



## **St. John's Church of England Primary School**



### **Collective Worship Policy**

#### **St. John's Vision statement**

*Shine like stars*

*Through God's love, we will flourish and develop our gifts in our nurturing community, as we strive to be an inspiration to all.*

**Your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:16**

Policy: Collective Worship Policy

**Reviewed: October 2024**

**Future Review: October 2027**



## 1. How is the policy a reflection of our theologically rooted Christian vision?

***Through God's love, we will flourish and develop our gifts in our nurturing community, as we strive to be an inspiration to all.***

**Your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:16**

At St. John's Primary School, worship is a central part of each school day. Acts of worship are wholly Christian, with an opportunity for reflection on a variety of aspects of life for all children which promotes their spiritual, moral and cultural development in accordance with the Law. We recognise the importance of involving our whole school community in regular collective worship which highlights the significance of our 'nurturing community'. As people created in the image of God we encourage our pupils to be the light shining out to those around them both other pupils and members of our school community— 'Shine like Stars.'

There is a weekly focus planned by the Headteacher in the Collective Worship on Monday and this is further developed throughout the week in the daily collective worship that takes place as outlined in the organisation of worship. This focus is an expression of the school's vision and values through the teaching and learning about God's Word and learning to live in God's World, as Jesus Christ lived and taught, for both adults and children. Through the planning for collective worship and celebration assembly we provide opportunities for pupils to flourish and be celebrated for their gifts that God has given them – 'develop their gifts'. We believe that Jesus' journey can serve as an inspiration for our mindfulness and our own personal learning journeys/ development; just like Jesus, we too can be an inspiration to others – 'as we strive to be an inspiration to all'. We believe as a school that with this mind-set, as in our biblical quote taken from Matthew 5:16, our work will be celebrated and rewarded as is evident in our weekly celebration assemblies where parents, carers and governors are most welcome to attend.

## 2. Introduction

In Church of England schools, collective worship is seen as more than a daily 'awe and wonder' moment. It is the unique heartbeat of the school and will be offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together.

*We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives...Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office 2016) page 10



Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a whole school family. Collective worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school and reaffirms our Christian vision and associated values of **granting forgiveness, growing in respect, practising endurance, sharing compassion, working for justice for everyone, and knowing confidence through Christ.**

### 3. Aims of Collective Worship

- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- To reflect the parish tradition of worship, while giving experience over time for pupils to experience the breadth of Anglicanism.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship and festivals. We offer the Eucharist Service termly to all parents, carers and the church community along with the pupils from Yr.5/6 class.
- Explore the school's Christian vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues.
- Enable pupils the opportunity to make a positive contribution to worship through involvement with aspects of the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship.

### 4. Legal requirements

Collective worship:

- Should be conducted in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and Instrument of Government and be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- Unless the right of withdrawal has been exercised all pupils must take part each day in an act of collective worship (DfE circular 1/94 para. 51) and the Governing Body should ensure that all pupils **each day** engage in a distinctively Christian act of worship.
- Arrangements for collective worship in foundation schools of a religious character (i.e. church schools) are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consultation with the headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52&53).

### 5. Planning of worship

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, the incumbent of our linked church/es and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader and governors.

The daily Christian act of worship is central to our Christian ethos. It makes an important contribution to the spiritual flourishing of the whole school community. We are committed to providing a daily act of Christian worship which is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality.

Collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school or key stage. Our school plans systematically, using both long term and short-term plans which enables continuity and



cohesion. We use the following resources to support our worship: *LDBS Collective Worship Planning, Picture News, Assemblies for primary schools by Margaret Cooling.*

### **Themes and resources for Collective Worship at St. John's School**

At all acts of worship, a candle is lit on the front table to remind the children of the presence of God. When this is lit, it is a sign to the children that they are present at worship and to behave with reverence.

Themes are selected as a focus for school assemblies, they may include the following: our half-termly Christian values, major events, festivals in the church year, stories from the Bible, topics from Picture News, known national and international events, Eco-Committee and School Council topics and themes from the LDBS worship calendar. include:

- reflecting from Christian symbols and their use in worship
- observing the cycle of the Anglican year.
- pupils' contributions
- children leading worship
- reflection time and silence
- identified prayers and traditional responses, hymns and songs
- using the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning
- music, dance and drama
- visitors
- School and class Prayer Books, with prayers written by the children, for use in collective worship
- Collective Worship file which provides a record of all the assembly themes, hymns and songs throughout the year
- Parish church and Clergy

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and our planning incorporates a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include: (eg: music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT).

When planning acts of worship, we follow the Church of England guidance to ensure that worship is:

- **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 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.



## 6. Pattern of Worship

Our pattern of worship is as follows:

| Day       | Collective Worship  |
|-----------|---|
| Monday    | <p>KS2 - (led by the Headteacher) @9am</p> <p>KS1 - (led by the Headteacher) @ 2.30pm</p> <p>EYFS – @11.20am</p> <p>Pathways attend half-termly for the whole school</p> <p>Visitors throughout the year e.g. Bridge of Hope Charity</p>  |
| Tuesday   | <p>KS2 - Picture News taken by the Class teacher in class @9am</p> <p>KS1 – Picture News KS1 @12.45pm</p> <p>EYFS - @11.20am</p>  |
| Wednesday | <p>KS2 - Picture News Collective Worship section taken by the Class teacher in class @9am</p> <p>KS1 – Picture News Collective Worship section taken by the class teacher in class @12.45pm</p> <p>EYFS - @11.20am</p> <p>Class Collective Worship (led by class teacher and the children termly, planned in class) every class takes the Collective Worship in the hall – parents/carers/governors invited to attend</p> <p>Church services (Harvest, Remembrance, Carol Service, Nativity, Easter Services, Pentecost, Leavers' Service) – parents/carers &amp; governors invited to attend</p> |
| Thursday  | <p>KS2 - Mother Mitzi's Collective Worship @9am</p> <p>Mother Mitzi takes Collective Worship for KS1 &amp; EYFS separately at least twice every half-term</p> <p>KS1- @12.45pm</p> <p>EYFS- @11.20am</p>  |
| Friday    | <p>Whole School Collective Worship and Celebration Assembly- parents/carers &amp; governors invited to attend</p> <p>Mother Mitzi leads the Collective Worship monthly</p>  |

Our worship consists of 4 parts:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community, for example, *(with music, liturgy and/or the lighting of a candle)*
- **Engage** – we share, for example, *(a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message)*
- **Respond** – pupils, for example, *(discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing)*



- Send – we share, for example, *(the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with a final prayer, music, liturgy and/or the blowing out of our special candle)*

## **START OF WORSHIP**

**Thank you for joining me for collective worship today.**

**Peace be with you.**

**All: And also with you.**

**At the start of our worship we light a candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the World. Invite a pupil to light the candle – Lord Jesus, shine your light on us today.**

## **CLOSE OF WORSHIP**

**If my prayer is your prayer, then join in with Amen at the end.**

**At the end of the worship we extinguish the candle with these words, (blow out the candle)**

**May the light of God shine from us and the peace of God be with us always. Amen**

**Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.**



## **Prayer**

At St. John's School, we believe that prayer should come from the heart, but we also know that it has to be taught by example. It should be communal or individual and at its heart it is communication between a worshipper and God.

Prayers that are said in class, in acts of collective worship both in school and in services. They are often written by the children either with support from the teachers or by themselves either in school or at home. There is a Prayer Box in the Prayer & Reflection Corner for pupils to put any prayers that they may have written during break or lunchtime or from home. These prayers are frequently used in acts of collective worship. The children are also encouraged to say both the Lord's Prayer and the School Prayer throughout the week, and always one of these prayers is said at the end of the Celebration Assembly and Collective Worship on a Friday.



### **Lunchtime Prayer (Ruby Class – Reception)**

Hands, hands, hands  
Thank you, Lord, for hands  
Food, food, food  
Thank you, Lord, for food  
Farmers, farmers, farmers,  
Thank you, Lord, for farmers  
Friends, friends, friends  
Thank you, Lord, for friends  
Family, family, family,  
Thank you, Lord, for family

Amen

### **Home time Song (Ruby Class)**

Now the day has ended what a lovely day its been  
Thank you for the things we've done and all the things we've seen.  
We thank you for the games we've played  
And all the friends we've made  
And we know the Lord is watching over us.  
(Slap, Clap)  
We know the Lord is watching over us.  
(Prayer Hands)

# **The Lord's Prayer**

and

# **Our School Prayer**

Dear God  
Thank you for St. John's School and  
for making us one whole family.  
Help us to remember that we are a team,  
And should all work together and  
Care for each other. Keep our hearts  
Full of love and friendship.



Thank you for our friend Catriona who no longer is with us.

Help us to keep the school's Golden Rules.

Thank you for helping us to celebrate our good works and achievements.

We ask you to keep us all safe.

Amen.

## 7. Collective worship leader

The leader for collective worship is responsible for long term planning of worship, leading acts of worship and supporting staff and pupils who are planning and leading aspects of worship. The leader also monitors the quality of worship and evaluates its impact across the school community.

## 8. Visitors leading worship

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies (protocol and expectations displayed in the Reception Area, on the website and on the noticeboard in the staffroom). This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

It is the responsibility of the collective worship leader and senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its context and our school's vision. Please refer to LDBS guidance for visitors leading worship.

## 9. CPD and training

Parents, pupils and adults in school are entitled to be led in Christian worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a church school context. Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular diocesan led training.





## 10. Monitoring and evaluation

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact they have on pupils and adults within the school community.

This involves monitoring by school leaders, the collective worship leader and governors and takes place both informally and formally. Everyone who leads worship is asked to evaluate, reflecting on how they can improve and develop their practice. We welcome the views of all those who participate in our worship, including pupils, parents, and visitors (feedback is gathered in staff meetings, questionnaires for parents/ carers, governors talking to pupils and completing the monitoring form and governors also talking to staff). This feedback plays an essential part in developing the spiritual growth of our school community.

Foundation governors and the worship leader observe and evaluate worship once every term and report back to the whole governing body.

The impact of collective worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

## 11. Parents and Carers

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help pupils flourish. Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship, However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all pupils will participate in collective worship, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child will discuss this with the headteacher before making their decision. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw pupils from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

## 12. Evaluation / Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the collective worship leader in consultation with the Headteacher and ratified every three years by the Governing Body.

Date of validation..... Signed.....  
Chair of Governors

Date of review..... Signed.....  
Chair of Governors