

St. George's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy



We are learning and growing together as God's family. We will always do our best to love and respect each other as we prepare for the future

Religious Education Policy and Handbook

St George's Catholic Primary School Our Vision Statement



Our vision is to build on our excellent foundation and continue to provide care, spiritual guidance and first class primary education for our children; an education which will equip them for their future learning.

We believe that self-esteem should be developed through achievement and development of talents. We are aspirational and ensure that children are successful and ready for the next step in their education and life journey.

We aim to ensure that pupils learn to take responsibility for their learning and their actions by developing and growing in their ability to be:

- Independent
- Resilient
- Respectful

We have high aspirations and we are determined to educate all of our children so that they can achieve success and maximise their capabilities.



We are committed to sustaining a happy school community with pupils, staff, governors, parents and parish, so that our children develop into successful young adults in their chosen path, within this rapidly changing world. We anticipate that that our children will look back with fondness and will be able to recognise that being a pupil at St George's Catholic Primary School played an important part in their lives.

RE Handbook

At St George's we will live out our Mission Statement,

- **Through the way we teach and learn**
- **Through our relationships and respect for one another, the children, parents and wider community**
- **Through our approach to behaviour and discipline which is based on Gospel values of forgiveness and restorative justice**
- **Through making prayer and worship an integral part of our daily life**
- **Through our concern for justice and peace in our world and for those less fortunate than ourselves**
- **Through following the key message of Pope Francis to help those in need**

| CONTENTS | PAGE NUMBER |
|--|--------------------|
| Mission Statement | 1 |
| POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION | 5 |
| Rationale of Religious Education | 5 |
| The Aims of Religious Education | 5 |
| Teaching and Learning | 6 |
| Curriculum skills/attitudes | 6 |
| Curriculum time allocation | 6 |
| CURRICULUM PLANNING – Programme of Study | 6 |
| Process | 7 |
| Methodology | 7 |
| Stages of Development | 7 |
| SEN/EAL | 8 |
| ASSESSMENT/RECORDING/MONITORING/REPORTING | 8 |
| Homework | 8 |
| Resources | 9 |
| Staff Development | 9 |
| MONITORING AND REVIEW | 9 |
| | |
| THE WIDER COMMUNITY | 9 |
| The School in the Wider Community | 9 |
| Parents | 10 |
| Other Faiths | 10 |
| Policy Review | 10 |
| | |
| POLICIES ON SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT | 11 |
| Spiritual Development Policy | 11 |
| Moral Development Policy | 13 |
| Social and Cultural Development | 15 |
| PSHE and Citizenship | 15 |
| | |
| POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP | 16 |
| The Role of the Co-ordinator | 18 |
| Why We Celebrate at St George's | 19 |
| PRAYER | 21 |
| Signs and Symbols for Liturgy with Children | 21 |
| Liturgical Development Table | 23 |
| Assemblies | 25 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation | 26 |
| Standards | 26 |
| The Role of the RE Leader | 27 |

POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We are learning and growing together as God's family. We will always do our best to love and respect each other as we prepare for our future.

Rationale of Religious Education:

- We believe Religious Education to be 'the core of the core curriculum.'
- We believe Religious Education is central to the educative mission of the Church.
- We are aware that evangelisation and catechesis are happening in our school for pupils, we are clear that the specific contribution Religious Education makes to the Catholic Life of the school is primarily educational and will be planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other curriculum subjects.
- We understand Religious Education to be the systematic study of the teaching of the Church and the mystery of Christ.

'At the heart of Catholic education lies the Christian vision of the human person. This vision is expressed and explored in religious education. Therefore religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process. The beliefs and values studied in Catholic religious education inspire and draw together every aspect of the life of a Catholic school..... All pupils have the right to receive an overall education which will enable them, in the light of the faith of the Church, to engage with the deepest questions of life and find reasons for the hope which is within them. Religious Education is, then, the core subject in a Catholic school.' (Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools – Bishops' Conference 2000)

'Religious Education...is a rigorous academic discipline, and as such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject.'
(Curriculum Directory. p10)

'The outcome of Religious Education is religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.' (Curriculum Directory p10)

The Aims of Religious Education

- to develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in life experiences
- to promote knowledge and understanding of Catholic faith and life and to assimilate and apply this knowledge and understanding to their lives
- to promote knowledge and understanding of the response of faith to the ultimate questions about human life, its origin and purpose
- to promote the skills required to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice
- to have respect for other people's views and to celebrate the diversity in society

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Curriculum skills/attitudes

Religious Education involves pupils not only in the attainment of knowledge and understanding, but also in the acquisition and deployment of skills. The acquisition of skills is essential as a means to increase knowledge and understanding.

The following skills are addressed:

- Investigation
- Interpretation
- Communication
- Critical
- Affective and social
- Evaluation
- Analytical
- Reflective

Through programmes of study, and the skills developed, we intend to help pupils to develop and grow in the gifts of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, right judgement, courage, reverence, awe and wonder.

Curriculum time allocation:

In line with Bishops' Conference recommendations, 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education. This does **not** include Collective Worship. Children must never be permitted to leave the classroom for any reason (e.g Interventions) during Religious Education lessons. Therefore careful consideration should be given to the timetable in each class.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Programme of Study:

To fulfil the above aims and to address the 4 areas of study outlined in the Curriculum Directory – Revelation, Church, Celebration and Life in Christ – we use the 'The way, The Truth and The Life' supplemented with other resources.

We believe that Religious Education is central to all learning that it permeates the entire curriculum and is not always kept to specific times. In planning the work we endeavour to ensure the aims as previously stated, are achieved.

We plan our Religious Education curriculum in accordance with the The Way, The Truth and The life Programme. We ensure that the topics studied build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the scheme of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school. The long-term plan maps the Religious Education topics studied in each term during each key stage. The Religious Education leader works out this plan in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. Sometimes we teach Religious Education topics in conjunction with other subjects, providing a cross curricular education.

Short-term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher.

The class teacher:

- Plans the topic to ensure achievement of the Learning Intentions.
- Selects appropriate activities for the whole class or groups of children
- Allocates 10% of the timetable for the Learning Outcomes to be achieved.

- Assesses the whole class once a term using the Age-Related Standards in order to support pupil's learning by offering an account of educational progression.

Process

We teach Religious Education through the process of Search, Revelation, Response. It follows the pattern of: The human **search** for meaning, God's initiative in **Revelation** and the **response** in faith.

'Teaching in Religious Education ...should help people be attentive to the meaning of their experiences, illumined by the light of the Gospel, so that they may respond to God more fully. Experience can also make the Christian message more intelligible.' (Curriculum Directory p11)

Methodology

A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils. Religious Education is the central focus of all our education and so involves a wide range of teaching methods and active learning opportunities.

Classroom organisation should include an area for quiet reflection and a central focus for classroom worship.

Religious Education enriches work in all areas of the curriculum and will include the coverage of wider issues such as justice, poverty, war, living in a diverse society, crime, the environment and Catholic social teaching (Caritas in Action).

Our teaching and learning styles in Religious Education enable children to build on their own experiences and extend their knowledge and understanding. We use their life experiences to develop their religious thinking in order to "Relate" them to Christian understanding. We organise visits to local places of worship and invite representatives of local religious groups to come into school and talk to the children.

The children:

- Learn about:
 - The Scriptures
 - The tradition and teaching of the Church
 - Prayers, psalms, hymns and other expressions of Christian Faith
 - The lives of outstanding Christians and those from other faiths.
- Explore the above in creative and practical ways through drama, writing, poetry, song, Art, dance, music personal research and investigation and service of others.

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

We teach religious education to all children in the school from EYFS to Year 6.

Ages 2 -7

For these children, significant people in their lives are central. The "person" is the message. The focus for religious education is on:

- *Naming* without explaining – religious people, actions, feelings, objects
- *Imitating* the words, actions, feelings of significant adults
- *Belonging* by joining in

Ages 7 – 11

For these children, the Traditional becomes central. Story, told in a variety of ways, carries the message. The focus for religious education is on:

- *Behaviour* of religious people, what they say, feel, do

- *Research* collecting facts, exploring questions, discovering answers, memorising
- *Joining in* and belonging in a more conscious way/social justice

SEN/EAL

We recognise that all classes in our school have children of widely differing abilities and needs and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability or experiences of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways, for example, by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty
- Grouping the children by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group.
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child.
- Using Classroom Assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

As with all other areas of the curriculum, the purpose of differentiation in Religious Education is:

- To enable children to succeed in the set task or activity
- To challenge children beyond their comfort zone of knowledge, understanding and skills.
- To enable children to recognise their achievements and celebrate these

Assessment, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- Assessment focuses on progression of skills over a phase using the Standards for Religious Education documents.
- Each teacher keeps a record of assessed work and pupils' progress in books and on the school tracker (AT1- KS1 and AT1 and AT3 on OTrack).
- Monitoring of teaching and learning, work scrutiny, termly assessment of topic, lesson observations and modelling by R.E. Leader, Diocesan support.
- Progress and achievement in Religious Education is reported to parents/carers in a written report at the end of each academic year.

Certificates are awarded weekly across all stages during Friday Assembly to celebrate achievement, behaviour and thoughtfulness. Marking is done regularly and positively to direct the child in their understanding and faith journey and to set achievable targets.

The headteacher rewards two children per week for respect for others, living out our mission statement

HOMEWORK

Homework is carried out in line with the whole school policy. As a Westminster school we distribute the 'Wednesday Word'. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and respond as a homework task.

RESOURCES

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all our religious education units. We keep resources for religious education in a central store (the middle cupboard outside the staffroom). There is a set of bibles for each key stage and a collection of religious artefacts, which we use to enrich teaching in religious education. Each teacher has resources with cloths for the liturgical year.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff CPD is important part of our Religious Education development and the Religious Education leader attends termly deanery meetings as well as various courses to keep the staff informed of the latest discussions and initiatives.

Courses relating to spiritual development are made available to staff. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher attend the relevant conferences which enable them to discuss issues with other senior managers and with the advisers, to increase their own awareness of important issues and deepen their spiritual development as a leader in a Catholic school.

The Religious Education Adviser is invited to take part in training days and to visit the school regularly. She is available to advise all staff when appropriate, observing the teaching of Religious Education and sample some of the children`s work.

Visitors are invited to lead/join the staff in meditation and prayer.

There is at least one INSET per year regarding Religious Education.

All staff meetings begin with a prayer – the Religious Education leader provides a prayer rota for meetings.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Religious Education leader regularly reviews resources.

The Religious Education leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of the children`s work and the quality of the teaching in Religious Education. She is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of Religious Education, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The Religious Education leader presents the headteacher and Governors with a termly report which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further development. She has specially allocated NCT for carrying out the vital task of scrutinising the children`s work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

THE WIDER COMMUNITY

The School in the Wider Community

The school is an integral part of the parish community of St George`s, and the relationship is seen as one of mutual support. Links are strengthened as follows;

- The parish priest and assistant priest support the pastoral and spiritual needs of the school.
- The parish priest and assistant priest liaises termly with senior staff at our parish meeting.
- They support the teaching of Religious Education at the request of teachers.
- They support the school community in times of celebration and need.
- The school community joins the Parish for Mass (KS2 classes)
- Children are encouraged to become members of the Parish choir.
- Children take part in the Sunday children`s liturgy
- Several members of staff are Special Ministers of the Eucharist. The school supports the Parish in the preparation for Holy Communion and Reconciliation
- Children of post-First Holy Communion age are altar servers at school and at church
- Parish Catechists liaise closely with the school
- A large number of parents, teachers and Governors play practical and active roles in the life of the parishes.
- Parishioners visit school to pray the rosary with the children in October and May

PARENTS

We believe that the parents are the first educators and we can only do our job most effectively with their help and support. We endeavour to do this in an atmosphere of trust and confidence. During the year:

- Parents are encouraged to join us for Masses, Celebrations, Assemblies and Prayer.
- Information meetings for parents are held regularly
- The PSA organise various fund raising events
- Each year there are Parent Evenings, reports, termly Religious Education information leaflet, half-termly newsletters, Curriculum Coverage information to keep parents informed.
- We celebrate St George's Feast Day by having a Mass and the school community have strawberries and cream after school.
- Parents fully support our concerts, plays, sports days, school trips etc.

OTHER FAITHS

Two other faiths are taught from Year 1 to Year 6 . Two weeks teaching and learning time per year is given to other faiths. The teaching of other faiths will focus on the key teachings of one faith at a time. It will start from the religion`s own understanding of itself and an understanding of what it is to be a member of a particular faith community.

The other faiths are taught discretely. This means that each faith is treated with integrity and not by comparison or by isolated festivals. The teaching will be of the key concepts of that religion.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by *Staff and Governors and* updated every 2 years.

POLICIES ON SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

We see spiritual development as a life-long task in which we have the privilege of sharing and supporting our pupils. Their spiritual needs are met through a close working relationship with parents and parish.

“There are many moments in which we become aware of that “capacity for more”, moments in which we are invited or provoked into experiences or understandings which we never before imagined. A glimpse of beauty, an insight into truth, the inspiration of remarkable goodness are all such moments. They take us “outside of ourselves” in a way that hints at the literal meaning of the word “ecstasy” : to stand outside oneself.

(CES document “Spiritual and Moral Development Across the Curriculum”)

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

The notion of spiritual development has implications right across the curriculum, and at all ages. Every subject area will include in its general aims such objectives as the following:

- To sustain the self-esteem of pupils in their learning experiences;
- To develop the individual`s capacities for critical and independent thought;
- To foster the emotional life of the individual. Particularly in regard to being able to express one`s feelings, and to enlarge one`s appreciative range;
- To provide opportunities for the development of imaginative and empathetic experiences;
- To encourage the setting apart of moments for stillness and reflection;
- To provide learning material and situations that encourage moral responses and obligations towards other persons;
- To pursue issues that impinge upon what a “person” is and that give value and identity to human life.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

We have identified the importance of the following:

- Our school`s shared vision and shared values;
- Working together to achieve shared goals;
- Establishing a community where all are valued;
- Commitment to building sound relationships between staff, between pupils, and between pupils and staff;
- Consistency, in staff responses to pupils, behaviour policies;
- Having a shared understanding of spiritual development;
- Planning to allow opportunities for spontaneity;
- The use of circle time
- Pupil Chaplains
- School council
- House system
- Achievement Assembly, Headteacher and other times of assembly.

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

- Provide opportunities for active learning
- Circle time as a forum for expression of personal feelings and reflective prayer
- Class worship, which can build a sense of belonging

- Children to lead their own “thought for the day” – children can choose a focal point for the worship, choose some appropriate music, etc.
- Provide time for confidential support and opportunities for children to communicate with the teacher even if the teacher is busy. We have a school worry box which the Learning Mentor checks and follows up.
- Celebrate children’s work and ideas, thoughtful use of display areas, interactive displays, interest tables; draw children’s attention to detail.
- Group children together to cultivate sound relationships.
- Build into the timetable opportunity for reflection, stillness, quiet times – use a candle or other objects to signal quiet times.
- Use stories to promote spiritual development – build up a list of stories as you use them.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to share experiences. Be prepared, for these are not always pleasant experiences. Difficult times and crisis areas can make a significant contribution to children’s spiritual development.

SCHOOL WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Worship contributes to the spiritual development of pupils. It:

- Provides an opportunity for pupils to worship God;
- Celebrates all that is good and beautiful and expresses thankfulness for the joy of being alive;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them;
- Ensures that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the pupils;
- Gives time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space.
- Illustrates forms of worship that others have found helpful in their spiritual development, e.g. silent contemplation, dance, singing;
- Provides a rich variety of forms of expression, e.g. art, drama, music, story, and give pupils the opportunity to experience these at their own level rather than teachers imposing their own interpretations;
- Takes place in an environment that is conducive to worship, which is professionally coordinated and properly resourced;
- Always invite, never coerce, remembering that children will be at different stages of spiritual development and that they should feel able to respond and participate at their own level.

We involve the school in the spiritual life of:

1. Families, by open invitations to our assemblies, prayer services, Masses and sacramental programmes
2. The parish, by open invitations to all clergy.
3. The wider community, through communication with our Bishop and Diocese, visiting the Cathedral where we participate in the Good Shepherd Mass and the Christmas Mass and involving ourselves with all Church directives and teaching.

Teachers highlight opportunities for spiritual and moral development the school curriculum map.

Teachers have to be alert to catching the moment, at times we have to be intentional about planning opportunities, creating an appropriate environment and reflecting on our teaching style and approach.

Opportunities and experiences are identified across the curriculum to transcend the ordinary in pupil`s learning and to question and wonder as they learn.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

MORAL

Reflection on Jesus as the model of the Christian way of life will lead the children to explore moral issues. We aim to help children to have an understanding of the Gospel values to help them make moral judgements. Through our Behaviour and Discipline Policy and code of conduct based on love and respect for the individual, we aim to help children and support staff to develop their personal code of conduct and ways of living and working with others in a caring community.

We help children to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MORAL DEVELOPMENT?

We want to place recognition of the unique value of each individual as a child of God securely at the centre of the life of the school. We will help pupils recognise they are all pilgrims on a journey but they have tradition, the Church and the Gospel to support them. We are also committed to live out the challenge of Jesus` teaching.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

We help pupils to acquire skills and attitudes necessary for their moral development. These include skills needed to cope with life at home, school and in the community such as:

- the ability to listen to and to respond to others` points of view and to express their own appropriately;
- the ability to make good choices;
- the ability to make and sustain relationships and to cope confidently with new people and in new situations;
- the confidence to cope with setbacks and to learn from mistakes with resilience;
- the ability to act according to accepted codes of behaviour and boundaries so they feel safe;
- the ability to take the initiative and to act responsibly and with consideration for others;
- the ability to reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.

We promote pupils` moral development by providing opportunities for them to:

- reflect on moral rules, shared values and their importance for good relationships and social stability;
- analyse the consequences of their actions, both good and bad in terms of their own consciences;

- acquire and develop the qualities and attitudes that will enable them to become better human beings, to develop their feeling for others and to exercise the self-disciplines that will enable them to fulfil their potential;
- exercise moral reasoning in making real choices about how they should act;
- exercise judgement in right and wrong, examining the consequences of their own actions and those of others;
- discuss and debate ideas of right and wrong in relation to current issues.

Pupils moral development is actively promoted to develop understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the importance of doing what is considered to be right. Such understanding will:

- inform their thinking and actions and help them to become a better person;
- increase the willingness to make an effort to understand others;
- build their respect for themselves and others;
- enable them to engage in effective moral reasoning in the constant attempt to do what is right;
- help pupils reflect on weakness, failure and sinfulness as a part of the human condition;
- give a willingness to understand and take into account, with compassion, the beliefs, feelings, emotions and experiences of others;
- develop an awareness of the dangers of acting against their conscience;
- develop a preparedness to engage in self-examination, aware of the attractions of self-deception;
- grow the skills to be able to deal effectively with moral conflict and temptation;
- develop a willingness to make an effort to understand, and when necessary forgive, themselves and others.

Citizenship education supports moral development by:

- helping pupils to become content with the values and ethos of our school;
- being inclusive;
- improving the school environment;
- reflecting the school organisation and management;
- influencing the school organisation and management;
- influencing school relationships, pastoral care and guidance;
- being reflected in collective worship;
- reinforcing links between the school, the local community and other local schools.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The basis of our cultural and social education is inspired by the Gospels. These naturally reflect and flow from spiritual and moral education. We aim to lead the children to a deeper understanding of their moral, cultural and social responsibility for others and the world created by God.

We do this by:

- helping others in society and considering the most vulnerable;
- celebrating key dates/feasts of other cultures;
- teaching about Other Faiths;
- inviting people of other faiths and cultures to our school;
- visiting museums and other places to enhance our knowledge of other cultures.

We enhance the children`s social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values and in so doing, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PHSE) AND CITIZENSHIP

Through our religious education lessons, we teach the children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices and behaviour. So, for example, we contribute to the discussion of topics such as smoking, drugs and health education. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. Please refer to the PHSE curriculum mapping and our SMSC evidence statement.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Mission Statement

We are learning and growing together as God’s family. We will always do our best to love and respect each other as we prepare for our future.

THE NATURE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.¹ (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.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

THE PLACE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

We endorse the belief that 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.

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

THE AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life

¹ 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 need to 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.

- 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
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'and 'to give worth to.'

PRINCIPLES

All Acts of Worship in our school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.²
- Be appropriately paced for the children's attention span
- Include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

HOW COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS ORGANISED IN OUR SCHOOL

- liturgies and prayer times
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite
- the occasional celebration of sacramental liturgies
- a range of types of prayer
- a range of styles of celebration
- opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship
- opportunities for pupils to take leadership roles in worship

THE PLANNING, CONTENT AND DELIVERY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'The Way, The Truth and The life', significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship.
- A Liturgy of The Word Plan is used for significant Acts of Worship and is a requirement of each class once every term. (a copy to be given to the R.E. Leader).
- To develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

RECORDING

Collective Worship is recorded:

- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

RESOURCES

- Central RE cupboard artefacts and classroom artefacts.

Online resources are available at The Liturgy Office and Mother Theresa Website is excellent. Other examples can be found from Web Addresses for R.E. (available from the R.E. Leader). There are also music CDs and DVDs..

THE CO-ORDINATOR FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Ms Tuohy (has a defined role and responsibility for RE Leader as set out in the job description.)

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored and reviewed by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator in consultation with the Headteacher and governors every two years. RE Link Governor (Mon Jeremy Fairhead)

THE ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is included in annual action plan which will form part 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 governors and headteacher 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 headteacher and governors 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 governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as a support to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- 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

WHY WE CELEBRATE AT ST GEORGE'S

*Children are
seriously deprived in their education
if they are not given
regular opportunities for worship
to discover
the wonders and richness of life,
to open up avenues for people –
and no one is obliged to go down these avenues,
and no one should try and make anyone explore
them.
[Brenda Watson]*

WORSHIP has many elements.

1. Creating the right atmosphere is vital.

It can be difficult as it takes place in a room associated with other activities. These are a few hints which might help to create the right atmosphere.

A focal point for prayer

Each class has a prayer area which is a focal point for prayer.

This is a permanent feature in the classroom that changes to reflect:

- the liturgical year
- the current topic being explored
- and has a display which changes once a term in keeping with the above.
- a place for children to participate in spontaneous prayer

In selecting items to use in creating a focal point it is important to consider:

- the size of artefacts, ensuring they are of appropriate proportions for the setting;
- colour – the use of the appropriate liturgical colour should be considered:
gold or white – for feast days and the Easter Season.
red – for the Holy Spirit (Pentecost) and the feasts of martyrs
purple – for Advent
purple – for Lent and the expression of penitence
green – for ordinary time in the Church's year

The focal point is attractively presented with appropriate coloured drapes, posters, artefacts, statues, flowers, the Word of God and a candle. Children can add their own pictures, prayers they have written, artefacts they have made from lego or clay/other media

This is laying a foundation for developing an appreciation of symbol and is crucial for children's liturgical formation, because our liturgy is **full of symbol** – bread, wine, water, sign of peace, sign of cross.

- Comfort – Response is more likely to be positive if pupils are comfortable.
- Greetings and goodbyes The Lord be with you
 Sign of the Cross
 Lighting a candle
 An act of the presence of God
 Lighting and extinguishing a candle

2. Music and song (or silence)

- Set the scene
- Listening
- Meditative prayer
- Accompanied/unaccompanied
- Taped/live

The power of music and song makes for a profound way of praying. Some music is for listening and meditative prayer and other music captures the spirit and meaning of a topic that has been explored. Music can also be used to set the scene.

3. Word of God

- Procession
- Sing Alleluia
- Liturgy plan
- Signing forehead, lips and heart
- Proclamation of the Word can be enhanced through:

Singing, mime, drama

Using children's drawings as illustrations

Inviting children to share insights

Linking it to the children's own experiences

4. Drama and role play

5. Creating: clay, paints, dance, banners, posters, images, collages

6. Speech and Silence

Religious traditions have, over the centuries, taught the importance of outer silence and inner stillness for a life of prayer. If prayer is conversation, then we must learn to listen as well as speak. We have to learn to listen to the silences as well as the words. Silence is a tool to help us pray and as with all tools we have to learn the skill of using it.

Stillness and silence do not come easily, especially today when there is sound all around us.

Some children do not find it easy or think it desirable to accept the invitation to be quiet. So, silence is a gift we have to **teach** the children to use.

PRAYER

Prayer is a central part of our life at school. It is at the heart of our celebrations and is both planned and spontaneous.

“Prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.” (St. Therese of Lisieux)

Children are introduced to a variety of styles and forms of prayer:

- Blessing – using holy water
- Adoration – Bowing our heads at Eucharist
- Petition – asks for forgiveness and calls for the establishment of the Kingdom of God
- Intercession – asking on behalf of another
- Thanksgiving – Acknowledging the gifts which God has given
- Praise – praises God simply because He is.
- Praying the psalms – “I thank you Lord for the wonder of my being”
- Traditional prayer – Our Father, Hail Mary
- Repetitive prayer – Jesus I love you
- Meditation – Reflecting on scripture and using your imagination
- Bodily prayer – bowing, dancing, genuflecting, raising hands in praise
- Contemplation – Looking at trees, a sunset, an icon, work done in class
- Gestures – sign of the cross, sign of peace
- Hymns – be joyful, listening to quiet music, reflective music
- Litanies – Thanks be to God, For all creation
- Procession – Stations of the Cross, Gospel Alleluia
- Prayer Services and Liturgies – formal and spontaneous prayer using Holy water, candles and so on
- Celebrations – prayer, song shared food and drink, celebrating work done
- The use of visuals – images, art, banners, displays, flowers, candles, I.T. can all enhance the experience of prayer

Signs and Symbols for Liturgy with Children

1. **Signs and symbols** ~ water ~ oil ~ bread ~ wheat ~ wine ~ grapes ~ flour ~ baptismal robe ~ candles ~ appropriate coloured drapes ~ flowers ~ plants.
2. **Signing of the Cross** ~ on forehead “receive the cross of Christ” ~ on shoulders “that you may follow Jesus with courage” ~ on eyes “that you may see God’s beautiful world” ~ on lips “that you may speak his love” ~ on heart “that Jesus may live in your heart” ~ signing with water – thumb – oil ~ signing by teach – self – each other
3. **Naming** ~ sense of belonging – called by name – cards / badges

4. **Holding hands** ~ sign of communion – ‘Our Father’ and gestures
Striking breast ~ penitential rite
Sign of Peace
5. **Presentation of Light** ~ large Paschal candle – passed on ~ small candle – ‘let light shine’ – joy – spreading happiness
6. **Word of God** ~ Bible ~ reverencing ~ kissing ~ touching ~ flowers ~ light ~ Procession of Word ~ listening ~ responding with formulae using in the liturgy ~ signing forehead, lips and heart
7. **Scripture Reflection** ~ re-enactment ~ Responding to Living Out the Gospel
8. **Use of Silence**
9. **Gestures** ~ kneeling ~ bowing ~ genuflecting ~ laying on of hands ~ joining hands ~ lifting hands up ~ holding hands
10. **Holy Water** ~ bless ~ sprinkle ~ call by name to bless themselves
11. **Sharing a Meal** ~ hot cross buns and squash/ribena ~ setting table ~ candles ~
12. **Processions** ~ of Bible (decorated) ~ statue ~ cross ~ flowers ~ candles
13. **Sacred Images** ~ crucifix ~ statue ~ cross ~ pictures ~ paintings
14. **Ashes** ~ writing ‘sins’ ~ burning and signing with ashes ~ sowing seeds

LITURGICAL DEVELOPMENT

| Knowledge | Foundation | Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 | Key Stage 3 | Key Stage 4 |
|--------------------|--|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Formal oral prayer | Sign of the Cross Simple Morning and Evening Prayers Simple Graces-Grace before and After Meals Simple Litany style prayer Prayer reflection of the day Prayers for the blessing of the Advent wreath Prayers for the lighting of the Advent candles | Hail Mary Our Father Glory be Simple Act of Contrition Morning Offering Grace at Meals Come Holy Spirit Act of Sorrow | Those listed for KS1+ I confess Angelus Benedictus Magnificat Eternal Rest Act of Love Act of Contrition The Rosary Stations of the Cross | Hail Holy Queen Come, Holy Spirit Queen of Heaven rejoice Some psalms, e.g. Out of the Depths, I lift up my eyes Jesus, Mary and Joseph | Prayers for dead Saints of God |
| Liturgical Prayers | Simple responses eg. And also with you Thanks be to God Peace be with You Gospel Acclamation [i.e. Alleluia] Great Amen Lord have mercy Simple response to Prayers of Intercession, e.g. Lord graciously hears us. | All responses of the Mass [including Eucharistic Acclamation 1,2 & 3 Bidding Prayer responses Responses to all doxologies, e.g. through Christ our Lord in Jesus' name. Response to short litanies, e.g. Pray for us. | All people's prayer and responses in the Mass, including all Eucharistic Acclamations Renewal of Baptismal Promises Litany of the Saints School Saint`s prayers et: St Teresa St. Francis, St George | | |

| Skills | Foundation | Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 | Key Stage 3 | Key Stage 4 |
|----------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Informal prayer | The beginnings of spontaneous prayer | The ability to ask for prayers on behalf of another | To structure prayers of intercession | To structure Bidding Prayer | |
| Silence / Reflection | Take part in simple stilling exercises | The ability to maintain stillness for a few moments and think quietly | Participate in extended periods of stillness and quiet thought Take part in a guided meditation | Extended silence To engage in meditation | Extended silence To lead meditation |

ASSEMBLIES AT ST GEORGE'S

Assemblies are part of the planned activity in the school with staff, children and parents participating and contributing.

Aims

- To foster the spiritual development of the children
- To celebrate aspects of the curriculum and achievement
- To provide a link with national, international and church events
- To provide time for reflection and prayer
- To celebrate the values the school encompasses
- To develop an awareness of how other people live
- To create a sense of togetherness and belonging

Through the themes of the Religious Education programme, the children become familiar with the seasons of the liturgical year of the Catholic Church. Making time to celebrate during Assembly enables children to acknowledge the value of the experiences they have explored.

- Each class leads an Assembly once a term
- When there is no Assembly each class begins the day with their own act of worship.
- Assembly themes are planned termly using the Religious Education programme, the Liturgical Year , social/moral issues and cross curricular links.

Timetable

| | | Assembly | Hymn Practice |
|-----------|--|--|------------------------------|
| Monday | Staff Meeting 3.30pm | Junior 9.05am Infant 10.20am | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | Staff Phase Briefing/Prayer 8.30am | Junior 9.05am | |
| Thursday | | Infants 9.05am Not Weekly | 10.00 KS2 2.00pm KS1/EYFS |
| Friday | Teacher Briefing/Prayer 8.30am | Whole School Achievement Assembly 2.00pm | |

GUIDELINES ON WHAT MAKES A GOOD ASSEMBLY

At St George's we want children to translate Gospel values into their everyday lives. When we participate in assemblies as leaders of or as participants in, we want the children to relate their understanding to their behaviour as followers of Jesus.

- Welcome to parents
- Aim/Objective – have a clear focus
- Delivery – Speaking /listening (speakers must be heard and understood)
- Based on Come and See/The Liturgical Year/Saints Feast/Other focus e.g. Bullying (PHSE) and cross curricular links.
- Encourage use of dance, drama, gospel story telling, relate to objective.
- I.T. used to compliment not distract from the Assembly
- Encourage parental involvement
- Collective Prayer
- Collective Singing
- Teachers act as models – sitting appropriately, participating in singing and praying, watching their classes are behaving appropriately.
- Do not allow children to light or blow out candles unsupervised

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Religious Education is part of the School Improvement Plan which is prepared and reviewed on a yearly basis
- The Religious Education Leader and Headteacher meet termly with the Religious Education Governor to discuss progress.
- The Religious Education Leader monitors the standards of children`s work every term and provides feedback to staff.
- The Religious Education Leader supports colleagues in the planning and teaching of Religious Education.
- The subject leader provides the Head and Governors with an annual Action Plan, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and indicating areas for improvement.
- The Religious Education Leader, members of the SLT and Religious Education Adviser observe the teaching of Religious Education.
- The ½ termly Headteacher report to FGB includes a standing item on the Catholic life of the school.

OUTSTANDING STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Teachers

- Clear planning linked to the Religious Education programme being used
- Learning intentions and success criteria being made clear to pupils
- Tasks relevant to the learning intentions
- Teacher is clear about their own objectives
- Good pace of delivery
- Secure subject knowledge
- High expectations

- Use of skills and ability to transfer from other curriculum areas
- Appropriate use of assessment
- Enthusiasm from the teacher
- Provision of a prayer corner
- Stimulating displays
- Provision of a reflective ethos
- Good relationship with the pupils
- Good peer to peer relationships – staff and children
- Resources ready for the lesson
- Appropriate use of resources

Pupils

- Involved
- Able to contribute
- Show respect for what they are learning
- Know, understand and can do
- Outstanding behaviour for learning
- Show initiative
- Make progress
- Show interest and enthusiasm

Work

- In books and display (take pride in)
- Evidence of coverage of the topic
- Evidence of sustained writing – cross curricular and application of literacy skills
- Range of activities
- Differentiation
- Research opportunities
- Use of ICT
- Marking according to school policy and offering feedback to pupils

THE ROLE OF THE LEADER FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Religious Education Leader will be responsible for:

- Working with senior leaders on monitoring teaching and learning, planning and standards through lesson observations and work scrutinies according to school practice.
- Organising and maintaining the school portfolio of pupils' work.
- Organising in-house moderation of standards meetings.
- Attendance at cross school moderation meetings.
- Self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Ensuring the curriculum offered is appropriate, suitable and relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Attending appropriate training and keeping up to date with current thinking, policy and developments and feeding back to staff.
- Organising and leading in-house staff training and development.
- Identifying training needs of staff to ensure their suitability to teach effective Religious Education.

- Supporting and advising colleagues in the delivery of Religious Education.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, Governors, parents, the Education Service on matters relating to Religious Education.
- Auditing, managing and developing resources within a given budget.