

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Axminster

Policy for Worship



Policy adopted Spring 2006
Last reviewed February 2011
Next review due February 2013

Mission Statement:

To educate and to develop every child's potential within our Catholic School Family.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St. Mary's School is practised in various ways, from a whole school act of Worship to classroom prayers, with regular celebration of the Eucharist.

It is the policy of the school to help children grow in their Faith, which is based on the teaching and traditions of the Catholic Church. We aim to encourage children to develop a personal relationship with God through prayer, this is important for all children in our care, regardless of whether they are practising Catholics or not.

Our pattern of Acts of Worship is as follows: -

Monday - Whole school worship led by the Head Teacher.

Tuesday - Key Stage 1 Collective Worship. This follows set themes, for example, saints, mission, sacraments. These will times of meditation, reflection and prayer.

Key Stage 2 class based worship. Teacher led or whole class led worship, based on themes from God Matters. Usually within own classroom, but shared with school on a least one occasion per term when parents are invited.

Wednesday - Prayer and Praise including Liturgical preparation.

Thursday – Key Stage 2 Collective Worship. This follows set themes, for example, studying parables or miracles, or the Stations of the Cross, current events and SEAL.

These will times of meditation, reflection and prayer.

Key Stage 1 class based worship. Teacher led or whole class led worship, based on themes from God Matters. Usually within own classroom, but shared with school on a least one occasion per term when parents are invited.

Friday - Whole school worship, led by the Parish Priest and Head Teacher. The Gospel reading for the following Sunday is read and discussed. Bidding prayers include those offered by the children. Worship is followed by a celebration of children's achievements from that week, e.g. behaviour, good work, certificates, special person award.

We celebrate Mass as a whole school at the beginning and end of each school year and on Holy days of obligation. Each term a Class leads the Act of Worship. Parents and Parishioners are invited to join us in school on these occasions.

Grace before/after meals and the evening prayer are said in each classroom on a daily basis. The Morning Prayer is incorporated into whole school, class and Key Stage Worship.

Prayer

Children have a natural aptitude for prayer. They are open to God. Helping children to pray is a fostering of a relationship with God. We are supporting children on their journey in faith. Children are given experience of personal and communal prayer by being encouraged to speak in their own way to God and by being introduced gradually to formal words for prayer at the appropriate level.

Throughout the God Matters programme prayer builds upon the children's natural spontaneous expressions of joy, wonder, awe, concern, thanks, sorrow, sadness, anger, fear and disappointment evoked through their growing awareness of themselves, others and their world. We are aware of children's need for expression through speech, song, movement, art, writing and silence. We are aware of the importance of giving the children a focal point for prayer in each classroom, and wherever acts of worship are held.

Focal Points

Focal points are clearly visible and accessible within each classroom. Liturgical colours are used for any cloth or drape, e.g. purple during Advent and Lent, white at Christmas, gold at Easter, red at Pentecost and green or other colours for ordinary time. Focal points often include something which reflects the topic e.g. Baptismal candle, Advent wreath, palm cross at Easter and / or other appropriate objects eg. a cross, crucifix or statue. They always contain a candle and a bible or religious storybook, open at a relevant page.

Foundation stage Key Stage One

The following prayers are introduced to, and learnt by the children during this time: -

The sign of the cross

The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

Hail Mary

Glory Be

Morning and night prayers. (Refer to Staff handbook)

Grace before meals. (Refer to Staff handbook)

Simple examination of conscience.

Simple act of contrition.

Simple responses such as: - The Lord be with you, And also with you, Lord in your Mercy, Hear our prayer, A reading from the Gospel of St John, Glory to you Lord. This is the Gospel of the Lord, Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. Peace be with you, And also with you. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Key Stage Two

The children learn the above prayers, plus: -

Responses to be said during Mass: -

Introduction

The Penitential rite (Lord have mercy)

I confess

The Gloria

The Liturgy of the Word (including response after each reading and before the Gospel.)

Apostle's creed.

Bidding prayer response (as above)

Offertory responses – Blessed be God forever, May the Lord accept...

Eucharistic prayer

Holy, holy

Acclamation of Faith

Lamb of God

Response before Communion (if receiving)

Rite of dismissal.

Eternal rest

Act of contrition

School as a worshipping community

Prayer, worship and liturgical celebration are central to our Catholic tradition. As stated, we have daily opportunities for Acts of Worship in the school. These are planned to include special feasts and reflect the liturgical year. We celebrate the Eucharist regularly, and each class prays together in the morning, before meals, and at the end of the school day. Children are given time and space to thank God for their day, to reflect on it and to offer up any intercessions of their own, particularly during class based worship.

Policy Monitoring and Review

Both Staff and Governors have agreed this policy. This policy will now be monitored by the Worship Leader, and reviewed by the Staff and Governors at the end of a two-year period.