



St Edward's Catholic First School

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Collective Worship Policy
Cycle review: 3 years
Ratified: October 2025
Review: September 2028

ST EDWARD'S CATHOLIC FIRST SCHOOL

St Edward's Catholic First School strives to provide a broad, balanced, and relevant Catholic education in which we recognise, through mutual respect, and our mission statement that *We See Jesus in Everything We Do*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Collective Worship in a Catholic school is concerned with the revelation of God's presence so that praise, honour, and thanksgiving may be given to Him. It should strengthen the Eucharistic community, which is called together to bear witness to Jesus Christ. Collective Worship is this community's response to God's invitation to enter into a loving relationship with Him, made possible through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. This may 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:

- Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, whether said by the teacher or by all present, does **not** fulfil this requirement.
- Collective Worship and assembly are distinct activities. While they may sometimes form part of the same gathering, 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 considered part of the Religious Education lesson (for time allocation purposes).

In this Catholic school, the overall responsibility lies with the governors, in consultation with the Headteacher, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and that opportunities for high-quality Collective Worship are provided.

3. OUR AIMS

Worship in this school is more than just a legal obligation; it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. As such, it is an activity to which all can contribute and from which all can benefit, including:

- Those who are part of a worshipping church community;
- 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.

We believe that Collective Worship in our school community provides a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationship with God and to unite our school family. Through the development of a culture of reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy, and meditation, our relationship with God can continue to grow.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Collective Worship in our school is centred on the development of our Gospel Values:

- Kindness
- Friendship
- Respect
- Forgiveness
- Perseverance
- Creativity

However, it is also responsive to the Liturgical calendar and relevant current events.

Collective Worship takes place in both whole-school and classroom settings. It is led by the Headteacher and the Junior Clergy Team. At St Edward's First, we follow the Ten:Ten Collective Worship resources for Prayer and Liturgy, including assemblies, daily classroom prayers, and staffroom prayer. Parents and carers also have access to these resources.

Collective Worship in our school may follow the pattern—or a variation of the pattern—outlined below:

- **Gathering** – how we come together: the setting, the environment (e.g. quiet reflective music, lighted candles, statues, the Sign of the Cross, a focus, and an examination of conscience);
- **Word** – a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), time for reflection, and prayers related to the theme;
- **Action** – a ritual or symbolic movement that all can participate in, fitting with the theme (e.g. gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, responses to prayers);
- **Mission** – being sent forth from the celebration with something meaningful to take into daily life.

All acts of worship should:

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be structured to provide a meaningful experience for all participants;

- Be concise and focused;
- Have a clear liturgical focus and offer variety in delivery.

5. CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

The school community celebrates Mass both within school and at the parish church. Services are planned in conjunction with the Parish Priest, and members of the parish community are welcome to join the children in worship.

6. RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

All staff at St Edward's First are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship. However, it is hoped that this right would not be exercised without first engaging in discussion with the Headteacher.

7. DEFINITIONS

- **Liturgy:** Literally means "work of the people" and refers to the formal structure of worship, in which symbol and action are central.
- **Prayer:** One of the early Church Fathers, St John Damascene, described prayer as "the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." These words, now found in the Catechism, illustrate why in this Catholic school we begin and end each session with prayer.
- **Collective Worship:** Our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship with Him—made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.