

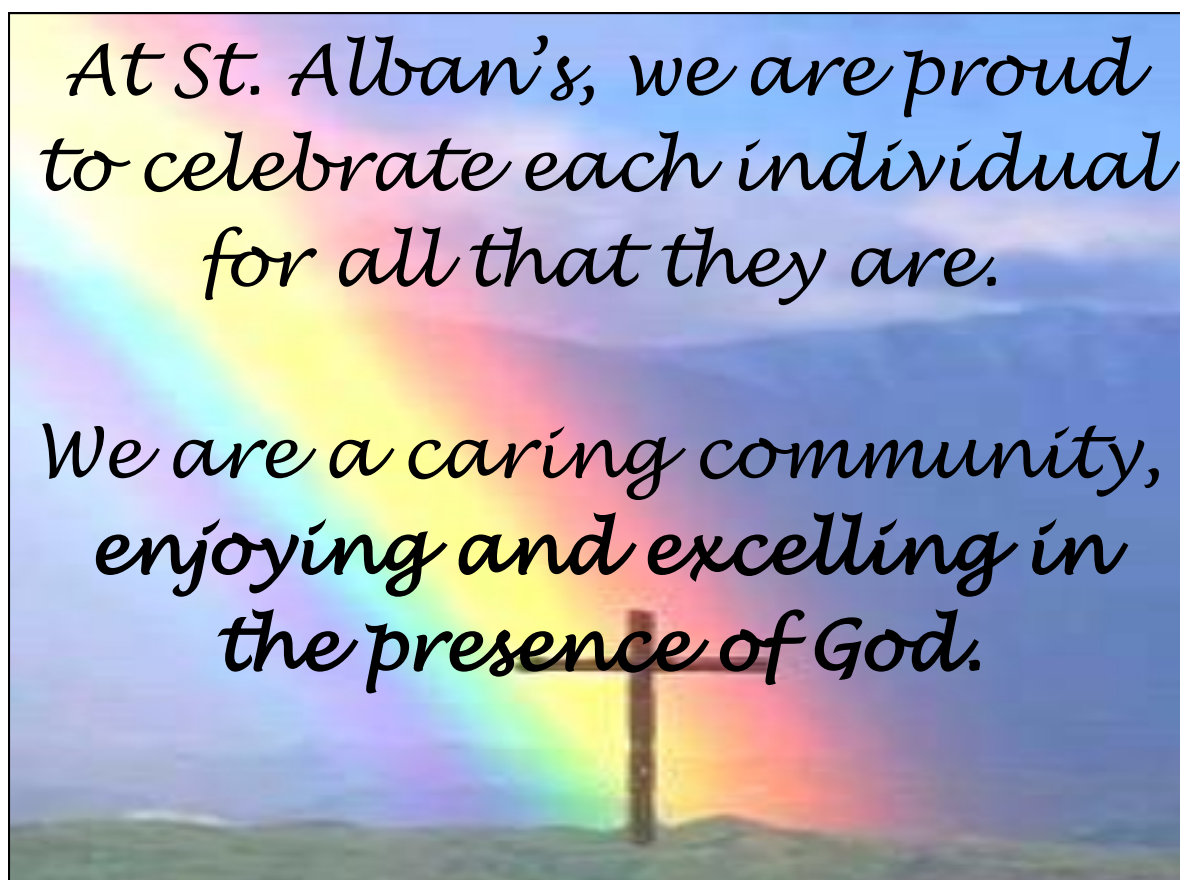
Collective Worship



At St. Alban's R.C. Primary School



St Alban's Collective Worship Policy



The Nature of Collective Worship

Collective 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 celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'¹

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily act of worship offered 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. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. 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. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

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, within Come and See RE curriculum.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St. Alban's

Worship 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.

The Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St. Alban's aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All acts of worship in St. Alban's R.C. Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead worship;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

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

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

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

- We celebrate a weekly whole-school Liturgy, which is based upon the Sunday Gospel.
- Children worship in class, with regular Liturgies, prayer circles, creative prayer opportunities and spiritual activities.
- Classes come together to worship and share the Word with one another.
- Our pupils are confident in seeking their own opportunities to pray independently and they make regular use of our prayer room in order to offer their own intentions.
- Staff prayer takes place on a regular basis and all meetings involve prayer which is led by the Senior Leadership Team and by all other members of staff.
- We promote opportunities to meet as a staff solely to pray and reflect together.

Collective Worship takes place as follows:

Every Friday, our staff briefing includes staff prayer which all staff are invited to take turns to lead

At key liturgical times daily voluntary staff prayer will take place led by teaching and non-teaching staff

Monday: Whole School Collective Worship (HT & child led)

Tuesday/ Wednesday/ Thursday: Range of Class Collective Worship opportunities, Happy Book for R-Y2, Hymn Practice

Friday: Whole School Celebration Assembly which includes opportunity for prayer and celebration of the Statement to Live by

Daily prayers are shared in every class throughout the day

Every class celebrates a termly act of Collective Worship, either as a Liturgy, a year group Mass or a class Mass, according to the timetable.

Whole School Liturgies take place throughout the year. (E.g. Welcome Mass , Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week, Advent, etc.)

Leading collective worship

As faith leaders of the school, Mr Smith, Mrs Allan, Mrs Duncan and Mrs Johnson will plan and lead collective worship. The class teacher will lead class collective worship. Children are taught to plan and lead worship according to their age.

Recording

We record Whole School Collective Worship on planning sheets.

Class teachers keep records of class Acts of Worship in display books or floor books.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Collective Worship is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form, (Appendix 1).

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform SEF 48.

Resources

- We have a dedicated prayer room, which is resourced with focal objects, a range of books, displays and prayer resources. Children are welcome to use these resources in their own ways.
- Each class has a box of resources to use to create focal points. This includes cloths in appropriate Liturgical colours, candles, books and focal objects.
- Each class has a resource to assist with planning class Collective Worship. This consists of boxes with ideas for the four parts of the Liturgy. Classes add their own ideas to these boxes and they remain the property of the class for their entire journey through school.

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'³

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Other opportunities

- Our pupils attend Mass regularly. We plan for Mass to take place in school.
- Children take part in spirituality and prayer experiences led by the YMT.

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 coordinator for Collective Worship

The Senior Leadership Team, RE Co-ordinator and Fr. Smith take the lead role in co-ordinating Collective Worship.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Appendix 1

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 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 including withdrawal from collective worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

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, 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

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]