

**ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**  
incorporating  
**WEST CUMBRIA CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM CENTRE**



## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Governors of St Benedict's Catholic High School are fully aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to Collective worship and they take account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, Education Act 1996 and the School Standards Framework Act 1998.

As a Catholic Voluntary Aided School the Governors of St Benedict's take account of the Diocesan Trust Deed which states the acts of worship shall be consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church. The Foundation Governors have particular responsibility for seeing that the Catholic character of the school is reflected in Collective Acts of Worship and are in accordance with the Trust Deed.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and cannot be subsumed under any part of the curriculum. It is distinctive and meets legal requirements.

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

### **Definitions**

**Collective Worship** 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. Worship is at the heart of St Benedict's School.

**Prayer** may be an individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.

All **liturgies** involve the praise, thanksgiving and adoration of God and are, therefore, acts of worship. However, not all worship will be liturgy as it may or may not include symbol and action.

An **assembly** is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship but the difference between worship and assembly is always made clear.

## **Character of Collective Worship**

In keeping with the Section 7 (1) of the 1988 Act and the ethos of our school, our Collective Worship is “wholly of a broadly Christian character.” Without being rigid or unfeeling towards the minority or non-Christians among us, we chiefly pray the Christian prayers, sing the Christian hymns and take our readings from the Holy Bible.

Our aim is for our Collective Worship to be prayerful and relevant and as essentially a part of the day as any other school activity. It takes various forms (e.g. structured services, directed reflection (from our own resources or from visiting speakers) plays/assemblies, songs of praise etc. Student participation and preparation is greatly encouraged and implemented. The liturgical year gives our Collective Worship its framework while the needs and events of our worlds of home, school, town and society, make up its content.

## **Aim of Collective Worship Policy**

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for pupils to develop their sense of faith by

- Worshipping God
- Reflecting on values that are of a Christian nature and on their own beliefs
- Developing a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- Considering spiritual and moral issues
- Responding to the worship offered
- Taking an active part in the worship offered
- Leading and developing the worship offered.

## **Principles of Collective Worship Policy**

1. Every effort will be made to give pupils positive experiences, based on sound educational, pastoral and liturgical principles.
2. Acts of Worship will prepare pupils for the liturgical life of the Church.
3. Acts of Worship will take into account, as far as possible, the age, aptitudes and backgrounds of the pupils.
4. Eucharistic celebrations will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with those pupils whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage.
5. Acts of Worship will usually follow the basic structure of Christian Worship.

## **School vision and ethos**

As a Christian school our education vision and ethos is:

- **Christ centered**

The school recognizes the dignity of the human person and the command of Christ to love and care for each other. We aim to build a community in which young people are welcomed, valued, nurtured and where a love of learning is promoted for the benefit of both our students and the community they belong to and serve.

- **Faith enlightened**

In the school, faith, culture and life is recognised in how each subject area is understood in the light of the Gospel. The Catholic faith is at the heart of the school life and is integral to its liturgies, rituals, symbolism and prayer spaces.

- **Shows concern for the poor, the weak and the vulnerable**

The school sets as its clear aim to work towards eradicating suffering and its causes. It seeks to create compassion as the driving force in the search for justice for those at the margins of the community. Students should be educated to question the status quo and to be active for social change and the promotion of equal opportunities.

- **Builds communities**

The school shows social responsibility for the world we inhabit. It works towards creating a world where everyone can live lives of dignity and decency with respect for life. The school is a community where parents, staff and students share a common vision as a community of warmth and love.

- **Pursues excellence**

The school enables every student to achieve their potential. It is committed to high quality teaching and learning and to building a community of reflective learners working to the highest standards. Respect is at the heart of the school community. There is a commitment to inventiveness and change.

## **Organisation and Management of Collective Worship**

The overall responsibility for Collective Worship lies with the Head teacher in consultation with the governors. The following structure and system are subject to SLT approval and review.

- Staff prayer takes place in the Chapel each morning from 8.15 – 8.25am, this is led by the school chaplain
- 8.30 - 8.40am on Mondays - Staff briefing will begin with a prayer by the Headteacher or another delegated member of staff.
- 8.40 – 8.55 am - Every day one of the Directors of Learning/ Heads of Year, member of SLT, or a teacher who would like to be placed on the (themed) assembly rota assembles a year group in the school hall or other area for an assembly (or virtual assembly). The structure of the assembly is left to the expertise of each Director of Learning/ Head of Year based around themes connected to the Church's Liturgical Year which allows for the incorporation of an Act of Worship as an integral part of the assembly. Pupils are encouraged to take part in assemblies/readings.
- Each form tutor starts the day with the tutor prayers and reflection provided by the school chaplain; pupils are encouraged to take an active part of this process throughout the year.
- Masses are on Holy days of Obligation and special feast days throughout the school year. In addition to this the RE department and the chaplain organise class Masses throughout the year. The priests from our parishes offer these Masses. The chaplain, Mrs Rush and the RE team aided by our pupils help to prepare all the Masses we have in school. Anyone who wishes to serve, read, help with the music or prepare the hall for Mass is very welcome.
- At the start of each new school year, the Staff begin by celebrating Mass together.
- Each year we have a Mass to celebrate the arrival of our new Years 7 and 12.
- Each year we have Leavers' Masses for Years 11 and 13.
- Each year the whole school (separately/simultaneously) meets together for Collective Worship for such important events as the School Masses, Advent Assemblies, Carol

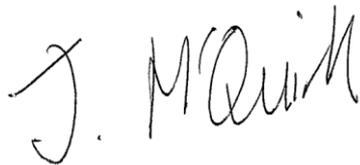
service, Ash Wednesday services, Lenten Assemblies, Staff Leavers' Mass and the Feast of St Benedict. These events are co-ordinated by the school Chaplain in conjunction with the SLT, Directors of Learning/ Heads of Year and Subject Leaders of Performing Arts and RE.

## **Policy monitoring and review**

- The monitoring of Collective Worship forms part of the school improvement plan.
- The Governing Body include the monitoring of Collective Worship on their agenda.
- Issues raised in the monitoring process will be used to further develop Collective Worship.
- Monitoring of Collective Worship includes observations of collective acts of worship, discussions with those who lead worship, discussions with those who experience worship (pupils, parents, governors and other members of the school community).
- Monitoring will check on resources, visual aids, etc.
- Staff development and in-service training will be recorded.
- From time to time a school audit for collective worship will be conducted to assist in monitoring Collective Worship.
- When the monitoring of Collective Worship has been completed it will lead to an evaluation of the current position and plans for the further development of Collective Worship within the school.
- Chaplaincy team, Directors of Learning/ Heads of Year, Subject Leader for RE/RS and SLT to visit tutor groups and to support and develop acts of collective worship.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring of progress towards implementation of this policy annually by Subject Leader for RE and Senior Team link.



Chair of Governors

Reviewed: December 2020

To be reviewed: December 2022