

St Alban's

Catholic Primary School



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'Inspired by God's love we celebrate our gifts as we learn and grow together'

St. Alban pray for us.

Worship Policy

June 2021

To be reviewed - June 2023



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(Mission Statement)

“Every Catholic and religiously sponsored school should have a vibrant worship life, with ample opportunities for student liturgies, time of prayer and reflection and be suffused with religious symbols that nurture the faith identity of students”

Thomas Groome

AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN SCHOOLS:

- . To provide opportunities for pupils to worship God
- . To consider spiritual and moral issues
- . To meet the Living God
- . To explore their own belief
- . To encourage **full, conscious, active participation** and response whether through active involvement in the presentation
- . To develop community spirit
- . To promote and reinforce common ethos
- . To express in a variety of ways the distinctive values that underpin the school's existence, vision, outlook against the background of its Mission Statement
- . To offer opportunities to explore the Spiritual Dimension in ways that enable/empower/uplift/ponder/reflect/empathise
- . To provide moments of reflection and prayer
- . To offer opportunities to ponder the Word of God and basic religious concepts
- . To enable pupils to come into the fullness of Trinitarian life.

Legislation for WORSHIP

1989 legislation laid down the following criteria:

All schools must begin the day with an act of worship which should be

- . Inclusive
- . Educational
- . Contribute to Spiritual Development
- . Have a Sense of occasion

Catholic Tradition

At the heart of Catholic life is the practise of starting each day, or, beginning any new piece of work (e.g. the school day) with prayer. Good schools make a point of dedicating their day and work to God, who is at **the heart** of the school.

Worshipping Nature of our schools

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The worshipping nature of our school is expressed in a variety of ways. Among these are:

- . Prayer (See Diocesan Handbook)
- . Assemblies
- . Eucharist
- . Sacraments
- . Alternative Liturgies
- . Classroom Prayer/Worship.

CATEGORIES OR DIMENSIONS OF worship:

- . Praise
- . Thanksgiving
- . Repentance
- . Intercessions

TYPES OF ACTS OF WORSHIP

- . Class led
- . Head Teacher
- . Senior Management
- . Visitor led
- . Parent led

Practical guidance for assembly preparation

Assemblies require careful planning if they are to be meaningful events. We cannot, however, ensure that these occasions will be religious experiences, that is the work of the Holy Spirit, but we can create the conditions and bring children to the threshold of worship.

TEN TIPS:

1. Favour a holistic approach (cross-curricular, and take account of the cultural richness of participants).
2. Decide on the appropriate strategies to present the assembly; prepare the venue creating a sense of occasion.
3. What will the focus be: artefact, candle, drape, poster, art display, symbol etc.?
4. Maximise pupil involvement and ensure staff presence and participation.
5. Content should be Scripture based, to ensure good doctrine and sound teaching (use a translation appropriate for participants).

6. Include some intercessions that reflect current situations, the reality of pupils' lives. Such prayers can be educational in teaching us how to pray in a way that fosters extended love of neighbour.

7. Use various forms of prayer: formal, personal, reflective, liturgical.

8. Choose hymns that are God-centred and balance the participative and reflective.

9. Build into assembly a quiet moment/silence to allow God to speak, teach, draw and love us. It is a time as Cardinal Hume cites when two silences meet: the silence of God and the silence of the individual.

10. The assembly should last ten to twelve minutes.

SUGGESTED areas for Evaluating the Provision of Worship

1. INTRODUCTION

- . What are expectations/ Diocesan Requirements?

2. MISSION STATEMENT

- . Who compiled it;
- . When revisited and reviewed?
- . How is the Mission Statement owned and lived around school

3. ASSEMBLIES

- Class
- . Whole school
- . Class worship
- . Time allocation (12 minutes in Primary schools)
- . Monitoring
- . Guidelines given to new staff?

4. MASSES

- . Whole school
- . Phase group
- . First Communion e.g. school/parish

5. RECONCILIATION SERVICES

- . Advent
- . Lent
- . Throughout the School year?
- . Sacramental preparation e.g. school/parish
- . Preparation for Rite

6. PRAYER

- . Formal prayer
- . Liturgical prayer

- . Reflective prayer
- . Meditation
- . Prayer focus in classrooms / hall
- . Diocesan Guidelines and Handbook

7. HYMN PRACTICE

- . Frequency/ new hymns/links with Parish

8. CHRISTMAS / EASTER / PENTECOST CELEBRATION

9. LEAVERS MASS

- . School / Parish/Deanery based

10. RETREATS/ AWAY DAYS

- . For Staff and Governors
- . Children
- . Deanery
- . Parents

11. R.E. INSET

12. RESOURCES

- . Bibles (age appropriate)
- . DVDs
- . Banners
- . Music
- . Crosses and crucifixes
- . Drapes (Liturgical colours)

13. DISPLAYS

14. ARTEFACTS

15. SCRIPTURE

- . Sunday preparation
- . Display around the school
- . Creative use of Scripture in worship and R.E.
- . Different translations
- . Wednesday Word

16. HOME/SCHOOL/PARISH

17. GOVERNORS

'The time to get your spiritual instrument in tune is early in the morning before the concert of the day begins.'

Author unknown

Some characteristics of a spiritually developed person.

Spiritual people are characterised, to a greater or lesser extent, by some of the following:

Openness to the Holy Spirit

In Catholic Schools opportunities for spiritual development of children and staff takes place through Prayer, Sacraments, reflection and the lived experience of Catholic life.

Awareness

In various religions the spiritual person is described as 'awake', 'enlightened', and 'open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit'.

Breadth of outlook

Spiritual people see things in perspective... they are aware of and take account of a wide range of considerations that bear on their everyday life.

A holistic outlook

A spiritual person is aware of the interconnectedness of things, the unity within diversity, patterns within the whole.

Integration

Spiritual people are integrated in body, mind and spirit; and in the various dimensions and commitments of life, including societal ones.

Wonder

The spiritual person has a due sense of awe, of mystery, of the transcendent in life...

Gratitude

Sometimes this is... used in such a way that it implies the existence of a divine 'person' to whom we are grateful. However, such a belief is not essential; we can conceive of a 'grateful' approach to life in terms of attitudes of gladness

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and humility with respect to the good things of life...

Hope

Even without a belief in 'providence' a certain degree of hopefulness or optimism would seem to be justified, and indeed necessary for every day living.

Courage

Plato spoke of the need for a courageous, 'spirited' approach to life. Courage is as basic and important as hope.

Energy

...their awareness provides a basis for motivation and their integrated life leads to synergy of body, mind and spirit, such that they in fact have a high degree of energy.

Detachment

The approach of 'going with the flow' does not imply lack of concern but rather a skilful working with the currents of life in order to achieve spiritual goals.

Acceptance

Even in popular, non-religious parlance one is encouraged to accept the inevitable 'with good grace'. Acceptance is a spiritual virtue in relation to the inevitable and not in situations where one could and should attempt to modify what takes place.

Love

To many, love is the paramount characteristic of the spiritual person... In the west love and spirituality are closely linked; for example in the New Testament (Bible, 1 Corinthians 13) it is stressed that whatever else we may be or do, without love we are nothing from a spiritual point of view.

Gentleness

... involves a sensitive, thoughtful, caring approach to other people, to one's own needs and to the cosmos in general... does not imply weakness or indecisiveness

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