

Date ratified at Full  
Governors' Meeting  
**28 April 2022**



Review  
Governors P&A  
Committee

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

### **NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL**

**Part of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust  
Company No: 7913261  
Registered Office: Surrey Street, Norwich NR1 3PB**

### **THE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

*I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full  
(John 10:10)*

We are a joyous and inclusive Catholic school, inspired by the love of God and the teachings of Jesus, specifically faith, hope, forgiveness and peace.

Our community is committed to a rounded education that develops knowledgeable, morally informed and compassionate young leaders.



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**Notre Dame High School**  
**A Policy Statement for Collective Worship**

**Vision - All our activity is rooted in prayer.**

*Ora est labora* ("**to pray is to work**") from St Benedict

- Our ethos, which flows from the values we pray about, is at the very core of how we teach our young people and work with each other at Notre Dame.
- The Mass is at the centre of the school life. Celebrating together as a whole school community makes a special and significant contribution to developing the school ethos.
- There is a Mass in the school chapel every Thursday morning at 8:30.
- We all participate in Collective Daily Prayer and the following activities start with a **publicly identified** prayer: *Assemblies, Form Group Registration, and all formal school meetings e.g. Governors meetings, Staff meetings, Year Team, Department Team meetings, Student Welfare & Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Board, Leadership Team meetings, and appropriate 'in-house' meetings.*
- Year Groups celebrate Mass together at least once a year.
- Forms have prayer services in our Chapel at least twice a year.

**Policy:**

We believe that collective prayer and worship in our school provides opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To foster and nurture relationships
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop a sense of community
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To seek appropriate responses to the love of God
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to celebrate'
- To recognise that prayer allows time and space for individual and collective reflection.

## Practice:

### 1. Daily Prayer

- As a Christian community we should set aside some time each morning to pray. This is also a legal requirement. This prayer will normally occur in the Form Group at morning Registration. On other days it will occur during Assembly. It is recommended that one of the following forms the basis of daily prayer:

*an excerpt from Sunday's Gospel  
a familiar prayer; such as the Our Father  
a prayer written or chosen by a pupil  
a time of silent prayer  
a reading suitable for that occasion*

[Readings do not have to be biblical and can include poems or even contemporary news stories which relate to the week's theme or major current events, provided that they are related or discussed in a spiritual manner.]

*Music and song can be used too.*

- It is expected that Form Groups follow a weekly rhythm of prayer, such as the one we use at staff briefing. An example is offered below:

**Monday:** *Introduce theme of the week with the reading from Sunday's Gospel accessible from the bulletin.*

**Tuesday:** *Silent prayer or pupil led prayer based on the weekly theme or topical news*

**Wednesday:** *The 'Our Father' or other familiar prayer*

**Thursday:** *Assembly Day*

**Friday:** *Music – student or form tutor bring in music to encourage prayer or individual reflection.*

It is worth noting that each year group has assembly on a different day.

- The contribution of daily prayer to the 'spiritual & moral' education within the community is enhanced by the extent that pupils participate in the planning, preparation and leadership of prayer. This can be enabled by:

*Pupils working with teachers to plan a series of morning prayers*

*Pupils researching possible prayer, music or other resources*

*Pupils developing a rota to take the lead in the daily prayers*

- The chaplaincy team will provide some guidance, such as identifying suitable material for use by tutors. Some resources are available in the staff work room and in the Sacristy.
- There is a collection of weekly updated resources available via a link on the bulletin. In addition, in the Pupil Planner there are some pages on 'Prayer'. Some of the most familiar prayers, such as Our Father & Hail Mary, are included on those pages.

## **2. Assemblies**

Assemblies are an important opportunity for spiritual development through prayer and for presenting Christian values to the students. Assemblies are organised on a year group basis. These are usually taken by members of the Leadership Team, members of the Senior Management Team; the Chaplaincy Team, Heads of Year. Those who take assemblies are encouraged to enable students to participate in the planning and delivery of assemblies.

The programme of Assemblies linked to the weekly themes is used and is outlined in the School Calendar. The weekly themes follow the cycle of the Liturgical Year of the Roman Catholic Church. That means that they come from the readings at the Sunday Mass. Any member of staff wishing to help by presenting an Assembly should see the headteacher or members of the Chaplaincy Team.

Assemblies are an essential element of the 'spiritual and moral' education programme within the school. The weekly themes are developed from the church's liturgical year. Those themes are further linked to the 'SEAL' (*Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning*) programme so that there is a sense of continuity. It is expected, therefore, that the assembly programme will not be overtaken by other school operations (such as briefing on yr9 options, yr11 exam information). It is preferable for year groups to gather for such briefings outside of assembly time. On the rare occasions that this is not possible the expectation is that such gatherings will still have a specific spiritual and moral content

## **3. Liturgies**

Whole school Masses during the year include those marking the beginning and ending of the school year, special occasions and (where possible) Holy Days of Obligation that occur during the school year. The practical arrangements are distributed to staff in the week before the Mass. It is very important to note that all staff share in the responsibility for ensuring that the right tone is set. Staff should sit among the students and lead by example. Our current practice is for Whole School Mass to be celebrated in the Sports Hall, although we go to St John's Cathedral for our start of the school year Mass in September.

Year group Masses are celebrated in St. John's Hall. These are placed in the school calendar after negotiation with the timetable team to secure St John's Hall without causing disruption to teaching groups. Current practice is for these Masses to take place on a Thursday. Where possible the Heads of Year and Form Tutors are released to attend with their Form groups.

Non-Eucharistic liturgies are celebrated as appropriate throughout the year. These include Advent/Christmas celebration; Distribution of Ashes and Reconciliation services during Lent; Holy Week celebrations when we are in school at that time; and prayer during retreat opportunities.

The planning of the liturgies is led by the Chaplaincy Team. Student participation is encouraged through helping the preparation, doing the readings, helping with music/singing, drama and leading some of the prayers.

It is expected that all staff support the Mass and other liturgies, supporting good standards of behaviour, and, in the case of Form Tutors, leading their forms in and strategically seating pupils, so that they can all participate for the best.

#### **4. The Chapel**

The School Chapel is an important place for the School community. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the chapel. Because of this, the chapel is a place for private and community prayer, for quiet and reflection. It is important that it is kept free for such use. Those wishing to use the chapel should check with the Chaplaincy Team.

#### **5. More information**

Staff and pupils are welcome to discuss issues relating to collective worship at any time. The policy and practice are monitored by the school Chaplaincy Team and by the Governors. In addition, there are groups of pupils who contribute to this process.

*'Guidelines for working in this Catholic School'* and *'Guidelines 2 - The Mass'*. This documentation is given to staff as part of the induction process. Additional copies are available on request.

The Chaplaincy team meets half-termly. The meetings times are detailed in the school calendar and staff are always welcome to attend.

#### **6. Policy review**

The Collective Worship policy will be reviewed every three years, or more frequently as necessary. The next review is scheduled for spring 2025.