

St. Gerard's Catholic Primary School



Collective Worship 2025

Signed: C.Gurran (Chair of Governors)

Signed: B.Baxter (Headteacher)

Date: September 2025

Date to be reviewed: September 2026

Mission Statement

With Christ as our teacher, to enable every child to be the best that they can be.

AIMS

The aim of St. Gerard's school is to provide an environment, which is both attractive and stimulating. We encourage children to achieve high standards in a caring, structured, disciplined atmosphere.

We aim to give all children the chance to see new things, develop their thoughts, try new skills, both physical and mental, and gradually expand their field of experience. In all things, including the everyday life of the school, we do not discriminate on grounds of culture, race or gender. We believe that, with these aims shaping the way we work together, children will develop a willingness and desire to learn and enjoy school life. We actively encourage the children to:

- Develop self-confidence and awareness of others and the environment.
- Listen attentively and gain understanding.
- Read fluently and accurately for information and for pleasure.
- Develop attractive handwriting, with high standards of spelling, punctuation and syntax, and be able to use language imaginatively and creatively.
- Speak well and clearly to each other and in public.
- Learn to make decisions and solve problems in a systematic way.
- Develop an understanding of mathematical principals and be able to apply them.
- Develop skills, concepts and understanding in the fields of science, technology and information and communication technology.
- Know about the geographical, historical and social aspect of local, national and global environments.
- Develop their talents in art, drama, music and physical education. Our guiding Principles

This school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils and an entitlement to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum including the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. We aim to provide a stimulating, supportive environment where children are motivated to learn. Whenever possible work is based on first hand experience, using a multisensory approach. Work is differentiated according to the needs of the child, or groups of children. We aim to promote confidence, self-esteem and independence.

The Nature of Collective Worship.

We believe that Christian worship in our 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 relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.¹

Legal Requirements.

Last updated February 2021

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (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.

¹ It is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of 'Collective Worship' in schools. 'Collective Worship' is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

² 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 need to 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.

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.

In this school, the responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that 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.

Worship in our school is more than just a legal requirement. It is at the heart of our school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

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
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.³ In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;

³ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- 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 mins. *For Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins. For Key Stage 2*);
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Our Liturgy and Prayer times are organised as follows

Monday- Mark10 Mission

Tuesday-Child led collective worship in class

Wednesday- key stage assembly

Thurs- Child led collective worship in class

Friday- Achievement assembly with prayer focus

Child-Led Worship

All classes aim to end each Come and See topic with a short, child-led liturgy using materials from the Come and See topic. Children will choose readings, prayers, music and artefacts

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Liturgical calendar, significant dates eg Remembrance, the School Values document. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community and global issues
- to develop in pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Recording

Collective Worship is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and references
- Through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, kind thoughts book/box, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Resources

Articles of Faith are stored centrally for staff to use. These are renewed when necessary. Each class has a Liturgy box/Collective worship box which includes drapes for Liturgical seasons, candles, prayer book and other appropriate texts, cross and pebbles.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

Daily Staff prayer
Weekly School Mass
Year 5/6 Residential to include retreat
GIFT team members to lead actions from Chaplaincy group
Prayer group – seasonal e.g. October May: Rosary Group
Remembrance
Advent travelling bags/travelling crib
Catholic cluster Advent service
Time for worship and reflection built into staff meetings

Eucharist

School mass is celebrated every Tuesday morning. 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 *'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.

In school, therefore, the **'Liturgy of the Word'**, rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- School Mass and occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites and/or The Liturgy of the Word

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Weekly mass and occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites/Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.

The Co-ordinator for Collective Worship

Mrs M Machen

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.