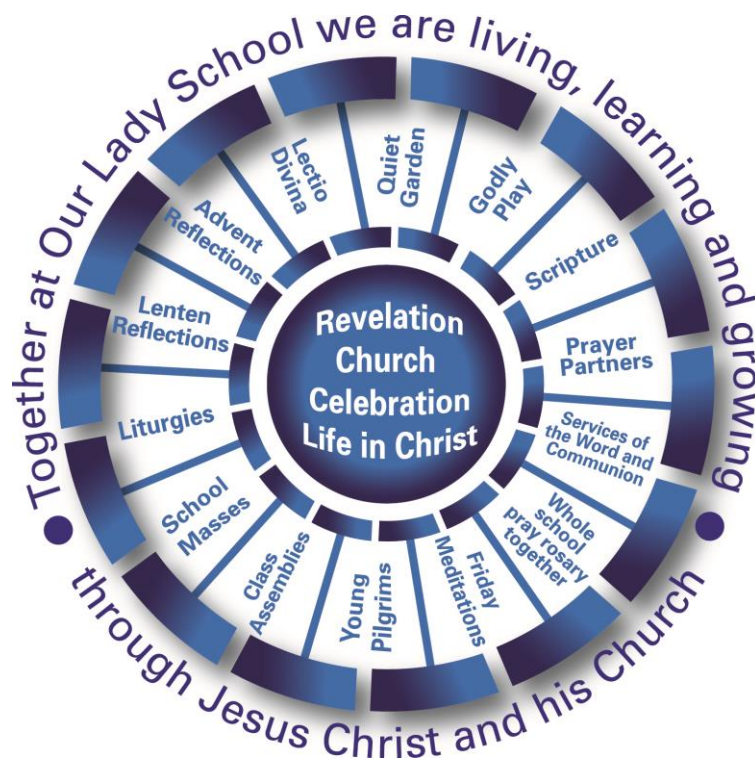




Our Lady Catholic Primary School

Collective Worship Policy



The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
A Catholic Academy

March 2020

“Together at Our Lady School we are living, learning and growing through Jesus Christ and his Church.”

PRINCIPLES:

Our Lady School believes that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do living our faith in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value, which we place on the development of the whole child, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” for the majority of the time. They must also be ‘appropriate’, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”.

Families who send their children to this school are, in the main, Catholic but we do have some children from other practising Christian faiths. In addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our children to worship, we have to consider the background that our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child’s family is respected at all times.

AIMS

Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of the other people in every day situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person’s life stance, whether it be religious or not

PRACTICE

At Our Lady School we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework:

- Daily prayers three times a day
- Monday whole school assembly led by the headteacher/member of SLT
- Wednesday Key Stage 1 assembly lead by KS1 leader and teachers, working together.
- Wednesday Key Stage 2 assembly lead by KS2 leader.
- Friday whole assembly lead by a class or the Headteacher/member of SLT
- Class meditations throughout the school

We celebrate Mass and liturgies regularly and children worship both in school and in the Parish.

Parents and governors are welcome to attend class assemblies, assemblies of a special nature e.g. following a theme week and Masses. Parishioners are welcome to attend Masses celebrated in school.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- All Teaching Staff are required to attend whole school assemblies.
- Parents of a pupil have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher.

This policy is shared with all staff and parents are advised of the policy.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This is according to the School's SIP.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON PLANNING AND CONDUCTING ASSEMBLIES

In planning our assemblies, we choose from a range of methods, including:

- Sacred and secular stories/readings linked to SEAL
- Dance/drama
- Fairtrade
- Prayer/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points/PowerPoint presentations
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors are invited to speak at assemblies

SONG/MUSIC

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. Music from a variety of cultures and types is used on occasions. Music should be selected carefully to match the theme. Children are given the opportunity to play instruments before assemblies, during our assemblies and at liturgies and Masses.

PRAYER/REFLECTION

We feel that, whilst prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts, use of reflective readings and moments of stillness also provides opportunities for pupils to respond in a more personal way. Various forms of introduction to our prayers can be used e.g., 'And now in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well known Christian prayer...' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions.

We celebrate special feast days, achievements and important occasions with liturgies and worship.

We mark Ash Wednesday with the distribution of Ashes in a school service led by a Priest.

We hold First Holy Communion Prayer Services for our Y3 children and their parents and prayer partner.

YR children experience Godly play, our Y5 children Lectio Divina and we have 'praying the scripture' during Lent and Advent for our parents and parishioners.

We have many acts of worship that reflect the liturgical year.