



Prayer and Worship Policy

School Mission Statement

St. Michael & St. Martin school follows the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, in its daily life through celebration of the Liturgy and through following the values taught in the Gospel of Jesus, by:

- Learning our faith.
- Living our faith.
- Loving our faith.

Thus, the school recognises the dignity of every human person because s/he is a child of God, while fostering awareness of the world's poor. Equality of opportunity for every person is therefore paramount and precludes all forms of discrimination on grounds of colour, gender, race, social class or ability.

The school aims to nurture the spiritual, intellectual and physical growth of each pupil through a holistic approach, which takes due note of the needs of every child while, at the same time, striving for excellence in all aspects of education in a secure environment.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 3 (Best interests of the child)

The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that may affect them. All adults should do what is best for children.

Article 14:

Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide their children on these matters.

Article 30:

You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

Introduction

The first key reason why Catholic schools are established, then, is to be part of the Church's mission in education, to place Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people's lives. (Christ at the Centre, 2012)

As a Catholic school, the foundation of all that we do is based upon Christ and His Gospel values of love, peace and justice. All members of our community share the responsibility of supporting the Catholic identity of the school. We will strive to ensure that we place Christ and the teachings of the Church at the heart of what we do.

It is recognised that '...the first educators in the faith are parents. By their example in the home and the participation in the Mass and other sacraments, the foundations of life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down.' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2000)

As a Catholic school, we support parents in their role as the first educators. Our Mission at St. Michael and St Martin is to follow the teaching of the Catholic Church in its daily life through the celebration of the liturgy and through following the values taught in the Gospel of Jesus.

Through collective worship in school we offer the opportunities for children to develop and grow in their faith.

We seek to ensure that the message and spirit of the Gospel permeates all aspects of school life. It is to this end that we have agreed the following Mission Statement:

**LEARNING OUR FAITH
LIVING OUR FAITH**

The requirement to provide Collective Worship

Pupils in VA (Voluntary Aided) schools in England and Wales are required by law to take part in an act of collective worship on each school day which must be in accordance with the provisions of the school's trust deed and instrument of government. In Catholic schools this is therefore "in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church".

Collective Worship is more than just a legal requirement and is central to what we offer at St. Michael and St Martin.

Aims

Through collective worship, our aims will support the following:

School Mission Statement

Our acts of collective worship will reflect and support the development of the school ethos and Mission Statement. Gospel values and prayer will provide the foundation for our worship, and enable children to grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.

Community

Through collective worship we will support our children to recognise and understand their role as a part of the school, parish and wider Church communities as followers of Christ. Through shared links between home, parish and school, personal achievements and significant events will be celebrated as a part of the community. Children will develop a sense of shared ethos and values.

Relationship

Through collective worship, children will be offered opportunities to reflect and grow in their personal relationship with God. Through prayer and reflection, we will enhance the spiritual and personal growth of each child. Children will be able to contemplate the mystery of God, and take time to 'wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'.

Church

Our acts of collective worship will be guided by the traditions and liturgical year of the Church. The children will be supported to learn prayers and traditions of the Church, and experience the seasons within the Church's year. Scripture, particularly from the Lectionary, will be used to support acts of collective worship.

Collective worship at St. Michael and St. Martin aims to give honour and praise to God. Therefore, acts of collective worship must be of high quality and always respectful to the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.

Worship of God has both a personal dimension and a communal dimension: personal, private worship is encouraged to complement communal worship (*Christ at the Centre, 2012*)

Collective Worship at St. Michael and St Martin

Liturgy shapes prayer and worship to enable all pupils to have a conscious, active, meaningful and fruitful participation. (*Christ at the Centre, 2012*)

Acts of collective worship at St. Michael and St. Martin take place in a variety of forms. These are supported by the learning environments around the school, which reflect the school's Catholic identity and mission.

Daily Prayers

The daily routine of school involves time for prayers:

- Each morning begins with a Morning Reflection and Morning Prayer
- Grace before meals
- Grace after meals (EYFS, KS1 (Sang) and in KS2)
- End of day prayer, including use of class prayer jar (EYFS, KS1 (Sang) and in KS2)

Prayers are also said during other acts of collective worship. Spontaneous prayer is also encouraged responding to the needs of the children and the wider community.

Alongside our school prayers, we recognise that prayer is individual for each person, and a variety of ways of prayer offered throughout the year.

Mass

As Catholics, we believe the centre of our faith is the Eucharist. Through this Sacrament we are joined in communion with Christ. Working with our Parish Priests, we will celebrate Mass in school on Holy Days of Obligation, and during significant times during the school year. Mass is celebrated as a whole school, within phases (often with parents invited – following Covid-19 Risk Assessment), as year groups and in the local parishes.

Child Led Worship

Central to supporting children in growing in their love and knowledge of Christ is the opportunity to plan and lead acts of worship. Children from across the school are supported to plan and lead their class in a time of worship. This takes place weekly.

Teacher Led Worship

Each teacher will plan and lead an act of worship with their class. These take place each week and sometimes follow a whole school focus.

Phase Worship

Each week, the school gathers in phases to come together for collective worship. SLT take turns to lead this time of worship, and involve children in the planning and delivery. St. Michael and St Martin uses a paid resource, Ten Ten Resources, who provide an assembly each week linked to Sunday's Gospel. St Michael and St Martin also use the Mark 10 Mission to explore the Sunday Gospel with the children each Monday morning.

Hymn Practice

KS2 hymn practice. This time of worship is led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Children learn a variety of songs and hymns, both contemporary and traditional. The liturgical year guides the choice of music used for worship. Since Covid-19, and depending on the school's risk assessment, Hymn singing has been restricted to class bubbles.

Whole School Collective Worship / Gospel Assembly

Each Friday, the whole school comes together for collective worship / Gospel Assembly. EYFS and KS1 will be led by class teachers. In KS2 each class takes turns leading the worship. This gives us a time to come together, spend time in the presence of God and reflect upon the week that has just passed.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation services planned during the seasons of Advent and Lent are led by the Parish Priests and provide the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation with a priest.

Other Liturgies

Throughout the year, we celebrate different liturgies linked to the life of the Church such as the Carol Service, Easter Liturgy, and Stations of the Cross etc. Children from different year groups are involved in the planning and preparation of these.

Staff Prayer

Catholic schools are committed to communal prayer, and as such, Staff at St Michael and St Martin meet daily each morning for Prayers – currently via Zoom but pre-covid in the staff room at 8:30am. Staff meetings always begin with a time of prayer and whole Staff Inset days begin with a liturgy. Governors also prayer together at the beginning of their meetings.

Prayer Tables

Prayer tables are there to support collective worship and the Catholic Life of the school. Each classroom has a prayer table and crucifix and the centre of the room. Around the school, prayer tables and focal points provided to enhance worship and allow children to explore their faith even more.

Home school links

Links with home to support collective worship are important. Parents invited to join certain acts of worship in school. Prayer resources and knowledge for what the children are studying shared with families each term. RE Knowledge Organisers sent out at the start of each term to assist with RE Homework and allow parents to assist with learning.

Monitoring of Collective Worship

The RE Subject Leader will monitor the delivery of collective worship at St. Michael and St Martin. Collective worship is planned using the suggested format from the Diocese of Westminster / CAFOD. Planning sheets, photographs and evidence of the children's prayers and reflections are collated in the classroom collective worship book.

Acts of worship and prayer areas may be monitored by the RE subject Leader and members of the SLT to ensure high quality collective worship is provided, and that worship is in line with the traditions of the Catholic Church. Monitoring also allows opportunities for good practise to be identified, shared and celebrated.

Agreed by Governing Body on (date): November 2024

Review Date	:	November 2027
Person Responsible	:	Nicola Duggan Sabina Bell