



ST PAUL'S ACADEMY

Collective Worship Policy



*'You are God's work of art'
Ephesians 2:10*

Approved by: Sheila Ward (Principal) and Governors

Last reviewed on: February 2024

Next review due by: February 2026

Introduction

St Paul's Academy is a Catholic non-selective Community School of 1153 pupils serving local community needs. It has a unique admissions arrangement with an offer of 160 faith places and 80 for the local community for each cohort of 240 in Years 7-11. At St Paul's Academy we believe we are all 'God's work of art'. Therefore we are all worthy and deserving of dignity and respect. This belief, especially in our prayer worship, underpins all that we do at St Paul's.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers is an integral part of the learning and teaching and enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and develop a mature spiritual life.'

Collective Worship at St Paul's Academy acknowledges and celebrates the life-giving presence of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in our lives. It is how we, as a community of faith, come together to give glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is through acts of Collective Worship, prayer and liturgy, that the Catholic identity of our school is shaped and sustained.

Sacramental aspects of the Church's liturgical life, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, are woven into the fabric of the school's Catholic identity. Therefore, we have a schedule of liturgical events which include planned participation in Mass and liturgies and the opportunity for staff and pupils to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the season of Lent.

Celebration of Word takes place each week in our weekly prayer powerpoint, in which students reflect on the Sunday gospel as well as a particular quote for the week linking to the Church's year. The scripture has an explanation, written reflection and questions to help students further reflect. This helps students understand how to reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy and demonstrates how they can articulate the ways in which these experiences have led to action.

Throughout their time at St Paul's students experience different forms of prayer such as Meditation, Lecio Devina, traditional prayers of the church, Stations of the Cross and personal prayers. These opportunities are given in the weekly prayer powerpoint, during Lent, when students are on retreat and when students visit the Chapel during their RE lessons.

The school Chapel is always open and both students and staff are welcome to come and spend time in prayer. Times of prayer are held in Chapel in response to particular events such as Remembrance Day, and prayers for the Ukraine and the Middle East. These are our

voluntary opportunities to compliment the whole school times of prayer in classrooms and assemblies.

Legal requirements

The law requires all maintained schools:

- provide daily Collective Worship for all pupils.
- Acts of Collective Worship are not to be designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school this means that times of Collective Worship are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education; recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship.
- In addition Foundation governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools; Governors in Catholic academies give a written commitment to do the same.¹

Responsibility and oversight of Collective Worship

The Governors and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that there are daily timetabled opportunities for whole school, form and year group Worship;

The school has named the Lay Chaplain as the person who is responsible for organising Collective Worship across the school; this Collective Worship, is in the form of prayer or assembly and happens for all pupils daily. Each pupil at St Paul's is able to access the prayer and liturgy offered within the school day.

Resources

This Collective Worship is well resourced, as is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources, including staff time, chaplaincy provision, and dedicated space for prayer and liturgy which are worthily equipped.

Training and formation

To continue professional development the Chaplain attends training and formation both at the diocese and the National Association of Catholic Chaplains in Education (ACCE) Conference to ensure that Collective Worship is prepared and delivered to a high standard. School staff receive regular training for Catholic life- focussed on prayer and daily habit of prayer for all staff and students. This is supplemented by weekly staff briefing where there is

¹ 1 *Christ at the Centre* Rev Marcus Stock, 2005 3

a focus on Catholic Life (events, staff prayer and reflection and highlighting any best practice we would like to see).

The school Pupil Chaplaincy Team receive training and formation before they prepare and deliver the whole school liturgy or assembly.

Monitoring and evaluation

As a school SLT evaluate assembly and form prayer on a termly basis, gathering student voice. After each whole school liturgy, the chaplain gathers a random selection of students from across the school community to evaluate and give feedback. This regular and comprehensive monitoring of Collective Worship is fed back to Governors in the Annual Chaplaincy Report and clearly demonstrates the impact it is having on our school's Catholic mission.

Principles of Collective Worship:

Acts of Worship at St Paul's endeavour to: give praise and honour to God; give pupils meaningful opportunities to engage in the Sacramental Life of the Church; give pupils and students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family context in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church. Collective worship is of high quality and fundamental to the life of our school and its Catholic character. Students have the opportunity to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead Worship.

Aims of Collective Worship

The ultimate aim of Collective Worship at St Paul's is to provide the space and tools for our young people within the context of the Catholic faith and traditions:

To contemplate the mystery of God;

To develop an understanding of Salvation History through meaningful engagement with the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation;

To reflect on spiritual and moral issues;

To foster and nurture relationships;

To respond to and to celebrate life;

To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community;

To nurture each student in the understanding that 'They are God's work of art';

To enrich religious experience;

To grow in liturgical understanding and development;

To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;

To seek appropriate responses to the love of God;

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