

SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

<i>Review Initiated by</i>	<i>Headteacher</i>
<i>Last Review</i>	<i>Summer 2024</i>
<i>Next Review</i>	<i>Summer 2025</i>

Distribution: All staff (policy drive) and all parents (website)

Mission Statement

Ad finem fidelis*
We share and care and forgive
For that is how Christ teaches us to live

At Saint Christina's we're a part of God's family,
Where we live and learn and play in harmony.
Everybody here strives to follow Christ's way,
In all that they think and do and say.

At Saint Christina's we're a part of God's family,
We respect diversity and individuality.
We seek to excel in all that we do,
Grow in God's love and embrace Christ's teaching, too!

At Saint Christina's we pray and grow together,
Treating everybody like a sister or a brother.
We learn tolerance and co-operation,
Embracing people from every nation

**Faithful to the end*

Context

Our School was founded in 1949 by the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus who live alongside us, pray for us, guide us and actively involve themselves in our community every day. The Handmaid's believe that a child's education should be a transformational experience, intellectually, emotionally and in terms of character, values and a sense of place in the world: the 'pedagogy of the heart'.

As a Catholic School, Christ is at the centre of our work. We are a school which welcomes children and pupils, parents and teachers who are Catholic as well as other Christian denominations, other faith traditions as well as those of none. We want our prayers and liturgy to be rich in opportunities for deepening an understanding of God, of transcendence, of ourselves and our world. We are preparing pupils for the future, to transform their world. We know that integrating prayer into all aspects of life is the best way we can equip them for that future.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18

"We need a healthy capacity for silent reflection, places of refuge from the tyranny of the urgent.

Most of all, we need prayer, to hear the prompts of the Spirit and cultivate dialogue in a community that can hold us and allow us to dream."

Principles

Saint Christina's believes that collective worship is an important part of a Catholic school's distinctive ethos. Collective Worship allows us, as a school community to explore and understand the values at the heart of the ethos of our school, that we are made in the image and likeness of God; that every individual has a God given gift and that we are to recognise it and use this gift. At Saint Christina's we want our children to discover and develop their gifts (whatever they may be) and fulfil their potential to the **best** of their ability. As the adults in the school community, we too have a responsibility to do this and will act as examples to others. We are striving for a school where the children, and adults, reach for excellence.

During the school day, Collective Worship allows pupils a space and time to reflect on following Jesus Christ as our role model. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved and engaged in daily worship.

Conscious that Christ is at the heart of our school, there is a lived sense of community at Saint Christina's which is evident in the quality of relationships and the strong culture of welcome, providing an exceptionally supportive and joyful community for each of its members, valuing all without exception and acknowledging Christ's presence in the other.

The prayer life of the school is a gift of the Holy Spirit who lives in each baptised person and is crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Therefore, education in ways of praying is an intrinsic aspect of the religious formation of pupils. In order to achieve this aim, young people are guided to explore, meditate and reflect on the Word of God, listening to music, formal prayer etc through daily Examen.

Individual as well as group ways of praying are experienced in formal and informal settings.

Aims:

Through our collective worship we aim to support children to:

- Develop a sense of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and the wider community.
- Develop relationships based on mutual respect, trust and compassion.
- Develop a shared language of values (our golden thread) to build a close-knit cohesive community.
- Show an understanding of the feelings and beliefs of other people.
- Communicate their feelings effectively, using appropriate language.
- Develop the spiritual awareness of the children e.g. a sense of awe and wonder and intellectual curiosity around all things.
- Confidently participate in child-led Acts of Worship to others (in a group, class or whole school gathering).
- Respond to religious and / or spiritual stimulus.

These aims are based on the fruits of the Holy Spirit and the teachings of St Raphaela Maria.

Prayer, worship and liturgy

Collective worship is a gathering of all or some of the school community which aims to foster the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all those present.

Each day will begin and end with a meaningful and appropriate time of prayer. Each classroom will have a focal point for prayer decorated with pupil's work e.g. prayers, poems, drawings etc.

Each class takes part in a daily Examen. These are created and led by the teacher, the Children's Chaplaincy Team or children within the class.

Mass

There are whole school Masses every week in the School Chapel, as well as for Holy Days of Obligation and for our foundress, Saint Raphaela Maria. The Liturgy is created by one of the sisters in the Convent in conjunction with the Chaplaincy Group, which includes the Deputy Head, the Director of Music, a member of the School Staff and the children (see next paragraph). Our Masses are led by our visiting priest or by Fr Rudolf who is on the School staff.

Liturgical formation for pupils and staff is important and they undertake liturgical ministries with confidence, understanding and skill. This is particularly evident in the planning of Mass. Each form plans and undertakes liturgical ministries such as reading, Gospel Acclamation, offertory, bidding prayers, and communal singing.

Children play an active part in each Mass, through reading, praying, singing, playing musical instruments, altar serving and taking part in entrance and offertory processions. Each class takes it in turn to lead and prepare the celebration based on the liturgical year, focusing on solemnities, feast days and memorials of saints important to the children.

The EYFS have their own age-appropriate Liturgy every Thursday which is led by the EYFS team.

We are very lucky to have access to such a beautiful Chapel at the heart of our community. Staff and pupils have regular access to this deeply lovely peaceful space as a context for worship, reflection, and prayer.

Sunday Mass

Families who attend Saint Christina's are warmly invited to attend Mass in the Convent Chapel on Sundays. Children who attend the Mass are routinely included within the celebration through involvement in a number of areas including, singing, prayer, performance and reading.

Assembly

The children have the opportunity to attend a number of assemblies each week, including a whole school assembly on Friday, Key Stage Assemblies, and House Assemblies. These events all include prayer, worship and reflection and a celebration of pupil achievement. The Key Stage One and House Meetings / Key Stage Two assemblies are held on a weekly basis. On Monday, Key Stage 1 and 2 attend a Hymn Practise which includes, in-keeping with the Handmaid's charism, an Examen.

The First Sacraments

The Sacraments are a celebration of the presence of Christ permeating every moment of our lives. Growing in understanding of the Sacraments is a complex interaction of a variety of experiences and celebrations in which the children take part during the years they spend in school.

Children in Year 3 are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist which are both celebrated in the Chapel. In preparing the children, we endeavour to draw together a circle of support around the child, including our priest, the parents, the Handmaids and members of our staff. These are important events for the whole of our community which, guided by the Handmaids, we celebrate and mark together within the Chapel.

Daily Prayers

Teaching Staff / pupils lead morning prayers at the start of each day. At lunchtime grace is sung by the whole school, and at the end of the day, in-keeping with the Handmaid's charism, each class performs an Examen. Full details of the prayers and the Examen are found in the Collective Worship section of the Staff Guide.

Liturgical workshops

The children are able to access liturgical teaching and understanding that enhance their faith life through workshops delivered directly by the Handmaids in and around the Convent and the Chapel e.g. Advent, the Stations of the Cross.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors are responsible for this policy, and for oversight of our life as a Catholic community and the effective adherence to, and nurture of the Handmaid's of the Sacred Heart of Jesus charism and approach to education. This is articulated within their handbook, "Our Educational Style," and places particular emphasis on the 'Pedagogy of the Heart.' There are named Governors each with a discreet area of focus for RE (Joan McConnell), Catholic Life (Sr Eileen) and Collective Worship (Sr Noella).

The Head and staff are collectively responsible for implementing the policy and cultivating a community where prayer and reflection is at its core. In our words and deeds we need to model our core values of love, joy, peace, goodness, kindness, gentleness, patience and self-control.

Our Chaplaincy Team are responsible for the Prayer Life of the school. Together, they encourage children to participate in different acts of worship, help to prepare and lead special celebrations, choose charities for school fundraisers and promote prayer in school life.

Training

INSET days are used to support the training needs of staff working in the school and funding made available to develop staff in their understanding and development of our Faith Life. This has included SLT members attending Building the Kingdom and the Headteacher, the National School of Formation. What it means to work in our Catholic School is included within the Induction Process for new Staff. The School will seek to enable more staff to be able to access training and retreat to further their own understanding.

Parents

As Pope Francis tells us, parents are the first educators of their children. However, they may need help and support with developing the spiritual formation of their children so we work in close partnership with parents.

Parents are invited to attend the weekly celebration of Mass and are also invited to special celebrations including the Carol Service and Feast Days as well as weekly Liturgies for EYFS.

Parents of a pupil have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher.

Additional Guidance on Planning and Conducting Assemblies

In planning Assemblies, a range of methods are used, including:

- Sacred and secular stories/readings linked to PSHE
- Dance/drama
- CAFOD resources
- Prayer/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points/PowerPoint presentations
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors from charities may be invited to speak at assemblies from time to time
- Music

Resources

- Every class has its own resources with prayer cloths and objects to be used when appropriate on the class prayer table.
- Extra resources are available from the RE coordinator or the RE cupboard in the Hall.

- We use the Ten:Ten Collective Worship Resources.
- Teachers have been signposted to different materials e.g. Mark 10 Mission.
- Artefacts to support the designated other Faith studies are located in the RE cupboard in the Hall.
- All classrooms are supplied with a Bible for their children.

Review date

This policy is regarded as a working document and is therefore to be reviewed and dated every year.