



Saint Pius X Catholic High School

ACTS OF WORSHIP POLICY

OCTOBER 2011

Our Mission Statement:

"Saint Pius X Catholic High School is a Catholic School in which the Gospel message of the Kingdom of God is revealed through our work and through our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ"

This is encompassed in the statement: 'Love one another as I have loved you' *John 13*

Our aim is to provide a variety of opportunities throughout the curriculum and the life of the school for students and staff to experience prayer and worship and invite them to participate and respond in faith to God the creator helping to move each member of our community along their own spiritual journey.

Whilst we recognise and affirm the Catholic nature of our school, we also recognise that many of our staff and students belong to other Christian denominations, other faiths, or no faith traditions. Our Acts of Worship policy must allow as far as possible, inclusiveness of all our community

Introduction:

As this is a Catholic school, we expect all members of the community to be aware of the implications of this.

When parents enrol their child at Saint Pius X Catholic High School, they are stating that they covet a Catholic Education for their child, that is, Catholic Religious Education outlined in the Bishops' Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. At the heart of Catholic Education is the provision of the living experience of a praying and worshipping community. It is therefore understood that enrolment in Saint Pius X School necessarily implies the acceptance of prayer and worship as a fundamental part of a child's spiritual and religious education.

All members of staff share in the religious life of the school and the implementation of this policy. Every member of staff has the duty and responsibility to be present at school acts of worship as required and to fulfil his/her role as laid down in this policy.

Guidance on acts of worship:

In accordance with the law, there must be a collective act of worship in the school community, which should take place each school day and must be broadly Christian in content.

As a Catholic school, our collective act of worship is a priority. It will take place each day, in Assembly, during form period or through the taught curriculum. The act of worship must be in sympathy with the Catholic faith, drawing from other Christian Denominations, faiths, and cultures. Where children of other faiths are admitted, special attention will be paid to nurturing their spirituality. To do this we will adhere to the principles laid down in the CTS document '*Catholic Schools and Children of other Faiths*'

We will achieve our main aim by:

- Offering opportunities for reflection, meditation and prayer throughout the curriculum and the life of the school
- Sharing the teachings of the faith, prompting the growth and development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values through liturgy, religious education and the curriculum as a whole

Practical activities:

- Celebrate the Church's year through liturgy
- Be responsive to special occasions, intentions and needs
- Encourage active preparation for and participation in liturgy
- Support our local parishes and encourage student involvement with their own worshipping communities on Sundays, Holy Days and other celebrations
- To provide the opportunity for all students to experience retreats and Days of Recollection

Senior Management strategies:

- To provide the resources necessary for daily acts of worship
- To provide a Chaplaincy area for prayer, reflection, liturgy and liturgical education
- To provide staff with support and guidance in leading prayer
- To provide opportunities for staff prayer/reflection and retreats

Sacramental Worship:

As the Sacraments lie at the Heart of our Catholic faith, it is our priority to enable the Eucharistic Community within our school, to celebrate and express their faith. The celebration of Mass will always be on a voluntary basis corresponding to Catholic teaching and the wishes of the Bishop of Hallam. Mass will be celebrated once per half term for the community or as needs arise.

A special commented Eucharistic service for Year 7 will be celebrated in their first term as an educational experience. The Mass will then be celebrated as a part of retreats, year group pilgrimages or for various occasions e.g. Y11 leavers Mass. On Holy days of obligation, the school will encourage children and staff to attend Mass in their own Parish.

The Importance of Acts of Worship

Should a parent wish to excuse their child from acts of prayer and worship they must contact the Headteacher to discuss the issue. Parents also need to be aware that prayer and worship in Saint Pius X School is a fundamental part of the Catholic Education that we provide and is implicit as well as explicit within the curriculum and may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured. It would therefore, be impossible to isolate students from collective worship. The Governors consider the withdrawal of a child from acts of worship to be incompatible with the aims of the school and the parents' stated choice of a Catholic Education for their child.

Monitoring the policy

The policy will be monitored by Chaplaincy through participation and observation of events and activities, which will be reported to the Governing Body annually

Acts of Worship Policy and Collective Worship combined into one policy October 2011
Date of next review: October 2013