

# St Vincent's VC Academy



## Collective Worship Policy

Prepared by: Mrs P Donnelly  
March 2017

## **Mission Statement**

Our school community is built upon the Gospel values of **love, kindness, charity and forgiveness**. We strive to witness the mission of Jesus Christ and bring the joy of His Good News to all. The motto of our patron saint permeates all we do: '**Kindness is the key to all hearts**'. St Vincent's VC Academy is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough and works as a special community within the St Cuthbert's Multi Academy Trust.

Our religious life is rooted in the faith, practice and moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each person in our community is specially valued and has an important part to play in making sure that we live out our mission.

*Our Mission Statement is due to be reviewed this term. We will ensure that children, their families and staff are included in this process, enabling us to reflect the shared vision of everything our school strives to be.*

## **The Nature of Collective Worship**

We believe that Christian 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 Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School**

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.

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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

## **The Aims of Collective Worship**

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully

## Principles

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- 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<sup>1</sup>. In order to do this, celebrations will:
  - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
  - be short and appropriately paced (children's attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life, *i.e. 5-6 minutes for Key Stage 1 and 7-10 minutes for Key Stage 2*);
  - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Collective worship in our school will be:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced
- recorded
- monitored
- evaluated

Collective Worship takes place every day and fully supports and promotes our Catholic Christian traditions:

<b>Monday</b>	Whole School collective worship led by Y6 worship leaders - Liturgy of the Word introducing this Sunday's Gospel
<b>Tuesday</b>	Celebration and worship ~ including hymn practices
<b>Wednesday</b>	Classroom based liturgy Wednesday word – child led
<b>Thursday</b>	Classroom based liturgy – Teacher led – Statement of belief
<b>Friday</b>	Weekly Mass (class rota) Whole School Praise Assembly ~ celebrating children's work and achievements.



In addition to this weekly programme, there are opportunities to celebrate Mass weekly (on a rota basis) + whole school liturgies / Masses (appropriate to the Church year).

- Children attend Mass in Church or School on Holydays.
- Each class leads a Liturgy in school based on the RE programme of work "Come and See".
- Clergy from our local parishes (West Hull Parishes and Our Lady of Lourdes, Hessle) play an active role in the school.
- Parents are encouraged to join us where appropriate and are welcome to share some of these celebrations.
- Termly Class Collective Worship with parents invited.

<sup>1</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9

## **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 Co-ordinator for Collective Worship**

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship is Mrs Philippa Donnelly – Head of School Designate by Mrs Catherine Holtby - Chaplain.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed every two years. The Parish Partners will support in the review of this policy.

**Draft Date** March 2017

**Adoption Date**.....

**Review Date**.....

**Signed**.....  
(Head of School)

**Signed**.....  
(Chair of Parish Partners) Summer Term TBC

## **Appendix 1 - The Role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship**

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship.
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship which may at times form part of the school development plan.
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family 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.

### **Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating**

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation.
- Observing, on occasions, an Act of Collective Worship.
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship.

### **Communication**

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Collective Worship.
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and Executive 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 RE Centre.

### **Professional development / Ongoing formation**

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship.
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back.
- 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.

## **Appendix 2 - Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.) We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that 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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, “on a special occasion”.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

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.