



# **St. Aloysius' Catholic Primary School**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **Our School Motto**

***"Be ambitious for the higher gifts."***  
*1 Cor. 12:31*

### **Our Mission Statement**

Welcome to our school.  
At St. Aloysius' we learn to grow in holiness,  
to become who we were made to be.

Here we seek to know God,  
finding Him in all that we learn,  
and understanding that all that is good, beautiful and true  
offers us a glimpse of God.

Here we seek to love God,  
with our hearts, our minds and our souls,  
meeting Him in prayer and recognising Him in one another.

Here we seek to serve God,  
making the best use of our gifts to serve those around us.

Here, recognising God's delight in us, and by His grace,  
we become more fully alive.

"A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints."

*Pope Benedict XVI*

### **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.



## **St. Aloysius' Catholic Primary School**

### **Collective Worship Policy**

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.

#### **Aims of Collective Worship**

Collective worship forms an essential part of the school policy on the curriculum. In accordance with the values of the school, which are concerned with mutual respect, cultural diversity and social inclusion, collective worship will be of a broadly Christian character. It will include all pupils unless they have been withdrawn by their parents. Collective worship will provide the opportunity for pupils to:

- worship a supreme being
- reflect and actively participate
- reinforce the values of the school community and its ethos
- celebrate successes
- discuss and share Christian values.

#### **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
  - 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

#### **Who was consulted?**

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



## St. Aloysius' Catholic Primary School

### Collective Worship Policy

This policy was approved by the governing body following consultation with staff, pupils, parents and the diocese.

#### **Relationship to other policies**

The policy should be read in conjunction with the curriculum and equality policies.

#### **Legal requirements**

Collective worship is a legal daily requirement which is distinct from curriculum time. For Catholic schools this requirement is made explicit within the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham which states:

"Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.

At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>"

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from all or any part of Collective Worship. The CES has provided guidance about this.

#### **Roles and responsibilities of Head Teacher, other staff, governors**

The Head Teacher will ensure that:

- the governing body is consulted about the broad nature and arrangements for collective worship
- a daily act of collective worship is provided
- alternative provision is made for pupils whose parents request that they do not attend the collective worship.

All staff are invited to participate in and make an active contribution to collective worship, and encourage pupils to become actively involved.

The governing body will consider before approving the arrangements for collective worship.

#### **Prayer**

##### **What is prayer?**

To pray means to raise the mind and the heart to God. In other words, when we pray we are giving God our thoughts and our love.

##### **Why pray?**

There are four reasons for praying (these are usually called the *four ends* of prayer) and all prayers, whatever they include, can be fitted in to one or more of these categories, one of these A.C.T.S.:

1. Adoration (praising God)
2. Contrition (saying sorry to God for our sins)
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication (asking God for the things we need)

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<sup>2</sup> Archdiocese of Birmingham 'Instrument of Government for Catholic Voluntary Aided Schools.'



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When we pray, we put God first. It is only by putting God first that we can begin to appreciate the extraordinary gifts that He has given us: He has created us, He has forgiven us our sins, and He gives us grace to help us to become more like Him. Once we see how extravagant His love is towards us, then we can begin to see that God treats *everyone* in exactly the same way. In God's eyes, *everyone* is worth loving and *everyone* is enormously worthwhile and valuable. Once we realize this, it changes our attitude towards other people and we can begin to love them as God loves them.

#### Prayers

Learning certain common prayers by heart provides the pupils with the building blocks of a life of prayer, just as the multiplication tables in maths and grammar in language work give children basic building blocks in other curriculum areas. To this end, children are taught certain prayers as they move through the school.

Growth in holiness cannot be measured; there is no certificate at the end of a course! As a result there are no tests to assess which prayers have been learnt by heart. Even so, most pupils would be expected to learn the responses for Mass, and to know:

- **By the end of KS1** – Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be, Prayer to my Guardian Angel;
- **By the end of Year 3** (First Communion year) – Act of Faith, Act of Hope, Act of Charity, Act of Contrition, a simple Morning Offering, and Grace Before Meals and Grace After Meals;
- **In Year 6**, those preparing for Confirmation will also be taught the Apostles' Creed, the Prayer to the Holy Spirit and the Memorare.

In addition:

- **In Year 4**, pupils will be taught how to say the rosary; will become familiar with the list of all twenty mysteries, learn the *Hail Holy Queen* and its short responsary, as well as the collect said at the end of the rosary; and will learn two very short prayers for the Holy Souls in Purgatory;
- **In Year 5**, pupils will be taught the *Anima Christi*, the *Sub Tuum*, and a longer form of the *Act of Contrition*.

#### When to pray

Each class should begin the morning, and end each day, with prayers. The prayers listed above should be used often but others may be used as well, including some in the words of the pupils. *Grace Before Meals* should be said before the pupils leave the classroom for lunch.

#### The Angelus

Traditionally the *Angelus* is said three times a day by Catholics around the world at 6am, noon, and 6pm. At St Aloysius' we say the midday *Angelus*. In each class the *Angelus* should be said either at midday – interrupting whatever else is going on – or as the class breaks for lunch immediately before the *Grace Before Meals* if this is said in the classroom, or at some other suitable moment close to midday.



## St. Aloysius' Catholic Primary School

### Collective Worship Policy

#### Masses

Parents, grandparents, family members, guardians and carers are welcome at, and should be invited and encouraged to attend, *all* Masses and services, including those specifically related to the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation.

#### School Masses

There are many Masses throughout the school year, typically:

##### **Autumn**

- First Mass of the new school year in the school hall
- All Saints and/or Holy Souls (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November) 10am at the Oratory
- Immaculate Conception (8<sup>th</sup> December) 10am at the Oratory
- Advent/end of term in the school hall

##### **Spring**

- Epiphany/start of new term in the school hall
- Candlemas (2<sup>nd</sup> February) in the school hall
- Ash Wednesday 10am at the Oratory
- The Annunciation (25<sup>th</sup> March) 10am at the Oratory
- Passiontide/end of term in the school hall

##### **Summer**

- Eastertide/St George's Day (23<sup>rd</sup> April)/start of term in the school hall
- Corpus Christi Mass and procession (Thursday after Holy Trinity Sunday) in the school hall
- St Philip (26<sup>th</sup> May) 10am at the Oratory
- St Aloysius (21<sup>st</sup> June) in the school hall
- SS Peter & Paul (29<sup>th</sup> June) 10am at the Oratory
- End of year in the school hall

#### Class Masses

Each class has a class Mass each term in The Courtyard or at The Oratory. These Masses are at 2pm on Tuesday afternoons. Usually these Masses are replaced with class prayers for Foundation Stage or Year 1 classes.

#### First Communion and Confirmation Masses

- Mass of Inscription (late January/early February) at 6pm on a weekday at the Oratory for all First Communion and Confirmation children and their families;
- First Communion Mass (usually Saturday closest to 21<sup>st</sup> June, the feast of St Aloysius) at 11am at the Oratory;
- Confirmation Mass (usually in the Autumn/Winter term) at the Oratory.



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#### Preparation for Masses

The class teachers, the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and the chaplain work closely together to prepare the Masses. Whole school Masses are prepared by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator and the chaplain, with classes taking it in turns to lead parts of the Mass. Class Masses are prepared by the class teacher and the chaplain.

#### Which Mass?

- Usually the Mass will need to be that of the saint or feast of the day, or a Mass of the current season (Advent, Christmastide, Lent, Eastertide or Ordinary Time). In which case the prayers and the readings are set by the Church.
- Sometimes it is possible to have a *votive* Mass. A votive Mass is one chosen at the will of the priest who is saying the Mass in consultation with the class teacher or R.E. Co-ordinator. In which case there is sometimes a greater flexibility about choice of prayers and readings.
- Occasionally it will be possible to have a Mass that fits in with a theme being covered by the class in their R.E. lessons. For these Masses there is more flexibility for prayers and readings.

#### Resources:

1. Roman Missal (with the texts of all the prayers of the Mass)
  1. Lectionary (3 volumes, red, blue and brown)
  2. Diocesan Ordo (the annual diary of the Diocese which tells us which feasts are kept on which days)

At school Masses the texts of the Mass and the hymns are usually displayed with the aid of PowerPoint. At class Masses all except the very youngest children should be able to make use of a set of Mass books for the text of the Mass and hymn books if there is to be any singing.

#### Readings

- Readings should be taken from one of the three volumes of the Lectionary.
- Choose readers carefully. Readers should practise ahead of the Mass. They need to be reminded to read *loudly, clearly* and *slowly*. Whilst it is important that many children should have an opportunity to read in public, it is also important that the readings are audible to all at the Mass. The readings are, after all, the means by which the Church keeps Our Lord's command to *proclaim* the Good News.
- If the readings are too difficult for young readers, the equivalent passage of the Bible may be read from the Good News Bible, or from a children's version of Scripture.
- The words, "The word of the Lord" should be read similarly loudly, clearly and slowly.



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- The response to the psalm should be read clearly, and promptly repeated by all present, before the reader goes on to read the first verse of the psalm. There is no need to begin the psalm with words such as, "The responsorial psalm. The response is...".
- Similarly, whoever reads the Gospel acclamation does not need to say, "Please stand to greet the Gospel". Instead, teachers and other adults present should simply lead the way by standing at that point just as in Church on Sundays.
- During Lent, the Alleluia verse is replaced by a simple Gospel Acclamation. Neither readings nor hymns should include the word "Alleluia" during Lent

#### Bidding Prayers

These are prayers of supplication (asking). Thanksgivings are not usually appropriate.

- The priest will introduce the bidding prayers, all of which are addressed to God the Father.
- The prayers should be short, usually just one sentence.
- They should begin with words such as,  
"For..."  
"We pray for..."  
"That..."  
(and should not begin "Dear Jesus..." or "Dear Lord/God...")
- Each prayer should conclude with, "Lord hear us"
- The last bidding prayer should be to ask for the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or Our Lady. The reader should then start the *Hail Mary* and everyone else will join in. (Sometimes we sing the *Salve Regina* instead of saying the *Hail Mary*).
- The priest will conclude the bidding prayers.

Typically there would be just **four** bidding prayers and should be drawn from the following topics:

- for the needs of the Church (e.g. the Pope, bishops, missionaries, those involved in spreading the Gospel and so on);
- for the salvation of the world (for the spread of the Gospel), and for public authorities (governments and so forth), and for peace;
- for all in need (e.g. those suffering from disasters, the sick, the dying, the bereaved, and so on);
- for those who have died (the souls of the Faithful Departed). A bidding prayer for the deceased should **not** end with "Lord, hear us" but with the reader saying, "Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord" and everyone responding, "And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen."
- for the local community (our diocese, city, parish, school, families and so forth);
- and should usually be in that order.



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#### Music

In Whole School masses, the Choir will lead the congregation in singing. The singing parts of the Mass should be sung where possible: the *Kyrie* (Lord have mercy), the *Gloria* on feast days, the *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy, Holy), the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God).

The *Psalm*, the *Gospel Acclamation*, and the *Memorial Acclamation* (immediately after the Consecration of Christ's Body and Blood) may all be sung as well.

The choice of hymns should include traditional hymns – as they are part of our heritage and patrimony as Catholics – as well as more modern hymns.

#### The Offertory Procession

There may be an offertory procession at whole school Masses. In which case, two pupils from the class leading the Mass need to be chosen to carry the bread and wine to the altar after the bidding prayers.

#### Holy Communion

Pupils need to be reminded frequently that anyone going to Communion must *fast* for one hour before Mass. That means eating nothing (including snacks and so forth) for an hour before Mass begins.

The Pope has clearly expressed a preference that Catholics should receive Holy Communion on the tongue. This should become the norm at school in order to emphasize the sacred nature of the Blessed Sacrament. However, for those who wish to receive in the hand, they should be reminded that ***hands must be clean***, and that they should place the left hand flat on top of the right hand, then pick up the Host with their right hand and consume the Blessed Sacrament ***whilst still standing at the altar***.

Children who have not yet made their First Communion, and non-Catholic children, may ask for a blessing by placing their arms across their chests.

#### Behaviour at Mass

The Mass is the most *sacred* action we have in the Catholic Church. Children should be expected to behave accordingly.

Churches, chapels and, during Masses, the school hall, are places of prayer. Pupils should, then, be quiet – if possible, silent – whilst they are in Church, or the convent chapel, or the school hall immediately before, during and after Mass unless they are actually making the responses or joining in the singing.

The example of adults is essential, for example in maintaining an atmosphere of prayer, and in leading the way and encouraging pupils to make the responses and to stand, sit and kneel at the appropriate moments. For class Masses in particular, class teachers might usefully prepare the pupils by going through the responses in class in advance, and reminding them when to stand, sit or kneel. Pupils should be reminded of the need to stand properly, without slouching or leaning over the pew/seat in front of them.



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#### Confession

We start to go to Confession once we can truly tell the difference between right and wrong, and once we are old enough to take some responsibility for our actions, in other words once we have reached the *age of reason* which, for most people, is about the age of seven. As a result, pupils are prepared for their First Confession at the same time as they are prepared for their First Holy Communion in Year 3.

The Church says we must confess any mortal sins at least once a year, but we should not wait a whole year to say sorry to God. Instead, a good habit to get into is to go to Confession about once a month even if we only have venial sins to confess. Why? Because in this way we are constantly trying to repair the damage our sins have done to our friendship with God, and each time we go to Confession we receive God's **sanctifying grace** which gives us the *strength* to grow in *virtue* and *holiness* and *friendship* with God. Consequently, once children have made their First Confession and Communion in Year 3 they are taken to the Oratory each term throughout Years 4, 5 and 6 in order to help them develop the habit of frequent Confession.

Non-Catholic children are strongly encouraged to join their Catholic peers on these occasions by 'going to Confession' too. In reality, they are invited to go into the confessional, say to the priest that they are not Catholics and to ask for a blessing. The priest may say a prayer with them before giving them a blessing. This serves three purposes:

- it adds to the sense of inclusion because no-one is excluded from God's mercy;
- it helps to develop a sense of cohesion because it means that all the pupils in the school are participating in the same activities and in the Catholic life of the school;
- it helps non-Catholics to understand a little better what their Catholic friends are doing rather than shrouding this part of their friends' lives in mystery.

#### Prayer tables

Each classroom has a crucifix prominently displayed and, in addition, has its own shrine or area of devotion. The shrine is not intended as a resource area, rather it provides a focus for prayer and very often the pupils will face towards it when saying class prayers together. The shrine is usually draped with a cloth in a colour to match the liturgical season:

- September to the end of November – green
- Advent – purple
- Christmas to the Baptism of the Lord – white or gold
- From the Baptism of the Lord to Shrove Tuesday – green
- Lent – purple
- Easter to Pentecost – white or gold
- Pentecost to the end of the summer term – green

The shrine will normally include a statue of Our Lady and perhaps an image of St Philip and/or St Aloysius or another saint or other images of devotion. It may include a crib at Christmas, scenes from the Stations of the Cross during Lent, an Easter Garden during Eastertide and so forth.



# St. Aloysius' Catholic Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

### Retreats

Both the First Communion children and the Confirmands take part in a day of recollection as part of their preparation for the reception of these sacraments.

### Assemblies

All assemblies are primarily acts of worship and should, therefore, either be formal acts of worship or should at least include an element of worship. To this end, all assemblies should include a prayer, and *may* include a reading from Scripture or from the lives or writings of one of the saints, and *may* include a hymn. Themes and content should reflect aspects of the Catholic Faith. The use of devotional objects such as a crucifix, statues, candles and so forth is encouraged.

### Staff INSET

Regular staff meeting time is given to discussion of the Mass with the whole staff. This includes explanation of signs, symbols, practices as well as agreement on expectations of the children during Mass in church and in school.

Any changes to the Liturgy or our own procedures are explored and explained.

RE co-ordinator and Headteacher in collaboration support new staff through induction into working in a Catholic School.

### Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The School Improvement Committee will receive a report from the Head Teacher annually on the themes covered in the daily acts of collective worship and how they complement the school's aims and values. The Head Teacher will also report on the numbers withdrawn and the effectiveness of the alternative arrangements. Parents and staff will be consulted about the impact of collective worship on pupils. Section 48 inspections will provide feedback on collective worship and its impact on pupils' spiritual development.

Signed ..... Head Teacher

Signed ..... Chair of Governors

Date May 2019  
Review May 2021