



St.Cuthbert's
Roman Catholic Academy Trust

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Collective Worship Policy



St Thomas More VC Academy

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Produced by: St Cuthbert's RC Academy Trust

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Mission Statement

“Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength and love your neighbour as you love yourself.”

(Mark 12:30-31)

St Thomas More VC Academy exists to help parents and carers educate children spiritually, morally, physically and academically as well as possible.

We aim to be a truly Christian community, where our relationships are built on encouragement, concern, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our religious life is rooted in the faith, practice and moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each person in our community is specially valued and has an important part to play in making sure that we live out our mission.

The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

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

Collective worship takes into account the religious 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 – or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

The Aims of Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship in our school 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 their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully

Principles

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church¹. In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - be short and appropriately paced.
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Collective worship in our school will be:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- recorded
- monitored
- evaluated

Collective Worship takes place every day and fully supports and promotes our Catholic Christian traditions:

Monday	Whole School Collective Worship ~ based on the Liturgy of the Word from the previous Sunday
Tuesday	Classroom based liturgy
Wednesday	Hymn singing
Thursday	School collective worship led by Y6 liturgy leaders
Friday	Whole School Praise Assembly ~ celebrating children's work and achievements.



In addition to this weekly programme, there are opportunities to celebrate whole school liturgies (appropriate to the Church year).

- Children attend Mass in Church or School at special times in the year, as well as during Advent and Lent.
- Fr Dawson from the West Hull Parishes plays an active role in the school.
- Parents are encouraged to join us where appropriate and are welcome to share some of these celebrations.
- Each class will carry out a Share and Prayer session through the year, inviting parents to see their RE work and spend time in prayer.

¹ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9

Eucharist

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 '*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.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship is the Head of Primary Education from St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust, Mrs K Siedle, supported by Mr D Barwick, RE Co-ordinator.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed every two years. The Trust Directors in particular will play a most important role.

Appendix 1 - The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship.
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan.
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils.
- 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 Directors and head of school to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship.

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation.
- Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship.
- Informing the head of school of standards and developments in Collective Worship.

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Collective Worship.
- Reporting to and consulting with the Directors and Head of School 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, Directors and the parish community.
- Liaison with the school chaplain.
- Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre.

Professional development / Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship.
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back.
- 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.

Appendix 2 - 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.) 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.

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

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, “on a special occasion”.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Controlled School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Directors after consultation with the Head of School.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to ‘timetabled slots’ but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.