



St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Acts of Worship Policy

“We commit ourselves to love, respect and serve one another as disciples of Jesus Christ”

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| Approval Date: | September 2023 |
| Review Date | September 2024 |

Introduction

At St Bede's Voluntary Academy, we place Christ at the center of what we do. This means we are committed to educating the whole child to reach their potential: "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full" John 10:10. Prayer, worship and reflection are woven into the fabric of our school community because they are integral to the Catholic faith. Opportunities for worship have therefore become discrete parts of the school day but we welcome extempore worship too. Students and staff have opportunities to experience a variety of worship formats: for prayer and reflection, both privately and collectively, assemblies and liturgies within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church, values and our shared ethos. We invite all of our wider school community to join us in any acts of worship.

Within the Diocese of Nottingham, it is our mission to help each person to "encounter God's personal love for them" and this will be partly achieved through our acts of worship. Students will be provided opportunities to plan, prepare and deliver acts of worship so that they can "discover and grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his disciples". They will also be encouraged to "open [up] to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in their lives so that they reach out to others with God's love" by being involved in physical acts of worship through mission and evangelism.

It is our mission as educators within the Catholic sector to acknowledge that this may be the first and only experience of worship. The dynamics of our students will have other faith backgrounds or identify without a religion. For these reasons, it is paramount Acts of Worship are afforded at least the same merit as curriculum time.

Mission

- Acts of Worship are a blessing and every member of our school is entitled to encounter God
- To deepen students' awareness and empathy by coordinating worship with the liturgical calendar whilst responding to the needs of the wider community
- To promote spiritual and moral values and virtues in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- To promote a sense of belonging to a thriving and active Christian community.
- To have Christ at the center of our worship so that it reflects the Catholic teachings and is Catholic in character, whilst respecting other faith celebrations and the diversity this brings
- To encourage the active participation of staff and students in worship, encouraging different groups to take responsibility for preparation and delivery. This will be achieved by allowing worship to take on a variety of forms and experiences such as: silence, music, dance, art, videos, scripture readings, drama.

Worship during Tutor Time

- It is the responsibility of the learning tutor to ensure an Act of Worship takes place during tutor time. Students should be encouraged to prepare the Act of Worship with advice and guidance when needed from the learning tutor. Resources will be provided by the liturgy coordinator, however it is expected that staff plan acts of worship in advance so that the focus and activities are appropriate to the interest, background and abilities of their students.
- Create a welcoming environment with a sense of calm and respect
- Participation by all students. Rotas may be in place so that each student has a role to play.
- The Word of God will be said and provide opportunities to reflect upon this
- Traditional prayers of the Church will be said during tutor time and will be changed according to the liturgical year.
- Different forms of prayer are encouraged (see appendix)

- The sign of the cross will introduce Acts of Worship
- The Sacred space is used and may include religious artefacts pertinent for that Act of Worship
- The website with resources for tutors is updated weekly with different themes each week. This is in accordance with NRCDES.
- Each tutor group will participate in a Chapel Act of Worship each term led by the Chaplaincy Team

Assemblies

Heads of Year and SLT are responsible for leading the year group in an act of worship on a regular basis. Assemblies should be well planned, meaningful and include traditional prayers of the Catholic Church. As with tutor time worship, there will be elements to include a peaceful welcome and goodbye; the sign of the cross to introduce worship; different forms of prayer; participation from students.

Technical equipment is available on request.

Each House group will gather for an Act of Worship organised by the House Leader in the Assembly Hall as follows:

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 7 | Year 11 |

Students will gather in the Presentation Centre on their respective days at 1:45pm. At least once a year each tutor group will lead a whole year liturgical prayer assembly.

Acts of Worship throughout the day

At 8.45am there will be a prayer said in all classes before the lesson begins. This should be the mission statement or the morning offering.

At 1:45pm during tutor time and assembly traditional prayers of the Church will be said. These will rotate throughout the year.

At 3.05pm a prayer should be said before the students are dismissed. This should be the Glory Be.

Other Liturgical Celebrations

Liturgy is an action of the Catholic Church that communicates the “word made flesh” (John 1:14) and opportunities for the school community to encounter the presence of God are essential during the academic year. The liturgy will follow the liturgical calendar to ensure the celebration is consistent with the Catholic Church. In addition, opportunities to receive sacraments are embedded within the school calendar as these are an outward sign of inward grace, a grace that is a gift from God.

- Liturgical celebrations take place at the beginning of the Academic year and at the end of each term
- On Holy Days of Obligation, there will be the opportunity for the school community to celebrate Mass
- Voluntary Mass takes place every Friday in the chapel dependent on the availability of local parish priests
- The school feast day of St Bede is celebrated on May 25th
- Our Lady of Lourdes Feast Day is celebrated 11th February
- The Feast of St Therese of Lisieux as a patron of the school is celebrated October 1st
- Year 11 Leaver’s Liturgy
- Mass of Welcome for Year 7

- Mass for all Parents and friends of St Bede's in September.
- One Mass per year group takes place throughout the year
- Services of reconciliation take place during Advent and Lent
- Prayer journeys also take place throughout the year
- Voluntary acts of reflection take place once a half term by the chaplaincy team on a lunchtime
- Reflection days take place for all year groups once a year.

Opportunities for Staff

The spiritual nurturing of staff is essential in order to give them the confidence and enthusiasm to engage and encourage students in reflection and worship. This includes

- Staff retreats
- Opportunities to lead prayer at briefing and meetings
- Involvement in pilgrimages
- Mass at the start of the academic year
- Staff Inset

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos, Jess Jackson, along with the Liturgy Coordinator, Hannah Cotterill, are responsible for monitoring Acts of Worship. The AHT for Catholic Ethos together with the Headteacher, Ryan Hibbard, are responsible for evaluating the impact of Acts of Worship.

Learning walks and observations will be published within the quality assurance calendar. Pupils are routinely monitoring and evaluating acts of worship and these are collated by the AHT and Liturgy coordinator. All stakeholders are regularly asked to submit feedback via surveys.

CW1: How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship:

| Evaluation Criteria |
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| The extent to which pupils are engaged by and participate in prayer and liturgy |
| The extent to which pupils are able to articulate an understanding of different ways of praying and the cycle of the liturgical year |
| The ability of pupils to work with others to prepare prayer and liturgy and how well formed they are to undertake liturgical ministries. |
| The capacity of pupils to recognise and articulate the connections between prayer and liturgy and the curriculum and life of the school. |
| The ability of pupils to reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy and the extent to which this reflection inspires them to action |

CW2: The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
 Inspectors will evaluate:

| Evaluation Criteria |
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| How central prayer and liturgy are to the whole of school life. |
| How well daily patterns of prayer are embedded and the extent to which these reflect the rhythms of the prayer life of the Church. |
| How well the range of prayer and liturgy engage participants with the breadth and richness of the Catholic tradition. |
| The extent to which the celebration of prayer and liturgy has scripture at its heart, and how well informed that selection is by the liturgical calendar and takes account of the capacity of the participants. |
| How effectively staff, including senior leaders, model good practice as leaders of and participants in prayer and liturgy. |
| How skilled relevant staff are in helping pupils to plan and lead well-constructed celebrations of prayer and liturgy according to the norms of the Church. |
| How well the school draws upon the creative and artistic skills of pupils and relevant staff and the riches of the Church to enhance prayer and liturgy. |
| How well space and the physical environment are prepared to support pupils' experience of prayer and liturgy |
| How well the school works with families and parishes to support the developing prayer life and liturgical participation of pupils |

CW3: How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship

Inspectors will evaluate:

| Evaluation Criteria |
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| How well formulated the school's policy on prayer and liturgy is and how effective it is in shaping and supporting the prayer and liturgical life of the school. |
| How well leaders, including governors, have planned prayer and liturgy across the school to facilitate the pupils' progressive participation. |
| The priority given by leaders, including governors, to the Celebration of the Eucharist, especially on holy days of obligation and other significant days in the Church's or school's calendar, and to the Sacrament of Reconciliation at key times in the liturgical year. |
| The frequency, quality and impact of the planned opportunities for the professional development of all staff: how well these reflect the significant role of prayer and liturgy in the life of the school. |
| How well leaders, including chaplains, understand prayer in the Catholic tradition, the spiritual development of students and the interplay between the personal and collective experiences of prayer. |

| Evaluation Criteria |
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| How well leaders, including chaplains, understand the principles of liturgical participation and ministry and how well they draw upon the Church's liturgical sources. |
| The effectiveness of leaders, including chaplains, in facilitating pupils and staff to provide high quality prayer and liturgy across the school, in a manner that reflects the age and capacity of participants. |
| The priority given to prayer and liturgy when setting budgets and allocating resources, such as time, staffing and dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy |
| The extent to which evaluation of prayer and liturgy is central to the school's annual review cycle and how effectively leaders, including governors, implement improvements as a result |

Appendix A: Guidance and supplementary resources to aid with Acts of Worship

Worship, in many different guises, needs to be appreciated as part of our everyday. Time has been allocated for this to take place discretely and Acts of Worship should not be paralysed by lack of time. Affording time to worship will allow relationships to develop positively and because worship responds to the needs of the students, complimenting the liturgical calendar and societal events, worship will become a vehicle to discuss wider school issues.

Staff will have a variety of knowledge and understanding and this is why the Liturgy Co-ordinator provides themes, focuses and resources. As part of our contract with the Catholic Education Sector, staff are expected to support Catholic teaching through Acts of Worship. CPD is routinely offered to all staff; new staff complete an induction process; all staff are encouraged to seek help or advice whenever they need it and any request for bespoke CPD will be offered.

Some students will arrive to St Bede's with little or no experience of Acts of Worship, especially but not limited to, encountering God's love through Acts of Worship. Students should feel nurtured and supported to explore the Catholic faith during Acts of Worship.

Prayer

Prayer is "raising the mind and heart to God" (CCC)
 Prayer is about developing a relationship with God
 Prayer should involve silence
 Prayer can be formulaic or extempore

Methods

Singing "singing is praying twice" (Youcat, attributed to St Augustine)
 Adoration: Praising God
 Confession: Asking God for forgiveness
 Thanksgiving: Thanking God
 Reciting scripture
 Meditation
 Rosary
 Devotion

Ideas and structure for Acts of Worship

Open with the Sign of the Cross

Religious artefacts could be used-candles lit, rosary beads laid out.

A visual welcome that reflects the word of the week

This will be linked to a reading-pupils will be invited to read the Word and this can be seen on a displayed rota to indicate participation of all

Quiet time to reflect on what has been read and this could be linked to a video, music or discussion

Sharing of ideas should be recorded in the Act of Worship book- something that students will take ownership of

A moment to pray-this could be led by students. It can be formulaic (the Our Father, Trust prayer) or extempore, linked to something they are praying for

Students ask for St Bede and Our Lady of Lourdes to pray for us

Worship is closed with the Sign of the Cross

Encouraging Prayer

Pass an object around to signal who talks

Students could say something they are grateful for, who they think might need some prayers said for, or a local/global event to think about

Prayer can be seen as doing something not just joining hands

Prayer at St. Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy

8.40am: Period 1

Either: O Jesus through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer you all my prayers, works and actions of this day.

St Bede: Pray For us

OR: We commit ourselves to Love, Respect and serve one another as disciples of Jesus Christ

St Bede: Pray for us

1:45pm Acts of Worship

3.05pm Period 5

Before students are dismissed they will stand and pray:

Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit . AMEN

St Bede: Pray For us.

Appendix B: Monitoring and evaluation documents

Act of Worship Pupil Evaluation

AoW Theme:

Name (optional):

Date of AoW:

Your Year group:

Religion (Optional):

Score ranking (1- Strongly Disagree, 5- Strongly agree)

I understood what the theme of the Act of Worship was about

1 2 3 4 5

The Act of Worship involved students taking part.

1 2 3 4 5

There was opportunity to reflect and pray, and the Act of Worship made reference to God and Jesus

1 2 3 4 5

It contained images, Music or other focal points.

1 2 3 4 5

I found it interesting and enjoyable.

1 2 3 4 5

This Act of Worship had an important message for me to think about.

1 2 3 4 5

In the Space below please write the part you enjoyed the most and the part you enjoyed the least:

Collective Worship: prayer and liturgy during Tutor Time

Name:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>▪ Environment</p> | <p>2. Quality of Worship</p> |
| <p>a) Students show respect to staff and fellow pupils resulting in positive relationships b) Pupils are calm and focused as a result of clear expectations and routine of Acts of Worship c) Focus table is set with appropriate stimuli d) Music is used to help focus, reflect or contribute to thinking e) Tutor boards are regularly updated to reflect the purpose of the week</p> | <p>a) The teacher’s enthusiasm engages the students and helps create a positive experience. b) Worship contains different elements to sustain enthusiasm of students c) Teachers check student understanding and address misconceptions d) Scripture is used carefully and meanings are explained to the students e) Students are provided with an opportunity to pray either collectively or individually</p> |
| <p>3. Transferable learning</p> | <p>4. Activities</p> |
| <p>a) Students can confidently recite prayers to be used in Act of Worship b) Students can link the message to the virtues of the school c) The context to the Act of Worship is given and understood by students d) Wider messages of the Catholic Church are shared e) Students have been provided with an opportunity to prepare, plan or deliver to peers f) Students can articulate the connections between prayer and liturgy to the curriculum and/or life of the school</p> | <p>a) Students are able to articulate thoughts and opinions based on the Act of Worship b) Students are offered meaningful ways to bear witness to the message of the Act of Worship c) Scrapbooks are used in purposeful ways to record and aid understanding in Act of Worship d) Students consider how their actions have an impact on themselves, the school and the wider community e) Students can reflect on their experience of prayer with confidence</p> |
| <p>5. Liturgical Sequencing</p> | |
| <p>a) The colour of the season is visually represented through the Act of Worship b) The planned worship is being followed in line with the liturgical season c) There are links made between the Act of Worship and how it falls in the Church’s calendar d) Students can articulate the significance of the liturgical colour and explain the season they are in.</p> | |

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|--|---|
| <p>Summary of Good and Expert Practice:</p> | <p>Key Areas for Development:</p> |
| <p>Is there evidence of student participation? Y / N</p> <p>Any examples of Expert Practice:</p> | <p>Is the liturgical sequencing being followed? Y / N</p> <p>Where is this evidenced?</p> |

