

**ST. MARY'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND**



PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Authorised for Issue: March 2023

To next be reviewed: March 2025

St Mary's School Vision

We aspire to be a kind and creative learning community where we support and challenge each other to be the best we can be.

We aim for all our children to

- have a sensitive, considerate and respectful attitude towards others
- understand and appreciate Christian values
- be proud of their school and their achievements
- be able to work co-operatively, collaboratively and independently
- be enthusiastic learners and confident in applying their skills
- develop an enquiry based approach, to become lifelong learners
- have essential skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology
- achieve the highest standards of which they are capable
- extend themselves in mind, body and spirit

To achieve these aims for our children we will

- give clear, challenging but achievable objectives that are shared with the child
- complete careful planning which includes continuity, progression and differentiation, using assessment to target learning needs
- provide a stimulating, organised, learning environment with appropriate resources
- give clear instructions; provide achievable tasks, with perceptive teaching and supportive guidance
- ensure all areas of the curriculum are covered for all pupils and provide a variety of activities to challenge and extend learning
- plan opportunities for children to ask questions, teach strategies and provide resources for them to find answers
- use a range of teaching approaches and plan for different learning styles
- involve parents and carers in school life
- promote the development and use of the children's self-evaluation skills
- give praise and recognition for effort, achievement or talent
- give clear guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour through the behaviour policy and encourage children to take responsibility for their actions
- encourage children to take an active and responsible part in decision-making
- set a good example in the way we behave towards others and give children opportunities to explore Christian values and develop their spirituality
- work together collaboratively as a community and strive for continuous improvement in all we do

St Mary's School Christian Values

Our School's Christian Values are demonstrated in all that we do and say

*** Compassion * Community * Courage * Curiosity ***

Collective Worship Policy

Collective worship should be 'a rich source of inspiration for the whole school, and a focus for all that is good and worthy of celebration' (Bath and Wells Diocese), in accordance with the requirements of the Education Reform Act of 1988 and the Trust Deed of the Scholl. It should enrich the lives of all within the school community, reflecting the words of John 10:10 'That they may have life in all their fullness'.

Policy Statement

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School, we believe the daily act of Collective worship is an integral and important part of school life through which every child and adult can explore the School's vision and shared Christian values enabling them to grow into responsible, compassionate and fulfilled adults who actively and positively contribute to the society in which they live.

A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The experience, beliefs and values of each of our families is very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and children. This means that Collective worship is different from a corporate act of worship in a church where, for Christians, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

At St Mary's Church of England Primary Collective Worship aims to be inspirational, invitational, inclusive and to lead people to a point of personal reflection where they can encounter worship, and join in, if they wish.

Through Collective Worship children will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian beliefs. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, and an experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity through signs and symbols. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and problems/challenges of the world will be given. Children will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian and other Faith calendars. Children will be offered time to be able to contemplate and grow spiritually.

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all children, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England.

The Local Governing Body have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the Headteacher. At St Mary's we have an Ethos committee. This includes the Headteacher, RE and Collective Worship Lead(s) and Foundation Governors. There is also a pupil Ethos committee, with any and all pupils invited to attend. This group is led by a member of the SLT or RE Lead. This pupil group feeds back to Governors in differing formats.

The Right of withdrawal

At St Mary's there are children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the Headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such Worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from Collective Worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school

- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

(This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily Collective Worship.)

Guiding Principles

Collective Worship at St Mary's aims to:

- Be inclusive
- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support children and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be a central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and Christian faith.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the Christian belief in the presence, love and peace of God. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity and respect.
- Support children in developing their understanding of the Christian concept of the Trinitarian nature of God.
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with the Biblical narrative, signs, symbols and language that reflect the church calendar and relate this to their daily living.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Children will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to help children understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teaching of Jesus.

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Children's personal development and wellbeing
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We ensure that information about Collective Worship is included on the school website and in newsletters.

How Collective worship is organised

We hold a daily act of collective worship. As stated by the Bath and Wells Diocese, it is 'the entitlement of all children and should happen daily'. Worship will normally be 15-20 minutes. The normal pattern for this is:

Monday: Whole School Led by the Deputy Headteacher

Tuesday: Whole School Led by the Headteacher

Wednesday: Whole School – Singing with prayer/reflection led by Music Lead(Hall)

Thursday: Key Stage Collective Worship around our Christian Value (Classroom)

Friday: Celebrations led by the Headteacher or other member of SLT with a focus on celebration.(Church)

Each year we have a number of Church services and other whole school occasions where parents can join us. These include:

- Harvest
- Remembrance
- Christmas
- Easter
- Leavers Service

Individual Classes also visit church regularly as part of the RE curriculum.

The school community is always invited to attend St Mary's Church for all age activities and services throughout the year and encouraged to take an active role.

Planning and Preparation

Each year a detailed Collective Worship calendar is compiled linking the Christian calendar, school Christian Values, British Values, PSHE and creative curriculum and with the parishes Children's work programme. This is done in collaboration with the clergy of St Mary's Church, the Headteacher and Collective Worship Lead.

Careful thought is given to creating an appropriate atmosphere.

Acts of Collective Worship follow a recognisable format with some patterns which are familiar e.g. greeting at the beginning

In almost all acts of Collective Worship there will be songs which wherever possible will relate to the theme.

There is usually a quiet time for reflection or a prayer. We use a range of prayers from a variety of resources including children's written or improvised prayers. Children will be encouraged to join in and to say Amen if they wish to.

Children's involvement and leadership are key to engagement and children actively plan and take part in whole school worship events. It is important at St Mary's that all children should feel able to contribute and lead whole school and class Collective Worship.

Teachings within whole school Collective Worship are then considered through discussions in class Collective Worship, enabling children to further extend their thinking and children are challenged and supported to continue to explore how times can impact on the way they live their lives.

Children in EYFS gradually join with whole school events and collective worship.

We believe that Collective Worship should also be a time when we as a community are able to reflect on the achievements and learning of the children. This provides an opportunity to reward children for the achievements both in and outside of school. It also plays an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, with all children inspired and nurtured and their achievements recognised.

Resources and Professional Learning

The school has a copy of Roots and Fruits which is a key resource for our Collective Worship. Other resources are available online for staff e.g. www.fischy.com.

Our resources also include books, cross, candles, pebbles and other artefacts and a noticeboard in the hall which records our Worship for each term. When becoming permanent members of staff at St Mary's, teachers attend training on Church School Ethos at the Diocese.

The school resources are available from school and church for Collective Worship and this enables upto date resources to be used.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring the policy and practice of Collective Worship is the duty of the Headteacher and the Governors of St Mary's. Evaluations of series of Acts of Worship are carried out on a regular basis by clergy, staff and members of the school governors using a proforma from Roots and Shoots.

Conclusion

Collective Worship is central to and enriches the life of the school community at St Mary's Church of England Primary School. It is a time where teachers and children may express joy and thankfulness, share concerns and experiences, and affirm the beliefs and values of the school community.

Disseminating the policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers. This policy is available on our school website.

Date of last review: M a r c h 2 0 2 3

