

## Mission Statement

**The Priory; a place to learn: have fun, grow and develop, in the light and love of Christ.  
Jesus said: "I am the vine; you are the branches" (John 15:5)**

## Guiding Rationale

Our religious beliefs coined within Catholic social teaching are central to the provision throughout the whole school; and the foundation on which the ethos of the school is built. Every person is recognised as a unique creation of God; it is the intention of every member of staff, for each child to be assisted in every way possible, to achieve his or her potential in all the fields which make up the whole human person: the academic, social, moral, physical and spiritual.

As Jesus taught through his actions and words, everyone has the right to be treated equally –with dignity and respect. All who work and learn here do so in the knowledge that God created us as unique individuals where our differences; whether of: disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and age, are celebrated as part of the wonderfully created world in which we live.

Our attitudes are Gospel led and every opportunity is taken to refer to behaviour norms which are seen as desirable and which epitomize those which are fostered by the Gospel teachings. This is especially the case in the ways in which we respect and relate to others through:

- valuing, respecting and promoting the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals within all our professional activities and relationships
- all members of staff feeling valued, well trained and able to perform their professional duties free from undue and damaging stress
- ensuring the equality of educational opportunity based on merit; irrespective of background, beliefs and socio-economic contexts.

As a worshipping community, we appreciate the importance of prayer in our daily lives and try to present as many opportunities as possible to participate in this intrinsic part of our Catholic Faith. It is from this action and acknowledgement of our faith that we are impelled to share our resources –the school and parish community undertake a great deal of charity work; supporting the global family of God on a local, national and world-wide basis.



# The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy

## Collective Worship Policy

The Priory is a caring, Catholic school community, where everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. Here individuals are helped to achieve their full potential, through a child centred curriculum, which develops independent learning. This guiding philosophy stems from our mission statement.

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## Aims:

- To love learning and thirst for knowledge
- To grow in Christian love through the teachings of the scriptures
- To acknowledge and respect difference
- To love and feel loved
- To respect our environment
- To forgive and be forgiven

## Introduction:

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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.

## Legal Requirements:

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

## The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of Our School:

We endorse the belief that 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 who 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 and religious experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain
- We will continue to foster and deepen the children's personal relationship with God our Father daily in prayer. We do this by helping them become aware of God's Presence in their lives and of His love for them by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age. This may be in one of the following ways:
  - Prayer of silence
  - Spontaneous prayer
  - Praying through gesture or action
  - Formal prayer

Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship. Children are encouraged to pray in the morning and in the evening. Worship in this school is much more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

### **The Aims of Collective Worship:**

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To make time out to 'wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'

### **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
- Give children positive liturgical experiences appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church. In order to do this, celebrations will:
  - Be kept small wherever possible or appropriate 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.

In order to achieve the above, Collective Worship is organised as follows:

Monday – Whole School Assembly, aided by pupils in retelling the weekend's Gospel story and message. The Statement of the week is also explored at this time. A modern-day tale or story which links into the Gospel and/or Statement of the week is also often told and explored at this time.

Tuesday – Assemblies in their own classes for Circle Time –reflecting on the Statement of the week and exploring the themes in the Come and See syllabus.

Wednesday – Singing Hymns Assembly: Learning how to worship through singing prayers and learning about the religious language used in these prayers; learning that singing is a very special way in which we respond to the awe and wonder of God’s grace and creation in our lives.

Thursday – Key Stage 2 and a Key Stage 1 (and FS2 when appropriate) Assembly.

Friday – Whole School Celebration Assembly – Headteacher and Classteacher’s Awards and Achievements celebrated and offered to God in a collective act of worship to which the school community is invited.

### **Planning:**

- Collective Worship in this school is planned following a structure with reference to the seasons of the church, ‘Come and See’, significant (and liturgical) dates and the curriculum.  
□□Scripture is be the focus for most acts of worship
- It will relate to the school community in the light of the school’s aims and mission
- There will be flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- We will aim to teach children the skills to enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Once a year the school’s provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school.

### **Resources:**

There are many resources available for planning Collective Worship. These are divided into Key Stages and can be found on a dedicated shelf in the PPA Room. There are several Internet sites that are also a useful resource for planning.

### **Eucharist:**

Eucharist celebrations form a very important part in our Collective Worship strategy. Opportunities for children to plan and participate are maximised and parents and other members of the school and Parish communities are encouraged to attend. The celebrations will take the following forms: □□Whole school Masses

- Class Masses and Liturgies
- Key Stage Masses and Liturgies
- Children are encouraged to participate in school-lead Sunday Masses throughout the year  
Children are prepared for the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, mainly during their time in York Class (Year 3). This is undertaken in partnership with the parish church with preparation sessions delivered by school staff on eight separate Monday’s throughout the year leading to the children’s Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Day. Similarly the parish church deliver eight further sessions on Saturday afternoons leading into Saturday evening’s vigil Mass.

Reviewed: Spring 2018

Next Review: Spring 2021

