

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

We are a Rights Respecting School. We aim to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our practice in school. This should be evidenced by this policy and by what you see, hear, feel and witness in our school.

Article 30: Children have the right to learn about and practice their own culture, language and religion. The right to practice one's own culture, language and religion applies to everyone.

St Wilfrid's RC Primary School Policy for Prayer and Collective Worship

John's Gospel Chapter 10, Verse 10: "I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full."

As a Catholic school and worshipping community, rooted firmly in a Christ-centred approach and based on Gospel values, we aim:

- To help parents in the education and formation of their children in accordance with the promises made at Baptism, when their children were first welcomed into the family of the Church
 - To help each child to make the most of his/her God-given talents
 - To provide equality of opportunity and to engender an awareness and respect for diversity in the wider community, by encouraging involvement within that community

Taken from the school Mission Statement

As a Catholic, Christian Community committed to the education of our children, daily worship naturally forms an integral part of school life.

Whilst there are obvious links with curriculum Religious Education, there is a clear timetable for Prayer and Worship as distinct from classroom RE.

As part of the public sector, we are also bound by the statutory requirement of a daily act of worship in accordance with the 1988 Education Act.

Prayer and Worship – What?

The worship of the one God sets us free from turning in on ourselves and reminds us to receive God's love and put him first in our lives. The worship that takes place in school is Collective Worship.

Worship in a Catholic school is far more than just a legal requirement. It is central to Catholic education and forms an essential part of the school's overall provision for prayer and worship and thus individual spiritual development.

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

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 whom perhaps school provides their main or only experience of Church
- Those who may have experiences of other Christian traditions or religious backgrounds

Collective Worship is an activity or experience:

- to which all can contribute
- from which all can gain

Catholic Collective Worship will always have Christ at its heart reflecting the liturgical tradition of the Church.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”
Matthew. 7:7

Prayer and Worship. Why?

In Prayer and Worship we PRAISE, ASK and THANK.

We recognise who we are: a Faith Community in the Home, the School and the Parish.

Prayer and Worship focuses on life as a whole school, as a community. It expresses what the school values. It is both religious and educational; a learning and worshipping experience.

Through Collective Worship, opportunities are provided for both children and staff to come together to worship God and specifically:

- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To reflect on personal belief
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To enable and encourage a sense of belonging
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To mark as special
- To come to terms with
- To wonder at
- To give worth to
- To build a firm foundation for liturgical awareness
- To take time out for reflection

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

- To enrich the spiritual dimension for all, at an appropriate level of development
- To develop and enhance a community spirit
- To encourage a common ethos and shared values base of the 5W's of Welcome, Welfare, Word, Witness and Worship

“More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.”
(Alfred Lord Tennyson. 1869)

Prayer and Worship – Who?

Governors

Responsibility lies with the Governing Body, to approve a Policy for Prayer and Worship in the school, after consultation with the Headteacher.

Headteacher

The Headteacher's role is to ensure that collective worship is provided for each child every day.

Children

All children have an entitlement to take part in a daily act of worship. At St Wilfrid's we encourage children to plan and deliver their own worship at an age appropriate level.

Teachers

All staff have a duty to assist in the planning and delivery of meaningful acts of worship.

Parents

Parents have a focal supportive role to play and example to set and are encouraged to participate in school collective worship.

Parish Priest and wider Faith Community

The active participation of the Parish Priest and the Parish community in supporting aspects of Collective Worship is acknowledged by all.

Prayer and Worship – When?

Legislation does not require that Prayer and Worship takes place at a specific time. It does not necessarily have to occur at the beginning of the day, but as a matter of course all days begin with a short prayer, whatever other acts of worship may be experienced during that day.

The underlying philosophy of this policy is that the children are encouraged to acknowledge that:

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

- We can pray, anytime, anywhere, about anything

Prayer and Worship is therefore to be viewed as much broader than just formal acts of collective worship.

There is scope during the day for brief moments of reflection, which arise in connection with what the children are doing, for example, reading a story, a poem or within class discussions.

Many of these will be provided by the spontaneous reaction of children and staff to the wonder of God's creation.

"I will bless the Lord at all time;
His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
O magnify the Lord with me
And let us exalt His name together!"
(Psalm 34:1,3)

Prayer and Worship – Where?

As a rule all main acts of Prayer and Worship will take place within the School premises or in Church.

In the Classroom/After school Club Area

"Where two or three meet in my name I am there among them."
(Matthew 18:10)

A class based act of worship can provide an opportunity for teachers and their children to share a unique experience together. At St Wilfrid's we encourage children to be involved in a pro-active way.

In the School Hall

"Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth;
Sing to the glory of his name;
Give to him glorious praise;
(Psalm 66:1-2)

The school hall can be transformed into a place of worship very simply by providing a focal point, based on symbol and imagery linked to the main theme, alongside the provision of music for reflection. The hall can be made to feel special by the example set by staff and older children's entry and exit.

Points to consider:

Do children always need to sit in lines?

Do they always need to sit in classes?

Can they be involved in the act of worship to provide ownership of the act?

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

In Church

“Praise God in His holy place.”
(Psalm 150:1)

Opportunities are provided for children to attend Holy Mass with the Parish family on special occasions, e.g. Ash Wednesday, and in addition for school Masses which are arranged on a half-termly basis. Father Tony also celebrates Class Masses each term with the Y4, 5 and 6 classes as these children have made their first holy communion.

All classes can visit church at other times during the school year. Often this is to support work in curriculum RE.

Year 3 children undertake the Sacramental Initiation Programme as laid down by our Diocese, Salford.

School will co-ordinate with the parish throughout the year to support special masses and worships eg the mass for the sick and the elderly, CAFOD masses, Churches Together services.

School supports the parish in their work educating children through monthly Family Masses.

At Home

“The family that prays together stays together”.
(RC Family Rosary Crusade 1947)

The Headteacher ensures that the school community is made aware of common themes for prayer eg Lenten promises, when appropriate, via the school newsletter. In addition, school sends home a weekly newsletter ‘The Wednesday Word’ which shares the coming Sunday’s Gospel and may be a starting point for a family’s individual discussion, prayer and worship.

In the Open

“Heaven and earth are full of your glory”.
(Roman Missal)

Acts of worship may be occasionally held in the open air in the school grounds. |

Prayer and Worship – How?

Hymn singing, class acts, whole school assemblies and weekly Prayer Group meetings are just some forms of regular prayer and worship at St Wilfrid's. Our aim is always to provide the children with a variety of meaningful experiences. Acts of Worship will therefore take place in many forms, including some of the following aspects:

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

- ✓ They can be led by the children, staff or visitors
- ✓ They can be offered by a class, key stage, mixed group or the whole school
- ✓ They can use a balance of quiet reflection, silence, prayers both prepared and spontaneous, responses, music, songs, hymns, dance, drama, poetry, readings both Biblical and secular, psalms and visual images
- ✓ They can provide a focus using artefacts, candles, lighting and symbols
- ✓ They can ensure that the theme, delivery, focus, length and resources are appropriate to the interests, age range and abilities of the children
- ✓ They can set an appropriate atmosphere including a sense of reverence, order and occasion, including entry and exit
- ✓ They can encourage the active participation of all present and support the overall precept of inclusion, where all are seen to be valued and cared for

Prayer and Worship – Evaluation?

In line with the School Mission Statement all staff within St. Wilfrid's school are constantly striving to evaluate the intended impact of their actions.

This is no less true in the area of Prayer and Worship. In line with good practice Acts of Worship are planned, recorded and evaluated.

Planning:

- Takes place in consultation with all appropriate parties and with reference to the school aims and policies. It includes cross-referencing the themes contained within 'Come and See' RE Scheme promoted by Salford Diocese
- Takes into account the Church's Liturgical Year, significant dates and Saints days such as the annual Feast day of St. Wilfrid on October 12th
- Takes into account the need for flexibility to respond to the changing situations within the school and wider community
- Staff meetings are regularly used to collaboratively plan themes and displays for whole school collective worship

Record Keeping

- Takes place to keep a note of themes, leaders, groupings and resources
- Weekly Monday assemblies largely follow the Liturgical year and are planned by those staff who deliver the assembly. This planning format is used by all teachers to plan other assemblies such as Class Assemblies (see Appendix)

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

- Can also take place through displays, evidence from children's contributions including prayers and reflections and photographs

Evaluation

- Takes place regularly by all involved staff and is discussed by staff together on a regular basis with the intended aim of realising the School Mission Statement as a reality for all.

Prayer and Worship – Resources

In relation to the provision of relevant suitable resources to support the delivery of this Prayer and Worship Policy, future identified areas of need will also be provided for.

Inset days and staff meetings are used, as required, to address prayer and worship needs. Relevant resources are then sourced.

A variety of books, symbols, candles, coloured cloths, visual imagery and musical resources are being steadily built up and are kept in the RE and CW cupboard.

"I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."

(John. 8:12)

St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School – Policy on Prayer and Worship

Appendix

Collective Worship planning format

Assembly – Date

Theme:	
Led by:	
Something to look at:	
Something to say:	
Something to sing:	
Scripture:	
Child Involvement:	
Prayer:	
Resources:	
Final message:	

