

Respect, Honesty, Ambition, Believe

**St Ninian's RCPS
And
Nurseries
(School only policy)**



Religious Observance in Schools Policy

January 2025

Edition and Revision Log

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Provision of Time for Reflection (Religious Observance)

What is Time for Reflection (otherwise known as Religious Observance)?

Religious Observance (RO) is defined for schools in Scotland as: *“Community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community.”* (Religious Observance Review Group Report 2004)

In line with current policy and legislation all Fife Schools are expected to fulfil this statutory requirement through undertaking acts of Religious Observance (RO) as described below. In this guidance, RO is referred to as Time for Reflection (TfR), although other names may be used to describe it.

Time for Reflection in St Ninian's RC Primary

St Ninian's school places high importance on ensuring that prayer and quiet reflection is inclusive of a diverse range of faith and belief traditions and reflects both faith and non-faith perspectives. We are proactive in ensuring high-quality, pupil, staff, and partner-led opportunities and events that enable a shared community understanding and celebration of the diversity within prayer and quiet reflection.

- Weekly Assemblies
- Daily Prayer in Classes
- Whole school masses for holidays of Obligation
- Celebration of Annual events eg St Ninian's Day
- Primary 7 pupils attend moving on Mass with all catholic cluster schools

We work closely with our school chaplaincy team and other visiting speakers who support us in planning, delivering and reviewing our TfR programme. We welcome the opportunity to work with a range of partners who represent faith and non-faith groups which reflect and are relatable to the diverse beliefs and values of our school community.

In St Ninian's, our faith-based practices are deeply rooted in our school values: **Respect, Achieve, Believe**. These values guide our approach to spiritual development, community engagement, and personal growth by:

- Encouraging pupils to show **respect** others through prayer and reflection,
- Promoting **honesty** by helping pupils to reflect on their actions and grow in understanding of the Gospel values,
- Inspiring **ambition** by supporting pupils to develop their faith talents and sense of purpose within the school and wider them to **achieve** personal and communal growth,
- Empowering them to **believe** in themselves, their faith, and their future.

Opportunities for TfR are provided for our young people in the following ways:

- **Daily Prayer in Classes** encourages pupils to pause, reflect, and believe in themselves and others. It nurtures a quiet confidence and spiritual awareness that supports emotional wellbeing and respectful relationships.
- **Celebration of Annual Events**, such as *St Ninian's Day*, connects our community to its community and traditions. These moments of celebration help pupils to believe in the importance of faith, culture, and collective memory.

- **P1-7 Pupils attend Class Masses in the Chapel** providing opportunities for deeper spiritual engagement. These experiences support pupils in requesting guidance, achieving a deeper understanding of their faith, and believing in their role as leaders within the school community.
- **Pupil Voice Groups (Mini Vinnies)** encourage pupils to achieve personal growth and leadership through participation in faith-based groups and activities. They support pupils to believe in their identity, values, and the importance of community and reflection.
- **Celebrating community events** eg Remembrance Sunday Service – encourage respect for other churches within our community.
- **Whole School Events Celebrating Achievements and Cultural Heritage** celebrate the diverse achievements and talents of young people, fostering pride and aspiration. They promote a culture where all pupils believe in their potential and feel valued for who they are and what they contribute.

Weekly Assemblies offer a space where pupils come together to reflect, celebrate achievements, and request guidance and strength for the week ahead. They reinforce our shared values and foster a sense of belonging to our faith community.

What part does worship play in the school TfR programme?

Our school approach to TfR aligns with the recommendations of the Religious Observance Review Group Report 2004:

Within Denominational schools organised acts of worship are considered appropriate as part of the formal activity of the school, supporting the school's aims, mission, values and ethos. These acts of worship will include the school community's celebration of daily prayer and of Mass which will always be at the core of the Roman Catholic school's religious observance.

Can I withdraw my young person from Time for Reflection/ Religious Observance?

Under the terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, parents/ carers/ families do have the right to withdraw their child from Time for Reflection/ Religious Observance. However, the Scottish Government also acknowledge:

*Where a parent **chooses** a denominational school for their child's education, they choose to opt in to the school's ethos and practice which is imbued with religious faith and religious observance. In denominational schools, it is therefore more difficult to extricate a pupil from all experiences which are influenced by the school's faith character.*

Curriculum For Excellence - Provision of Religious Observance in Schools, Scottish Government, 17 February 2011

Where a request is made, we will work in partnership with families to manage this with sensitivity and understanding. If you wish to make a request please email: stniniansrcps.enquiries@fife.gov.uk Following receipt of this communication, a member of the school Senior Leadership Team will arrange a meeting with you to explain in more detail our inclusive approach to RO, discuss any implications for withdrawal and to agree suitable arrangements as an alternative where required. Additionally, where

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a young person wishes to undertake religious practice or worship as part of their school day, we will seek to provide facilities which support this.

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