

## St Edmund's College

### Prayer and Worship Policy

#### Mission Statement

**Rooted in Christ and Catholic tradition** and under the guidance of our patron, St Edmund, we aim to realise the God-given potential, in body, mind and spirit, of all members of our community through service and leadership. Avita Pro Fide



## **Rationale**

Collective worship within the College is for:

- Those who form part of the Worshipping community in church.
- Those for whom the College may be their first and / or only experience of Church.
- Those from other Christian traditions, or life perspectives
- Those from other Faith backgrounds.

All pupils are required to attend and respect school acts of worship and liturgy. The invitation is that they do so with an open heart and mind.

Worship is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Worship is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with Him and should involve students as active participants and be linked to the Catholic liturgical calendar.

## **Aims of Collective Worship**

The ultimate aim of Collective Worship in the Catholic school is to provide the space and tools for young people, within the context of the Catholic faith and traditions:

- to contemplate the mystery of God;
- to develop an understanding of Salvation History through meaningful engagement with the Eucharist and the sacrament of Reconciliation;
- to reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- to foster and nurture relationships;
- to respond to and to celebrate life;
- to experience a sense of belonging and to develop community;
- to nurture a common ethos and shared set of values;
- to enrich religious experience;
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development;
- to know and understand prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;
- to seek appropriate responses to the love of God;
- to take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'.

## **Opportunities for worship**

### **Mass**

The Mass is central to our liturgy and is held regularly for the community. Mass is celebrated on Holydays and College Feast days for all staff and students. In addition there are regular voluntary Masses. All boarding students attend together each Sunday. The priest in residence approves all themes for Mass and provides guidance to students involved in particular ministries such as reading, serving, singing or being an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.

### **Prayer**

The weekly liturgical themes reflect the liturgical calendar and specific themes are decided by the Priest in Residence and the Deputy Head (Religious Life)

Each day begins with an Act of Worship. This is either in the form of tutor group prayers, Chapel prayers, School assembly or House prayers.

Staff receive a list of themes at the start of each term, and these follow the liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. One day each week focusses on one Edmundian Virtue. Celebrations particular to the College (St Edmund's Day etc) are also marked.

Resources are available to all staff on Teams, in the termly prayer book and in the Chaplaincy.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered regularly to staff and students.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is available each Friday lunchtime.

Stations of the Cross and the Rosary are also prayed at key times in the Church year.

Retreats are held each year for all students and are an important part of the Religious Life of the College. The retreats are hosted by an external organisation where possible such as NET. There are also opportunities for days of reflection and staff/ family away days.

Each Friday there are voluntary staff prayers. Staff volunteer to lead this time of prayer and reflection.

### **Prayer Areas**

The College benefits from a large Pugin chapel which is used for Chapel Prayers in the mornings and for Masses throughout the week. The chapel is open to students throughout the day.

Voluntary Mass takes place in the Shrine Chapel as this allows for a more intimate experience.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in the chantry.

Each tutor room has a prayer area with a crucifix, prayerbook and rosary beads. This is to enable the students to focus and move into the time of prayer. The worship monitor in each tutor group is responsible for the care of this area.

### **Evaluation**

There is a varied and systematic process of evaluation in place. After all major liturgical events key stakeholders discuss areas that require developments and/ or refinement to ensure that all experiences of prayer are meaningful, authentic and true to the traditions of the Church. In addition, each year selected students complete a worship diary in the Lent term which is used to evaluate the provision and impact of prayer in the College. HSM/HOY and SLT also have a rolling programme to monitor and give feedback to tutors with regards to tutor led worship. Parents, staff and student's complete surveys at set points in the year which are used to evaluate current practice and inform future experiences. Good practice and areas for development are shared amongst staff in order to ensure we provide a formative and meaningful experience for all members of the St Edmund's Community.

The Deputy Head (Religious Life) reports to the Board of Governors each term.

### **Health and Safety**

Candles are only lit when a member of staff is present. The Chapel has fire extinguishers and a fire blanket. All students are aware of the procedures for a fire whether it be during the normal school day, or out of hours for boarders.

### Version Control

Date of adoption of this policy	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023
Date of last review of this policy	Lent 2026
Date for next review of this policy	Lent 2027
Policy owner (SLT)	Deputy Head (Religious Life)
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Education Sub-Committee