

Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy Collective Worship Policy

“Prayer, reflection, worship and liturgical celebration are central to the Catholic tradition.... The worshipping nature of the school or college should be expressed in a variety of ways. Pupils should be assisted in exploring a range of methods of private, individual prayer, as well as group prayer in both formal and informal styles and settings. The celebration of the Eucharist (Mass) is the centre of worship for the Catholic community. There are also other forms of liturgy which have an educative value in themselves and help individuals to deepen their understanding of worship. All liturgical celebrations will aim to encourage the active participation of all concerned.”

(Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of a Catholic School, CES 1999)

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for students and staff to:

- Worship God as a community of faith
- Reflect on values that are of a Catholic nature
- Develop a worldwide community spirit that reflects the ethos of our school and shares the message of the Gospel.
- Consider spiritual and moral issues
- Embrace and respond to the worship offered.

It is the statutory duty of the school to provide a daily collective Act of Worship for all students, apart from those who have been withdrawn by their parents. This may take the form of whole school Acts of Worship or Acts of Worship in tutor time or prayer.

The Head teacher is responsible, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for arranging the daily Act of Worship after consultation with the governing body. The Act of Worship will be in accordance with the beliefs of the Catholic religion specified for the school.

Great emphasis is placed on the Act of Worship which underpins the whole school day.

It is not feasible for the whole school to gather for an Act of Worship, therefore different house groups will gather daily. The tutor groups absent from the main collective Act of Worship prepare and deliver their own prayer and worship.

Acts of Worship are led by volunteers on a rota system which is drawn up by the Assistant Head. All members of the community (as well as visitors) are welcome to offer to lead or assist with the Act of Worship. During the course of each academic year, each tutor group will prepare and lead at least one Act of Worship. Other Acts of Worship may be led by distinct groups within the school such as the Justice and Peace Group, Fair Trade Group, Oasis Team. Students are encouraged at other times to be proactive in leading liturgy within school.

Other forms of whole school worship will also take place. These will include celebrations such as:

- School Masses on Holydays of Obligation and our school Feast Day
- End of Term liturgy
- Advent/Lenten liturgies
- Agape and leavers' liturgies (Year 11)
- Liturgy of welcome (Year 7)

Acts of Worship offer varied opportunities for prayer, reflection and worship and involve varied approaches through scripture, music, drama.

A bank of resources is available from the Chaplain and the newly appointed Lead Lay Chaplain. Support and guidance are available from the Headteacher, Core Curriculum Leader of Religious Education and Chaplain together with the newly created Staff Liturgy Group.

Adopted by Governing Body: 07 February 2007

Reviewed: February 2010, May 2013, May 2016, November 2018

Date for next Review: May 2019