



St. Mary's C of E Primary School
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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY 2024

VISION

'Care, grow and flourish in God's loving hands.'

MISSION

- With St Mary's Church, Brookside Methodist, and other local churches, we will further develop understanding of Christian values in action through worship and across the curriculum
- Through excellent teaching we will deliver an inspirational curriculum
- We will enable every child to make the very best progress
- We will work in partnership with children and families to further promote confidence and self esteem
- We will prepare children to confidently face the challenges of growing up in the 21st Century
- We will provide children with an understanding of local, national and global communities and faiths.

Safeguarding Statement of Intent

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every pupil, both inside and outside of the school premises. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken.

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that members of the governing board, the headteacher and staff understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse, and know to refer concerns to the DSL.
- Teaching pupils how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- Ensuring that the headteacher and any new staff and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

Collective Worship as an expression of the school's vision

Rooted in God's love, our nurturing ethos enables all members of our school community to thrive and flourish. As a Church school, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos where children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. Collective Worship is the heartbeat of our school life – a time to gather together, reaffirm our vision and associated values and celebrate the central role that each pupil and adult have to play in our community.

Policy Statement

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

The Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church).
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see [Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance](#)). Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.

- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to ‘do anything’. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community’s behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England.

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord’s Prayer, psalms, parables and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework and ‘shape’ for worship:

- **Gathering together:** As we arrive for Collecting Worship, we light our Pascal and Trinity candles and share greeting words. Music is playing on arrival, which is often linked with our focus value. All of this acts as a ‘preparation’ for worship.
- **Engaging:** There is always an opportunity to learn together about God and the life and teaching of Christ. This may be through talk, Bible stories/verses, video clips, drama, the life of a significant figure and how they exemplify Christian values, or through visitors. This is often centered on a focus value/theme and the lectionary to provide a distinctly Anglican experience. Our highly inclusive approach to collective worship exposes children to representation and diversity in religious artwork, composers and musical choices.
- **Responding and reflecting together:** During Collective Worship, we pause to think, feel and imagine. We reflect on what we have learnt and what difference it will make to our lives. The way we respond might be silence, singing songs that reflect the learning, praying, time to look at images, asking big questions.
- **Sending out:** At the end of Collective Worship, children are reminded to take learning with them and think how it can make a difference. Dismissal words are used and the linked music is played as a conclusion to the act of worship.

We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

At St. Mary’s School, we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music. Singing is an important element of collective worship with carefully selected hymnody to reflect and immerse the children in thematic worship and praise.

We foster links with both St. Mary’s Church and Brookside Methodist Church, involving the Reverend Alec Corio in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school. Children regularly visit church to experience Collective Worship.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At St. Mary’s School we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their

clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to St. Mary's School, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Planning

Planning for Collective Worship is led by the Headteacher in liaison with Reverend Alec Corio. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year, underpinned by upon Christian Values. The headteacher ensures that leaders and visiting speakers receive copies of the long-term plans. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the plans as a basis for developing their own short term plans for individual acts of worship.

Organisation

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. Where collective worship forms part of an 'assembly', we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering.

- There is one class-based Collective Worship per week which is planned and shared with teachers.
- There is one act of Collective Worship per week that is led by Reverend Alec Corio, during this time, Y6 pupils are involved in Bible readings and leadership of intercessory prayers. Parents and carers often attend this act of worship. This is either in church or at school.
- Children organically contribute to the organisation and delivery of Collective Worship.
- Governors are always welcome to attend and some are occasionally involved in its implementation e.g. Harvest Festival.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point.

We use Friday afternoon's Collective Worship as an opportunity to celebrate children's successes. This culminates in an act of Collective Worship and plays an important role in promoting the ethos of the school.

Resources

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We have a collection of songs which are used to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. Those leading worship also access professional development opportunities.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. We intend to make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead it before asking them to

submit short term plans.

Inclusion


We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The headteacher as Collective Worship leader is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Signed:
Chair of Governors 

Date ratified by Governing Body.....24.1.24.....