

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



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1. Introduction

Regular liturgical celebrations and daily prayers in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church, should be at the heart of school life. (A7.7) The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of learning and teaching should create time for the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and develop a mature spiritual life. (A8.7)

**From Christ at the Centre: A Summary of Why the Church Provides Catholic Schools,
Rev Marcus Stock STL MA, Director of Schools, 2005**

The Catholic School is essentially different and distinct from other institutions in both philosophy and practice. Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust recognises the importance of emphasising this distinctiveness in our acts of collective worship. To this end, our acts of worship are designed to:

- Foster and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ
- promote an appreciation of prayer, worship and liturgy
- encourage the participation of students so as to reinforce the unique worth of each individual within our community and also;
- in line with the Liturgical Calendar, the directives and the translations of the liturgical books of the Roman Catholic Church.

In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation and the Diocesan Memorandum of Understanding each school in the Trust must provide religious education and collective worship in accordance with the teachings, rites and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church and will be subject to the authority and direction of the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. The key areas of the distinctive nature of Catholic education are recorded in 'Principles, Practices and Concerns' as supplemented by 'The Common Good in Education' (Bishops Conference 1996), focusing particularly on the search for excellence as an integral part of the spiritual quest within oneself and within the wider community.

The Right to Withdraw

An Academy's Funding Agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for Acts of collective worship. Each student must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents/carers, or if in the Sixth Form they have decided to withdraw themselves.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and are not required to provide a reason for doing so.

Parents/carers will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the **headteacher** following a request of withdrawal in terms of:

- The elements of worship in which the parent/carer would object to the student taking part in.
- The practical implications of their withdrawal.

Alternative provision will be arranged for students who are withdrawn from collective worship.

- Alternative provision may involve religious worship relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:
- The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational collective worship with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.

Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative provision will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

The Trust's Funding Agreement also states that: 'Where a Mainstream Academy is designated with a religious character in accordance with section 124B of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) or further to section 6(8) of the [Academies Act 2010](#):

b) subject to clause 28, the Company shall comply with the requirements of section 70(1) of, and Schedule 20 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as if the Academy were a foundation school with a religious character or a voluntary school, and as if references to 'the required collective worship' were references to collective worshiping accordance with the tenets and practices of the specified religion or religious denomination of the Academy.'

c) the Company shall ensure that all quality of....the Academy's collective worship...are inspected. Such inspection shall be conducted by a person chosen by the Company and the Academy shall secure that such inspection shall comply with the requirements set out in any statutory provision and regulations as if the Academy were a foundation or voluntary school which has been designated under section 69(3) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 as having a religious character.

Collective Worship in a Catholic school is, however, more than just a legal requirement. It is central to Catholic education and is an essential part of the Trust's overall provision for prayer and worship. We are proudly Catholic in both senses of the word. Everyone in our community is invited to contribute to it and gain from it, regardless of faith, level of belief and commitment.

The inspection of the Trust's arrangement for the inspection for collective worship and RE shall be through Section 48 Inspections. The report on Religious Education is produced for the Bishop of Hexham & Newcastle, who under Canon Law 804 and 806, as the Diocesan Bishop he has responsibility for the schools in the diocese, and for the Governing Body of the schools concerned. *"The formation and education in the Catholic religion provided in any school is subject to the authority of the Church....the diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic*

schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of Religious Institutes". ([Canons 804, 806 Code of Canon Law](#)).

The Trust is a Eucharistic Community this means that we are a community rooted in the Catholic tradition, which gathers to celebrate Eucharist on a regular basis. The word "Eucharist" is a translation of the Greek word eucharistia, which means thanksgiving. Through sharing liturgical life and mutual support for one another, the trust is strengthened to live Christ- centred lives dedicated to spiritual growth and social commitment.

The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch." ([Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324](#))

In accordance with the [1988 Education Act](#) and the [DfE Circular 1/94](#), collective worship within the Trust provides opportunities for students and staff to come together as a community through daily prayer in the classroom, through participation in weekly assemblies and through other liturgical celebrations. Furthermore, through collective worship we are able to encourage students and staff to reinforce positive attitudes they may have within their community. We also highlight and try to change negative attitudes within our society to encourage a common ethos and shared values amongst all.

In accordance with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Local Governing Committee after consultation with the Headteacher.

Aims

The Trust aims to provide opportunities for students and staff to come together in community to worship God and to respond to the invitation from God to be in relationship with Him. Collective Worship reflects the traditions of our Church, taking into account the spiritual 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 and only experience of church.
- Those from other Christian traditions, faith communities or none.

We endeavour to do this by:

- Helping to develop the faith of each individual within our community;
- Promoting the belief that our Trust is a caring community;
- Giving students an insight into and understanding of Gospel values;

- Developing an understanding of the responsibilities the Gospel values place upon each individual within the community;
- Developing a sense of mission;
- Encourage those who form part of the worshipping community in church;
- Help those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Include students from other Christian traditions, or none or from other faith backgrounds; and
- Provide an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Therefore, the staff in all of the Trust schools gather as a community and briefing begins with a prayer/reflection to remind us all of God's presence among us. Pastoral tutors start each day with a prayer with their groups in registration.

2. Vision and Values of Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

The Trust has adopted the following vision and values to guide us in our mission and to underpin all that we do:

Our Vision:

Our schools will be places of excellence – providing service and witness to children, their families and the wider Catholic community, adding value as a family of schools and enriching the learning and experience of all our young people so they may achieve their full potential.

Our Values:

The following values underpin everything the Trust and our Schools will do:

BEING Just and Responsible: We seek to act justly, fairly and responsibly in all our relationships to ensure 'The Common Good' is upheld.

PROMOTING Spiritual and Human Development: We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

ACHIEVING Quality in Teaching and Learning: We believe everyone should gain dignity and self-worth through quality teaching and learning which allow all in our school community to excel.

SHOWING Respect for Every Person: We believe that all are created in the image of God and therefore we will respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person, promoting equality and celebrating diversity.

CREATING Community: We believe our schools to be faith communities where Gospel values of truth, honesty, forgiveness and reconciliation are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

COMMUNICATING: We value the views and opinions of the communities whom we serve and will actively engage and respond.

3. The Aims of Collective Worship at Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

- To reflect upon the mystery that is God;
- To provide opportunities for students and staff to come to know Jesus Christ through prayer and action;
- To heighten students' awareness of questions related to the ultimate mysteries of life and to explore the beliefs and commitments made by themselves and others in response to such questions;
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development with specific reference to the Catholic tradition;
- To respond to life's challenges, celebrate life's wonders and comfort and console at times of difficulty;
- To celebrate the richness and diversity of our God given creation and the responsibilities we have for its stewardship;
- To give opportunities for silent contemplation, reflection, personal response and prayer;
- To explore, reflect on, express, affirm, or challenge commonly accepted personal and social values and individually held beliefs;
- To express our faith as a Christian community thus reinforcing the sense of belonging, the development of community spirit, the promotion of a common ethos and the reinforcement of positive attitudes;
- To provide staff and students with opportunities to worship God, hence enabling individual spiritual moral development; and
- To offer students the opportunity to prepare themselves for challenges in their adult life.

To fulfil these aims we will:

- Ensure the Act of Worship is seen as part of the total curriculum, an integral part of the life of the school and seen to be important;
- Adopt an approach that is based on educational principles which aid the spiritual development of individuals. Therefore the form, shape and content will be educational;
- Respect the integrity of the individual, to give the opportunity to participate creatively and encourage each to make an individual response to a shared experience;
- Build up accessible resource materials for use in assemblies and the daily act of worship;

- Experiences of prayer and worship will be high quality, reflecting the liturgical seasons and feasts of the Church.
- Endeavour to provide a physical environment that is conducive to the above;
- Involve a wider combination of staff, students and relevant members of the community in assemblies; and
- Provide an opportunity to review Collective Worship.

Role of Trust Head of Catholic Life

The Trust Head of Catholic Life acts as a resource to support Lay Chaplains and Chaplaincy Teams. Their role is to provide:

- Training and support
- Point of contact
- Identify and meet the training needs of those involved in chaplaincy in our schools
- Oversee spirituality timetables
- Assistance with sacred spaces
- Opportunities to meet and discuss ideas and problem-solve together
- Assistance with the planning and preparation of key Liturgical celebrations including major feasts and seasons across sectors
- Resources for websites

The Trust Head of Catholic Life will work with school Chaplains and those with responsibility for co-ordinating collective worship to develop ideas to:

- Make prayer engaging and meaningful
- Increase involvement of our young people in the prayer life of their school
- Develop whole Trust MAT spirituality events including retreats and liturgies

The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship

The role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship is detailed at **Appendix 1**.

The Coordinator for Collective Worship is Sarah McGee, supported by Leadership Link, Claire Pullen, Assistant Headteacher.

Organisation of Collective Worship

The organisation of collective worship is detailed at **Appendix 2**.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator. It is evaluated and reviewed by the Headteacher, members of Senior Leadership Team and the Collective Worship Co-ordinator with the whole school teaching staff and Governors every two years.

The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of students
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles
- Establishing and leading a planning group to include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputies, staff, students, governors and school chaplain.

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Collective Worship
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents/carers, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

Organisation of Collective Worship

Planning, content and celebration

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents/carers are invited to participate in some celebrations.

The timetable of Collective Worship is as below:

PREP

Every morning students spend 15 minutes with their tutor in their pastoral base. We call this time PREP, which stands for prayer, registration, equipment and planner. Every year group follows a format which allows for collective worship each day; gospel reflection, candle reflection, tutor reflection, student reflection and an assembly.

The gospel reflection is prepared by the School Chaplain and is based on that week's Sunday Gospel. The candle reflection allows for a moment of quiet reflection. The tutor and student reflections are led by and prepared by either the tutor or individual students on rotation. The assembly takes place in the Main Hall and is delivered by either a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Head of Year or the School Chaplain. An example of the PREP format is below:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/14bQnQR7FyLSvHrny0F4FXJb1IBGMnPv2jzhrNmdE3o/edit#slide=id.g95b4b2a715_1_0

Prayer themes for Assemblies and PREP

Each theme for the week is based on the Sunday Gospel. There is an excerpt from the Gospel along with the full Gospel reference. Themes for 2020/21 are below.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RmzGpBDyWNMs_MM-i2B7qMLfEj4xrF3VHZzHzkrNTIU/edit?usp=sharing

Recording

When a student is delivering Collective Worship in their PREP time, this is recorded in their student planner.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Collective Worship is monitored and evaluated each year through the Learning Improvement Plan. Catholic Life, Collective Worship and Religious Education are priority one on the LIP.

We monitor Collective Worship through learning walks during PREP. The Leadership Team, Pastoral Leaders and school Chaplain support the year teams in the delivery of collective worship.

Staff are new to the school are provided with professional development and training during their induction. Learning walks help to identify training needs so that further support can be provided where necessary. Following monitoring, priorities are identified and addressed as part of the LIP.

The Learning Environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'¹

Our School proudly displays many symbols of our Catholic Ethos. Much of our artwork has been created by students, members of our parish community and the wider community. Our Mission Cross, which is located in our Main Reception, illustrates our strong partnerships with our Catholic primary schools and parishes within the Escomb Partnership.

A crucifix is displayed in every classroom and communal area. The Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary are displayed in classrooms.

Our Main Reception has an abundance of artwork which defines our **Learning Community Guided by Gospel Values:**

A strong Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of school life. The personal commitment to their faith shown by the headteacher, leaders and staff is having a profound effect on the atmosphere and learning environment. The warm and genuine welcome given to visitors is typical of the sense of nurture found to be offered to the pupils.

There is a vibrant and welcoming entrance hall where the visitor is left in no doubt that this is a Catholic school. Beautiful art work created by pupils and staff is of a very high quality and reflects strongly the Catholic nature of the school.²

Developing Parish Links

The school has established strong parish links and the Headteacher and School Chaplain regularly attend the Escomb Partnership meetings. Fr Dennis Tindall is a Governor of the school. Both Fr

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

² Hexham & Newcastle Diocesan Inspection Report - Oct 2019

Tindall and Ann Wake, the Chair of the Local Governing Committee, are the Governor links for Catholic Ethos.

Prayer

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Throughout the year Liturgy/Reflection/Mass is offered to students. The styles of the liturgy vary and are age appropriate. A variety of themes are used to engage, inspire and provide spiritual reflection and comfort. The school Chaplain meets with Heads of Year, tutors and Parish Priest(s) to determine the style of prayer, theme and focus for the occasion and the year group.

Prayers and reflections are shared with staff at every face to face briefing and on every written briefing. Staff deliver prayers / reflections as part of a staff briefing rota.

Staff are invited to attend staff Liturgy/Mass each Friday morning at 8.30am. The Liturgy/Mass gives staff the opportunity to reflect on the previous week and to pray together as a community.

Prayer provides great comfort to our community, particularly in challenging, difficult and sad times.

Daily Worship

Every morning students spend 15 minutes with their tutor in their pastoral bases. We call this time PREP, which stands for prayer, registration, equipment and planner. Every year group follows a format which allows for collective worship each day: gospel reflection, candle reflection, tutor reflection, student reflection and a year group assembly.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/14bQnQRe7FyLSvHrny0F4FXJb1IBGMnPv2izhrNmdE3o/edit#slide=id.g95b4b2a715_1_0

Retreats / Pilgrimages

Each year group is offered the opportunity to attend an in-house day retreat (compulsory) and a residential retreat with the Youth Ministry Team at the Emmaus Village(optional).

The day retreats take place within the school and the theme is discussed with the year team. A planning team is assembled to determine which activities/workshops/prayers would be suitable and topical.

Residential retreats take place at the Emmaus Youth Village and at the SVP Camp on Holy Island. Students from Years 7 to Year 11 are invited to visit the Emmaus Youth Village and Years 12 to 13 are invited to visit Holy Island.

We offer a biannual Easter pilgrimage to Lourdes.

An annual residential Staff Retreat takes place at the Emmaus Village and this is always well-attended as it provides an opportunity for staff to reflect and enjoy the support and comfort of one another, thereby strengthening our community.

Feast Days / Holy Days of Obligation

When a Feast Day or Holy Day of Obligation falls during school time, arrangements are made to celebrate Mass, where appropriate or alternatively, the whole school will participate in liturgical celebrations.

Chapel

We are blessed to have a sacred space in school. The chapel is a calm and special place within the centre of our school and is used regularly for student and staff prayer as well as private reflections.. We have reservation in the chapel which is respected by all students and staff.

Student groups visit the chapel during RE lessons, especially when teaching the Eucharist.

Charity

Students and staff are incredibly generous and welcome the opportunity to support international, national and local charities.

Year Groups adopt charities and, as a school, we have key charities that we support which are pertinent to our community such as the Great North Air Ambulance and Cancer Research/Macmillan.

As a Catholic school we also support CAFOD and actively take part in each of their campaigns with St John's students who have trained to become CAFOD Young Leaders.

Our Sixth Form charitable expedition (Project Peru / Project Kenya) raises funds to provide support for the poor and marginalised in poverty-stricken areas.

Holy Mass & Celebration of Sacraments

Throughout the academic year, each year group students and all staff have the opportunity to celebrate Mass as a community. Several weeks before the Mass, each pastoral group takes part in a preparatory liturgy, which takes place in the Chapel. Following preparations, Year Group Mass takes place in the Main Hall.



At the beginning of Advent and Lent, students and staff have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation. Parish Priests are invited into school to administer the Sacrament and this is well received by staff and students alike.

Sacramental Preparation: Supporting Parishes

Students in Year 9 and above are invited to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. We work closely with our parishes to help with sacramental preparation and several catechists support students in school and at our local churches during these sessions.

Resources

A wide range of resources are used to support Collective Worship. For further details please contact Emma Ramsey, school Chaplain.