



### **St Mary's Mission Statement**

Our school community seeks to build on Gospel values to:

- Nurture and respect the talents and abilities that God has given to each unique individual.
- Enable everyone to aspire to and realise their potential through perseverance, resilience and integrity
- To grow in love and to be loved, unconditionally.

### **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 our response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with Him.

### **Legal Requirements**

St. Mary's complies with the requirements set out in the DfE Collective Worship in School Document (1994) stating that all maintained schools must provide daily collective worship for all registered 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 also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

However, worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement – it is an integral part of school life and central to its Catholic tradition. Taking part in daily collective worship also helps to build community cohesion by creating a consistent structure around the core values and symbols of Christianity.

The act of worship is **not** designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the local governing body after consultation with the Head teacher/ RE subject leader.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child(ren) from Collective Worship. However, given its importance 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 Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School**

We believe that Collective Worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- those who form part of the worshipping communities
- those for whom the school may be their first and only experience of church
- those from other Christian denominations – or none
- those from other faith backgrounds

It will be 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 our own beliefs
- To respond and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a shared 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 liturgy in this school will:

- give glory to God
- be a quality educational activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character, including aspects of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole person
- 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, with reference to 'The Directory of Masses for Children' as a basis for our practice.

In order to do this, our celebrations are kept small wherever possible, to help children personalise the experience. We also keep them short and appropriately paced, bearing in mind that children's attention span lasts for an average of one minute per year of life! Celebrations are kept simple and include a range of experiences in various groupings.

## How Collective Worship is organised at St. Mary's

Collective Worship is arranged in a variety of ways as follows:

Monday	Class liturgy
Tuesday	Class liturgy
Wednesday	Whole school liturgy
Thursday	Whole School Liturgical preparation
Friday	Whole School Achievement Assembly/ whole school prayer

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on school premises. However, on occasion it may take place in Buckfast Abbey or in the Parish Churches.

## The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Collective worship is planned:

- following a structure linked to the Church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- with reference to the school's aims and policies
- to develop in pupils the skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship themselves, rather than participating in a token way.

## 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.

## Eucharistic Celebrations

We hold Mass at least once a term and all children are included in the celebration according to the stage of their faith development and are encouraged to participate. This may be as a reader, part of the offertory procession or as part of the choir. The Mass is prepared in consultation with the school chaplain, Father Christopher.

**Other Celebrations** Among the themes included are Harvest, Lent, Stations of the Cross, Advent, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, the month of Mary and special feast days. Members of the school and parish community are also invited to take part in Prayer Space events which take place during the school year.

## Sacramental Preparation

The children learn about the sacraments through the themes and topics of 'God Matters,' the RE scheme of work.

Programmes for sacramental preparation may be school or parish based. The school aims to liaise as closely as possible with parishes over sacramental preparation and celebration. The school aims to celebrate in school with all children who have recently made their First Holy Communion.

## **Inclusion**

St. Mary's aims as far as possible to include all parishes involved with the school: Buckfast, Totnes and Ivybridge, all families, whatever their faith, all pupils, staff and governors in its celebration and worship

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

The current co-ordinators are Miss Slack in her role as head teacher and RE leader and Mrs Kerswell in her role as music subject leader.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the RE co-ordinator(s) - one of whom will always be the Headteacher - and is reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors have a particularly important role in this.

**Approved at meeting of the ECM Committee on**

**To be reviewed in 2 years**

**Signed ..... Chair of ECM Committee**

## Appendix 1

### Resources

Books, posters, drapes and other religious artefacts are stored in the art stock room and in the Head teacher's office. Teachers may also have a selection of books in their own classrooms.

## Appendix 2

### The Role of the RE Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator will be responsible (with support from school and parishes) for the following:

- to liaise with the head teacher, staff, governors and parish priest(s)
- formulating a 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 the religious and educational needs of all who participate are considered and that it is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory of Masses With Children'
- organising themes for worship
- assisting the head teacher and governors 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, acts of Collective Worship led by other members of staff
- informing the governors of standards and developments in Collective Worship

### Communication

- communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of liturgy and Collective Worship
- reporting to and consulting with the head teacher and governors regarding matters of development and/or concern
- acting as a consultant to colleagues
- encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- informing newly-appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- communicating with parents, governors and parish community
- liaison with parish priests
- liaison with the Diocesan RE Team

### Professional Development/ on-going formation

- leading and organising in-service training and on-going formation for Collective Worship
- attending appropriate in-service training courses and reporting back
- keeping up to date by personal reading

### Resources

- evaluation of existing resources
- developing resources available for Collective Worship, including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, posters and new/relevant books