assembly, which includes the whole school.
- 3.2** We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to

behave in an appropriate way. We expect them to be quiet, thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings. Children are invited to pray, and to participate fully in hymns (unless parents exercise their right to withdraw their child – see section 4). We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, and sometimes candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

- 3.3** The assemblies are normally conducted by the Headteacher or other members of staff, but sometimes might be led by the children, school chaplain (parish priest), or other representatives of local religious groups.
- 3.4** We take the themes of our assemblies from the Gospel through the liturgical year, topical themes, school values, 'God Matters' and 'Values for Life' schemes of work, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the liturgical year. The themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum and may include elements of Catholic social teaching. We plan our assemblies in advance of the day they take place.
- 3.5** Our weekly 'Celebration' assemblies reflect the achievements, learning and values displayed of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised. St. Augustine's is a school that wants to celebrate success, and we shall continue to recognise the successes of all our children in our assemblies.
- 3.6** Each year there is a particular assembly and mass that parents are invited to attend by their children. These are called class assemblies. We encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements.
- 3.7** Governors' attendance at our assemblies and collective worship is always welcome.

4 Right of withdrawal

- 4.1** We expect all children to attend collective worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. However, the Governors will question any parent who wants to withdraw their child from worship given the faith nature of our school. As prayer occurs throughout the day, it would be untenable to keep removing any child at short notice and without suitable supervision.
- 4.2** The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

5 Monitoring and review

- 5.1** Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of a named school governor, who is also responsible for religious education. The governor concerned shall report findings to both the Headteacher and the governors.

Equality Impact Assessment - Groups that may be affected:

Are there concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for a positive impact x or n.a.
Age (young people, the elderly; issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		x
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication)		x
Gender reassignment (transsexual)		x
Marriage and civil partnership		x
Pregnancy and maternity		x
Racial groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers)		x
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)		x
Gender (male, female)		x
Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)		x