



ST VINCENT'S SCHOOL

A Specialist School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Policy Document Title:	Collective Worship Policy
To be read in conjunction with:	Religious Education Policy
Updated:	09/23 RB
To be reviewed:	09/24

The focal points of collective worship in our school are:

- A caring atmosphere.
- Mutual respect.
- Achievement.
- Self-Worth.
- Individuality.
- Education
- Valued.
- Celebration.

As a Catholic school we encourage people to explore God and his Creation. Worship therefore is an essential part of religious experience and is an important and significant part of school life here at St Vincent's.

Aims of Collective Worship.

At St. Vincent's we aim to provide collective worship that will support the philosophy of our Mission Statement. Collective worship will therefore be:

- Central to our Catholic Education and form an essential part of our overall provision for prayer and worship.
- Designed to have Christ at its heart and centred on his command to 'love one another.'
- Ever mindful that the use of the word 'Catholic' is not exclusive to pupils of that one faith, but all embracing of other faiths.

- Respectful of the diversity of belief and commitment by the celebration of cultural and religious aspects of other world faiths, so that we ‘honour all faith traditions and beliefs.’
- Conducive for the worshipping community to reflect on spiritual and moral issues, and on personal belief.
- Respond to the celebration of life, enhanced by carefully prepared acts of worship that will enrich the religious experience of children and staff.

How these aims are met

Worship at St Vincent’s will be expressed in a variety of ways:

Prayer - Pupils are encouraged to explore a variety of methods of private, individual and group prayer in both formal and informal settings.

- Pupils can use the school Chapel if they so wish for private meditation, as long as they inform staff of their whereabouts. The chapel is open all day, every day
- Pupils and staff are encouraged to prepare their own prayers either for private or public use.

Liturgies - The celebration of the Eucharist is a very important part of worship in the Catholic Church. There are also other forms of liturgical experience, sacramental and non – sacramental.

- These have an educative value in themselves and also help individuals to deepen their understanding of worship.
- All liturgical celebrations will encourage active participation whenever possible with both staff and pupils. Special Masses are celebrated by all, for example St. Vincent’s Feast Day Mass or Masses celebrating the receiving of Sacraments of Holy Communion or Confirmation.
- Services of Reconciliation may be held during Lent as well as other services such as those commemorating Holy Week .
- Liturgies are thoroughly prepared by the Pastoral Group in terms of readings, hymns, provision of altar breads and wine when needed and the preparation and decoration of the chapel..

- Liaison takes place between the staff music group, regarding the choice of music for all services and the rehearsal of hymns to be played and sung.
- All members of the St. Vincent's community are welcome to participate in our liturgies

Daily Act of Worship.

- When the children arrive at school on Monday morning and just before they leave school on Friday we have a whole-school assembly, in the chapel. These are led by the RE subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, the RE subject leader provides all staff with a reflection based on Christian values and sometimes values shared with another world faith. These reflections look at how these religious values can inspire us in everyday life, by using scenarios from the worlds of Science, History and Citizenship. First thing in the morning, pupils from the secondary department gather in the chapel to listen to these reflections and to pray.
- Collective Worship must not be counted within the 10% of the time allocated for the teaching of R.E. Therefore 10 minutes each day, outside of the actual teaching timetable, is taken with an act of Collective Worship.
- Any school messages, which have to be given, to assembled pupils and staff during a whole-school assembly, are discrete from, and sensitive to the act of worship and take place at the beginning of the assembly before worship has started.

Preparation for Collective Worship

- The programme for weekly assemblies is drawn up by the RE Co-ordinator and distributed to staff at the beginning of each term.
- The whole school assemblies are based around the Church's liturgical year whilst at the same time ensuring that our Ecumenical faith tradition is also catered for and World Faith and other national special days, are celebrated.
- The termly timetable of assemblies is posted on the Chapel notice board for the whole school community to be aware of.

Expression

- Collective Worship is expressed in a variety of ways:
 - Reading
 - Music
 - Drama
 - Art and craft
 - Any suitable cross – curricular dimension
- At all times the focus is on the expression of a religious message.
- We are particularly sensitive to the need of expressing the Friday Collective Worship in a style that is all inclusive of all ages represented. With careful planning, preparation, thought and expertise, this is achieved, so that each person present receives a valuable worship experience.

Involvement

All pupils are invited to participate in all aspects of collective worship regardless of ability. It is our aim to encourage all pupils to want to be involved.

RE Staff, Pastoral Group & Collective Worship

- The RE subject leader and staff in the Pastoral Group, will offer their experience, skills and advice in the preparation of collective worship.
- There are resources that are available to all and staff may use their own resources.
- The RE department maintains links with local priests who may assist in acts of worship. In addition links with CAFOD and Vincentian communities are firmly maintained.

Evaluation

We aim for prayer, worship and liturgy to be real educational experiences, and for them to contribute successfully to the development of faith in each individual in the community.

Evaluation of the provision must also be part of the process:

- What is the quality of our collective worship?

- Are staff and pupils motivated to participate?
- Is the philosophy of the Mission statement and its aims apparent in all that we do?
- How far is the content relevant to our Christian lives and the lives of other faith groups?
- Is the school drawing upon the rich variety of cultures, traditions and backgrounds of its members?
- Is the school continually resourcing quality collective worship?
- Is the community encouraged to contribute appropriate skills and gifts in a spirit of offering and sharing?
- In our provision are we sensitive to the personal, social and religious needs and abilities of everyone? Does it reach out to those who have no faith?

These questions form the basis of annual review by the management of the school. Any necessary updates to this policy may be made after this review.

Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development

Collective worship provides opportunities for pupils and staff to come together to worship God, support one another and pray for the wider community and for guidance. In this way it contributes to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of each student

Citizenship and Collective Worship

Collective Worship also promotes the importance of Citizenship. Through Collective worship, it provides learning opportunities for pupils from Early Years/Foundation Stage through Key Stages 1 to 4 and for pupils in the post 16 sector to gain knowledge, skills and understanding, necessary to play an effective role in local, national and international citizenship.

Collective Worship therefore:

- Helps all pupils become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens, aware of their duties and rights.

- Promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, allowing pupils to become self-confident and responsible both in and beyond the classroom.
- Encourages all our young people to play a helpful part in the life of the community of St. Vincent's, the local community and the wider world.
- Encourages respect for different national, religious and ethnic groups .and their traditions.
- Develops the pupils' ability to reflect on issues and take part in discussions
- Initiates interest and curiosity in spiritual, moral and cultural issues and events and promotes learning.