

Collective Worship Policy

St Mary's Church of England School



Our Vision:

**'BUILDING A CARING COMMUNITY,
WHERE ALL CAN LEARN AND SHINE!'**

*As a church school we are inspired by Jesus teaching to:
'Love God and Love Others as Ourselves'
Matthew 12 vs 30-31*

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of Wisdom, Hope, Forgiveness, Compassion and Endurance and celebrates the central role that each child has to play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will 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.

Collective worship gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.

- b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training
- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

The Anglican Christian Tradition

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of songs
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection

We may also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- *Using prayers from Common Worship*
- *Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship*
- *Using Collects as a focus for worship*
- *Celebrating Eucharist*

Implementation

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, members of the local clergy and external visitors, in consultation with the collective worship leader. Acts of worship take place daily and follow a weekly cycle

Mondays – Whole School worship led by the Headteacher

Tuesdays – Class worship – an opportunity to reflect on the weekly themes at age appropriate level

Wednesday – Clergy worship – taking the theme deeper.

Thursday – Picture News – collective worship with a focus on big questions and the wider world.

Fridays – School community focus - Celebration of our responses and achievements this week.

Our school plans are written to meet the needs of our community and draw on different resources such as the Rochester Diocesan Collective Worship Planning. All worship is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and enables continuity. Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. 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.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including music, silence, symbolism, drama, video, creative worship responses, outdoor worship responses.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- *We Gather* – we welcome the community, with the lighting of our class lanterns and liturgy, music or prompts to help centre our attention ready for worship.
- *We listen/Engage* – we share, a Bible reading (often using saddleback kids video versions), followed by discussion or activity or extended input to engage pupils with the Christian message
- *We Respond* – pupils discuss, share, reflect, sing or respond to a reflective prompt. We pray together in response
- *We Go forth/Send* – we share our school prayer and then revisit the key message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour

Expectations of pupils

Our STAR club welcomes new members. Pupils from STAR club are involved in decisions about how worship is planned and delivered. They take on roles within worship such as the:

‘Preparing role’ – Setting up the hall for worship

‘Welcome Role’ – welcoming classes at the door and placing their lanterns at the front.

Leading the gathering liturgy.

‘Delivery role’ – e.g. support with bible reading, prayers, songs

‘Evaluation Role’ – Awarding certificates and recording video journal evaluation.

They work with the collective worship leader to consider links to collective worship and the after school S.T.A.R. (Space, Time. Activities and Reflection) club, designing activities for the STAR club each week.

Developing worship

The school allocates part of its budget to support the daily act of collect worship. The collective worship leader attends professional development as appropriate with Salisbury Diocese and accesses a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our Chair of Governors and STAR club are involved with regular review of acts of collective worship and the impact they have on the school and its wider community.

We also welcome the contributions of parents through our annual questionnaires. These are shared with our STAR Club and foundation governor meetings and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) in consultation with the Diocese of Salisbury.

Parental Withdrawal

Worship is regarded as special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and of none. We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship. However, as collective worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents.

Policy Reviewed: July 2022

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