

ST BERNARD'S HIGH SCHOOL



Prayer & Liturgy Policy

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Chair of Governors

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Mission Statement

St Bernard's is a school community that aims to live by Jesus' commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you."

We are a Catholic learning community committed to the ongoing development of the entire potential of every person, achieved through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

We care for each other as individuals of equal worth, regardless of status, sex, race or religion and thus actively seek to promote safeguarding, justice and fairness. We provide an atmosphere in which all can grow in our Faith, and encourage this faith by a lively relevant liturgy.

We work with parents, parishes, local communities and industry to prepare our students for the opportunities of adulthood.

Worship Statement

As a Catholic School Community we are fully inclusive and St Bernard's aims to help all its members in their recognition of Jesus Christ at the heart of their lives, with acts of prayer and worship threaded through its daily life. The purpose is to support all members to mirror and reflect, for and to others, the life of Christ. This is the essence of Discipleship.

By "worship" we mean liturgies which enable people to express and confidently declare their faith; inspire and strengthen them in their daily lives and provoke such responses as praise, thanksgiving, joy, love, awe and wonder, commitment, repentance and reconciliation. A fundamental aspect is to facilitate a reflective spirituality, from which faith becomes ever stronger and more fully embedded.

Aspects of Worship

The two main aspects of worship in a Catholic School should be:

- Offering – for example praise, adoration and reconciliation
- Receiving – for example fellowship, forgiveness, inspiration and strength

Liturgy

Liturgy should express in prayer and ritual the spiritual life of those who take part. It should be recognised that there is a strong and interdependent relationship between the Mass and the community, which celebrates it. In other words, the community makes the Eucharist and the Eucharist makes the community. As a Catholic Community the Eucharist must lie at the heart of our worshipping life. St Bernard's seeks to provide a variety of opportunities for worship, in an attempt to meet and engage people at differing stages of their faith journey.

In this faith journey, students should not be passive; rather, they should have opportunities to utilise their God-given talents to enhance the liturgical and spiritual experience of the entire community. This can be achieved through a variety of ministries including: Welcome, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Choir, Altar Servers, Musicians and Faith through Art.

Opportunities for Worship

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the school's worship and for the spiritual development of the students along with the Senior Leadership Team and the Head of RE. The Head of RE works with the whole staff, especially Form Tutors and arranges Liturgical opportunities including Year Group, and whole school Masses/Liturgies. In addition, the Head of RE supports the work of tutors in supporting the faith journey of students. These are designed to empower student's understanding of the key liturgical themes in the Church's calendar.

All staff attend induction into the opportunities for worship at the school. There are briefing notes on the school network setting out the background to the Church's and School's major Feasts. In addition, governors have afforded the school an additional day for Staff Retreat as another way of nurturing staff experience of spirituality whether they practice a faith or not to further develop their understanding of what it means to work in a Catholic school. Staff are also given the opportunity to apply to study the CCRS.

All members of the Senior Leadership Team lead an assembly on a rota basis. A day is designated to each year group for weekly assemblies. The Year Leader will lead some assemblies, and across the Year group each form will lead an assembly during the course of the academic year. In addition, the school chaplain supports House Captains and Deputy House Captains to lead liturgical events for example services of reconciliation.

The School Community celebrates all the Holy Days of Obligation.

St Bernard's also celebrates other very important school Masses: the Harvest Mass for Year 7 students and their families; the Year 11 and 13 Celebration Mass and Feast Day Mass. Within these the student body is empowered to structure 'their' liturgy.

Each tutor group nominates a Liturgy Prefect who, together with the tutor, helps to plan, support and lead the tutor group morning prayer. They are also responsible for involving other members of their forms to read, play music, sing, dance and perform drama in these prayer activities.

The school has a chapel. During Lent the Stations of the Cross are recited out of doors in the Nuns Walk. In addition, Services of Reconciliation take place during registration and PSHE during Lent to enable the community to be spiritually prepared for the mystery of Easter. We also lead prayers in school as and when disasters, tragedies and death occur in the wider community.

Morning Briefing for all staff begins with a prayer, piece of scripture or a reflective thought of the day. Students are supported and encouraged with prayers for daily use in their School Planners. At all staff INSET days, staff are led in a liturgy. All staff meetings begin with a prayer. Further opportunities for worship and spiritual nourishment for KS3/4 students take place with Days of Reflection led by the Walsingham House Team as well as Days of Recollection for the Sixth Form.

All staff and students attend services such as the Advent service and there are set days in the calendar for adoration where each form is represented in our school chapel at certain times in the day. The school is fortunate to have St Helen's Church so close to the school and form, year and house Masses do take place in the church.

The community will come together for evening events such as the carol concert and this is always an event that is well received by staff and parents.

Community acts within the school include:

- The annual pancake race
- CAFOD walks
- Christmas dinner
- Family fast days

Such events bring the school community together and are always well represented.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Mission Statement should permeate all aspects of our School life. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students is the responsibility of all members of staff as is affected both by the taught and 'hidden' curriculum.

The ethos of our school is a powerful influence on our students and the school should provide a positive and secure environment in which development can occur. "The Church sees education as an integral part of its mission to proclaim God as Creator, Christ as Redeemer and the Holy Spirit as Inspirer of all that is good in human living. Every person's life is charged with God's presence and every human experience presents us with the opportunity to deepen our knowledge and love of Him

True education is concerned with the whole person."

(Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of a Catholic School)

Spiritual Development

Spiritual Development is concerned with student's knowledge of values and beliefs. Students should be enabled to reflect on their experiences in ways which develop their spiritual awareness and self knowledge, recognising that faith is a journey.

In a Catholic school this includes:

- Helping students to recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life.
- Nurturing and promoting the spiritual growth of students by reflection and prayer and charitable acts.
- Encouraging students to be aware and respectful of the spiritual values of other cultures and traditions

Moral Development

Moral development is concerned with the students' ability to build a framework of personal values which regulate personal behaviour through principles rather than punishment and reward.

Students must come to realise the distinction between the absolute and social values of right and wrong. In a Catholic school the absolute values will be those of the Gospel. Social values are related to the current norms and values of the society in which we live. These are reflected in our laws and customs. Students should realise that values vary according to societies' traditions.

When our students leave school they should be able to:-

- Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and understand their consequences.
- Formulate and articulate their own values and realise that these may change over time according to their level of maturity and spiritual insight.
- Develop a set of socially acceptable values and principles and set their own guidelines to govern their behaviour in the light of Gospel values.

Social Development

Social development involves the development of an understanding of the tensions that exist between group rules and personal morality.

In a Catholic school we must encourage students to make a positive contribution to our own society and also to the wider world. Students should be helped to be aware of and develop their contributions to family life, the work place and the community. They should be empowered to be Active Citizens, recognising they have a responsibility for brothers and sisters in the immediate community and across the globe. This can be facilitated through involvement in leading and contributing to charitable appeals, or taking a role in a school activity. In this way, we can all be stewards for the well-being of society and the planet.

Cultural Development

Cultural development is concerned with students' appreciation of their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures. It should encourage a pride in the vitality of resilience of life as God-given.

Other policies which have relevance to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are:-

- Equal Opportunities
- Anti-bullying
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Teaching and Learning