



*Saint Joseph's*  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

---

# **Collective Worship Policy**

Version 6.0 – April 2025

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
CHURCH ROAD  
LAVERSTOCK  
SALISBURY  
SP1 1QY



### Success Criteria:

To ensure that Collective Worship is an integral part of school life for all pupils.

#### Context/Aim:

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 a relationship. This is made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

### Monitoring Procedures:

<b>By Whom:</b> Governors' Pastoral & Ethos Committee Head of Religious Education	<b>When:</b> Biennially	<b>How:</b> Written reports by the Head of Religious Education at every Pastoral & Ethos Governors meeting
---	----------------------------	---

### Evaluation:

<b>By Whom:</b> Governors' Pastoral & Ethos Committee and Head of Religious Education	<b>When:</b> Biennially	<b>How:</b> Whole school reviews
--	----------------------------	-------------------------------------

### Revision History:

Version	Approved and Ratified	Review Date	Additional Notes
V6.0	April 2025	April 2027	Minor changes and Appendix added
V 5.0	April 2023	April 2025	Rewrite
V 4.1	October 2017	October 2019	Minor changes to locations
V 4.0	October 2015	October 2017	Additional wording added i.e. British Values
V 3.0	March 2012	March 2014	-
V 2.4	November 2010	November 2012	-
V 2.1	December 2009	December 2011	-
V 2.0	November 2007	November 2009	-
V 1.0	May 2006	May 2007	-





### Vision Statement:

**With God's love and inspiration, we aspire and achieve excellence.**

**Vision:** St. Joseph's aspires to be an exceptional, inclusive Catholic school where every individual feels a **profound sense of belonging and recognises their spiritual gifts**. In a safe, trusting, and respectful environment, everyone can thrive.

The St Joseph's family is dedicated to providing and receiving **outstanding educational opportunities, enabling each member to achieve excellent progress and outcomes** in every aspect of school life to ensure the highest level of academic results. We are committed to nurturing God-given talents and encouraging everyone to reach their full potential, fostering spiritual and moral character development.

### Other SJCS Policies that relate to this Policy:

PSHE Policy

Sex & Relationships Policy



# Collective Worship Policy

St Joseph's is a Catholic school that welcomes all faiths. While fully respecting the faith of each pupil, the school has no wish to compromise its mission to provide an all-round education to pupils of all backgrounds. We are about being a community, which is having its unique identity and St. Joseph's is a place full of opportunities.

Our Mission Statement encompasses what we are about:

**'With God's love and inspiration, we aspire and achieve excellence.'**

This mission is to enhance the spiritual, moral and academic development of its pupils in the setting of the school's Catholic tradition. It is part of the school's gift to invite pupils to an experience of this tradition through following St. Joseph's values from the Tree of Values, which are at the very heart of our school situated at the corridor of values. It is those values that we believe connect us all just like St John reminds us in 15th chapter that Jesus is the vine and we are his branches. Indeed, the school is happy to recognise the warm acceptance by the pupils and their parents of what the school has to offer in this respect and have a fulfilling as well as loving relationship with Christ who is at the very centre of all we do. This is the main reason why we believe that with God's love we are guided in hope for our school family to be the best we can be in everything we do. Hence the development of our Collective Worship Policy.

**Our objectives are to:**

- Provide opportunities within our community, which has a strong identity striving to build on and have strong and loving relationships
- Provide opportunities for pupils, staff and parents to experience a sense of belonging to a faith-filled Christian community and to commit themselves to being of service to others just like brothers and sisters in Pope Francis' Fratelli tutti where we are reminded that we need to judge our lives and work through the lens of love.
- Respect the role of parents as the primary educators of their children.
- Be enthusiastic in imparting knowledge of Catholic faith and traditions, enabling pupils to accept truth freely and develop their own moral conscience based upon Christian values and principles.
- Promote growth and improvement in learning and living, being mindful that we have received 'every good and perfect gift from above' (James 1:17) and therefore give praise and thanksgiving to God for all that we have received.





### **Our vision statement:**

St. Joseph's aspires to be an exceptional, inclusive Catholic school where every individual feels a **profound sense of belonging and recognises their spiritual gifts**. In a safe, trusting, and respectful environment, everyone can thrive.

The St Joseph's family is dedicated to providing and receiving **outstanding educational opportunities, enabling each member to achieve excellent progress and outcomes** in every aspect of school life to ensure the highest level of academic results. We are committed to nurturing God-given talents and encouraging everyone to reach their full potential, fostering spiritual and moral character development.

### **As the overarching principle from which collective worship flows, Cardinal Vincent Nichols says the following about spirituality:**

'We need to give pupils opportunities to reflect, in increasing depth, on what they have seen, or read, or done; to analyse their reactions; to justify the meaning they give to a particular experience. To encourage pupils to get into the habit of this kind of reflection, it is therefore, an essential part of the spiritual development.'

### **We see the aims of the spiritual development of our school as follows:**

- That pupils know that they are spiritual beings created by God.
- That each of us is on a journey of faith.
- That we are all on different journeys.
- That this is a distinctly Catholic school community on its own special journey.
- That we need to celebrate and develop the spirituality of each person in our own community (school, home and parish).
- That we develop the pupils' self-esteem, self-confidence and their ability to express their inner thoughts in a variety of ways.

As a Catholic school one of the most important ways that we strive to achieve these spiritual aims is through our 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 a loving relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ.

### **The nature of collective worship in our school is as follows:**

- Prayer and worship is at the heart of the life of the school
- Prayer takes into account the pupils' age and faith development
- Liturgy is interactive and reflective
- Liturgy is 'owned' and often led by the pupils
- Liturgy impacts on daily life and behaviour





**From this rationale we see the aims of our collective worship as follows:**

- To contemplate something of the mystery of the Triune God.
- To help pupils to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.
- To positively present prayers and beliefs that come from the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.
- To help pupils to understand that they belong to a wider Catholic community with strong links to local parishes and the diocesan community.

**From these main aims we seek to:**

- Reflect on moral and spiritual issues
- Explore our own beliefs
- Reflect on and celebrate life
- Experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- Develop a common ethos and shared values
- Enrich religious experience
- Reinforce positive attitudes and behaviour

**The principles of planning and delivery of collective worship are as follows:**

- To follow a structure that parallels the church's liturgical calendar.
- To be flexible to respond to, and change with, situations within school and the wider community.
- To develop pupils' skills that enables them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always being recipients.
- To develop staff skills at all levels with regard to preparation, organisation and leading collective worship providing suitable resources and training.

Just as all children are expected to attend collective worship, we believe that it is important that all staff endeavour to attend as well. By doing this a powerful witness is given to our children and visitors of the principles of community and belonging aforementioned in this policy.

Collective Worship is monitored by the Head of RE, and supported by the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Houses, and Directors of Learning. There is close liaison with the Deputy Head on all aspects of Collective Worship and its delivery. This allows the school to evaluate all we are doing to meet the needs of pupils with regards to our rationale.



## Appendix 1

### Definitions

#### Liturgy

Liturgy literally means 'work of the people' and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action.

#### Prayer

Prayer may be an individual experience or, if it is an activity with others, may form part of an act of worship. One of the early fathers of the Church described prayer as "the raising of one's mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God." These words of St John Damascene, now found in the catechism, illustrate why we begin and end each day with a prayer. St Therese of Lisieux describes prayer as a "surge of the heart; a simple look turned towards heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love; embracing both trial and joy."5.

#### Collective Worship

Collective worship is concerned with giving glory, honour and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. St John Vianney used a powerful metaphor for differentiating between private and collective prayer – "private prayer is like straw here and there: If you set it on fire it makes a lot of little flames. But gather the straw into a bundle and light them, and you get a mighty fire, rising like a column into the sky;"6. Worship is at the very heart of our school and must reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities. 10





## Appendix 2

### Prayer Experiences

Students are introduced to a variety of forms and styles of prayer, which are developed in ways which are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

<b>Type:</b>	<b>Example:</b>
Praying the psalms	<i>'I thank you for the wonder of my being' [Psalm 139]</i>
Traditional prayers	<i>Glory be to the Father, Our Father, Hail Mary</i>
Repetitive prayer [mantra]	<i>'Jesus, I love you', repeated several times, slowly</i>
Meditation	<i>Scripture reflection with use of imagination</i>
Bodily prayer	<i>Raising hands in praise, bowing, dancing, genuflecting</i>
Prayer of the heart	<i>Stillness to listen to God: 'Be still and know that I am God.'</i>
Contemplation	<i>Looking at trees, a sunset, an icon, work done in the topic</i>
Gestures	<i>The sign of the cross, the sign of peace</i>
Hymns	<i>Traditional and modern hymns</i>
Music	<i>Listening to quiet, reflective music</i>
Litanies	<i>For all creation: Thanks be to God</i>
Processions	<i>Gospel procession with sung 'alleluia'</i>
Prayer services and liturgies	<i>Formal and spontaneous prayer using holy water, candles, incense and other symbols</i>
Celebrations	<i>Prayer, song, sharing food and drink, celebrating</i>