



Prayer and Worship Policy 2024-2025

Together, as God's family we are learning through love, forgiveness, respect and compassion to use our unique gifts, challenging and transforming our world.

OUR AIMS

This Policy for Celebration of the Word at St Williams is underpinned by our school mission statement. So that our school is authentically and distinctively Catholic, we are called to witness as 'A Worshipping Community.' We provide rich and varied worship opportunities throughout the year, in small, class based and larger groups. These create a strong sense of community and service to each other. Our inclusive worship helps pupils to grow in confidence in prayer and develop a relationship with God. We use the Word of God as a resource for the nurturing spirituality of the child through quiet meditation, imaginative responses such as drama and role play and group reflection. We gather together regularly as a whole school to celebrate together and to show the glory and activity of God in our lives. Through this worship we are led to reflect, meditate and pray, which reflects the spirituality of our whole school community. Collective worship is part of every week timetable. Pupils participate in liturgy in a meaningful and enjoyable manner, both in the classroom and in larger settings.

As a school we aim:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To consider and celebrate the values of the gospel
- To explore their own beliefs and respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and explore Christian values
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers
- To reinforce positive attitudes and participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. These acts of worship are not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

OUR APPROACH TO COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

At St Williams, we strive to establish a quiet and prayerful atmosphere using the 'Gather, Listen, Respond, Go Forth' approach for our Celebration of the Word. We plan for the themes of Collective Worship by considering the following in our detailed plan for provision, which is shared with all members of our school community; Gospel themes, our Mission Statement, Holy Days, Special Liturgical celebrations and occasions and other times that are significant in the Christian Calendar. We ensure that the 'listen' element has appropriate scripture and that during 'respond' the children are given the opportunity to voice their responses/feelings/prayers.

Gather – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)

Listen – liturgies will normally centre on scripture from the Bible from which The Word of God will be proclaimed.

Respond – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The action may vary (dance, music, drama, art, poetry etc.).

Go Forth – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

Organisation

Whole school Collective Worship – RE lead (Deputy)/ Head teacher/ Assistant head

Class Collective worship – Class teacher/Children

Class prayers – led by children

Catholic Social Teaching assemblies – Individual classes

Prayer Experiences

Pupils are introduced to a variety of forms and styles of prayer, which are developed in ways which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. These may include:

- Traditional Prayers e.g. Hail Mary
- Repetitive prayer phrases
- Praying the psalms "I thank you for the wonder of my being." (Psalm 139)
- Scripture – reflections on this
- Bodily prayer – genuflecting

- Prayer of the heart – stillness “Be still and know that I am God.”
- Contemplation - Gestures e.g. the sign of the cross and the sign of peace
- Hymns, both modern and traditional
- Music – listening to quiet reflective music or other
- Litanies – e.g. Thanks be to God
- Processions – Gospel processions with sung acclamation
- Prayer services and liturgies
- Celebrations – gathering in prayer, song, scripture, sharing food and celebrating all aspects of life

Development in Prayers

EYFS (3-5 years)

- The sign of the Cross
- School prayers
- The Lord’s Prayer
- Hail Mary

Key Stage One (5-7 years)

- The sign of the Cross
- The Lord’s Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory be
- Grace before meals
- Grace after meals

Lower Key Stage Two (7-9 years)

- The sign of the Cross
- The Lord’s Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory be
- Grace before meals
- Grace after meals
- The Apostles’ Creed
- The Act of Contrition
- Angel of God
- Come, Holy Spirit

Upper Key Stage Two (9-11 years)

- The sign of the Cross
- The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory be
- Grace before meals
- Grace after meals
- The Apostles' Creed
- The Act of Contrition
- Angel of God
- Come, Holy Spirit
- The rosary
- The Magnificat
- Act of Faith
- Act of Hope
- Act of Love

RESOURCES

All classes contain a focal point for prayer and worship, updated regularly to ensure it is in line with the RE curriculum or particular liturgical celebrations through the year. This can be as an R.E. wall display and an area made up of Bibles/prayer books/books, candles, artefacts and children's work. Each class shares a Prayer and Liturgy resource box, so children have access to a wide variety of resources to enhance their worship experiences.

Collective Worship is recorded on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources. As the children progress through the school, they take on increasing ownership of the delivery of sessions. Prayer and Liturgy may also be captured in floor books which contain collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs etc.

PUPIL LEADERSHIP

Our Pupil leadership teams (GIFT/CARITAS/ECO/COUNCIL) help us at St Williams to live out our Mission and will take part in the planning, delivery and evaluation of school celebrations throughout the year. The GIFT team meet weekly with the RE Lead to plan and deliver the Gospel assembly. The Caritas Ambassadors, Eco team and Student Council all have planned opportunities throughout the year, as outlined in our provision plan, to contribute to whole school worships.

EUCCHARIST

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children 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 children to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to “The Welcome Table. Planning Masses with Children” which contains the complete text of the Church’s ‘Directory for Masses with Children’ as a basis for our practice.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach. In school, therefore, the ‘Liturgy of the Word’, rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

At 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

Pupil led worship At Key Stage 2 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
- pupil led worship

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The school’s provision for prayer and collective worship will be evaluated regularly to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils, its impact and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. The primary responsibility for monitoring prayer and worship will lie with the RE and Faith Life team.

At least once a year the school’s provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Policy reviewed and updated: September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

