



# Collective Worship Policy

*Information for Parents: This policy is available on request.*

The Ursuline Preparatory School does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Statutory and Diocesan requirements are that all schools should provide a daily act of worship.

*“Every Catholic and religiously sponsored School should have a vibrant worship life with ample opportunities for student liturgies, times of prayer and reflection and be suffused with religious symbols that nurture the faith identity of students.” Thomas Groome*

## 1 Aims and purpose

1.1 The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship and meet the living God;
- to reflect on the ethos of the school;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship;
- to reflect on various aspects of school life by sharing learning experiences; and celebrating individual, group or whole school achievements.



## **2 Worshipping nature of our School**

The worshipping nature of our school is expressed in a variety of ways. Among these are:

- Prayer including our Start and End of School Day Prayers and our Grace at lunch time;
- Assemblies;
- The Mass;
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- Alternative Liturgies such as The Christingle Service, Remembrance Day and Foundation Day services;
- The Rosary;
- Holy Week, Stations of the Cross and the Easter Play
- The May Procession;
- Classroom Prayer / Worship / Meditation;
- Upper 1 Residential Retreat;
- Upper 2 Day Retreat

## **3 Collective worship**

3.1 We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship may involve all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

3.2 In line with the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, which states that collective worship should be 'in accordance with the tenets and practices of the religion or religious denomination specified in relation to the school', as a Catholic school our assemblies are based on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

## **4 Organisation of collective worship**

4.1 Each day begins with a prayer to dedicate our day and work to God. This may be class led or in the form of an assembly.

4.2 Worship occurs daily, taking the form of whole school, departmental or individual class assemblies.

- 4.3 We create opportunities for, and bring children to the threshold of, worship to ensure they are meaningful events.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music or pictures and sometimes candles or other symbols which act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

- 4.4 The Headteacher or other members of staff normally conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious and secular groups conduct them instead.

The Upper 2 class lead the end of term assemblies at Christmas and Easter. A special celebration assembly takes place at the end of each Key Stage.

- 4.5 We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum, most especially the R.E. curriculum. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day or the season in which they take place. In addition, we also celebrate and highlight key aspects and festivals of other world religions.

- 4.6 Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children; and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. The Ursuline Preparatory School is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all children in assemblies.

- 4.7 We invite parents to class assemblies, feast day masses prepared by a specific class, Christingle, The Stations of the Cross, EYFS Baptism Celebration, EYFS and Key Stage One Mothers Day Assemblies and the Leavers' Mass on the final day of the School Year.

4.8 We welcome Governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

## **5 Monitoring and review**

5.1 The subject is reviewed as part of the monitoring progress built into the staff-training programme of the school. Additionally, the Curriculum Co-ordinator monitors the content of our collective worship and the children's response to it.