



St Mark's CE Primary School Collective Worship Policy

“To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God”. William Temple (1881-1894)

Living and Learning Together'

St. Mark's CE Primary School is a welcoming community where children develop a lifelong love of learning and sense of belonging, within a nurturing and inclusive Christian environment. All children have the opportunity to become free thinking, responsible citizens, whilst understanding and appreciating the wonder of our world. They leave St Mark's with the confidence to live fulfilling lives, and respond with flexibility to an ever changing world.

Introduction

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our values and celebrates the contribution that each child makes to our community. Worship will reflect 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.

Worship in our school should:

As worship:

- Should at its simplest create a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us
- Be distinctively Christian
- Use and promote the clearly identified core Christian CIRCLE values of the school
- Have **Integrity** as acts of Anglican worship whilst being **Invitational, Inclusive** and **inspirational**
- Be based on Biblical text or themes
- Enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Be central in importance to the life of our school community, which is part of a wider community that embraces the whole world
- Reflect on human existence
- Use the seasons and festivals of the Christian year
- Develop understanding of Anglican traditions and the practice of the local parish church

For people:

- Develop personal spirituality within the school community through a range of experiences including individual and collective prayer
- Engage pupils and adults with collective worship, making it relevant and transformational to the lives of members of the whole school community
- Celebrate the God given gifts and talents of individuals and the whole school community
- Make a significant contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of members of the school community
- Consider the beliefs and values of others, especially those within the school community
- Raise aspirations of individuals and the school community

Aims

- To promote the joy of worship as engaging, inspiring and transformative.
- To develop spirituality, morality, social and cultural values.
- Sometimes to provide a peaceful environment enabling stillness, reflection and prayer.
- Sometimes to be noisy and joyous with singing, music, dance, drama, etc.
- To give an opportunity to acquire a secure knowledge of the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible.
- To understand, celebrate and develop children's knowledge of Christian beliefs, celebrations, traditions and religious festivals in the Anglican Church's year.
- To appreciate that people, cultures and beliefs differ and to demonstrate respect, tolerance and generosity towards them.
- To develop pupils' sense of self-worth and to provide opportunities to celebrate achievements.
- To develop a caring attitude to others and a sense of community and loyalty.
- To provide opportunities for children to plan, lead, contribute to, monitor and evaluate collective worship.
- To invite clergy of the parish, other lay members of the parish and other Christian leaders in the community [as are acceptable to the parish church] to lead regular worship.

How we achieve our aims

We aim to promote collective acts of worship, which are rich, meaningful experiences that are appropriate and significant to the pupil's needs, age, development and interest by:

- Creating a sense of occasion and reverence following the four central attributes of worship; Gather, Engage, Respond, and Send.
- Arranging worship at different places when possible, different times with different people and groupings, involving all members of the school community at some time.
- Planning and linking themes which focus on a particular idea/concept, i.e. the liturgical year; RE curriculum, festivals and celebrations, within Christian and other faith traditions, our Christian CIRCLE values and celebrating achievements, good work and behaviour.
- Using a wide range of resources, devotional aids, artefacts (from religious and secular sources), music, art, clips and drama to engage children's interest.
- Encourage children to participate and experience different styles of worship, e.g. prayer, praise, silence, rituals, and become familiar with the language of worship, Biblical readings and liturgy.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to reflect, contemplate on their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs.
- Using the centrality of prayer – personal silent prayer, personal shared prayers, collective prayers, writing prayers.
- Providing opportunities that develop pupil's awareness of what is beautiful, good, wonderful, awesome and puzzling in life experience.
- Involving pupils and members of the wider community to participate in collective worship and activities within the parish.
- Presenting and creating displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas and thoughts.

Central attributes of an act of worship

The School will endeavour to fulfil the legal requirements of 1988 Education Reform Act in conjunction with School's trust deed, by holding 'an act of collective worship every day'.

During collective worship, whether in the hall, classroom or outside, we will apply the following 'central attributes' of worship:

Gathering Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony

Engaging	Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content
Responding	Ensuring there is time and opportunity for individual, group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways and in addition
Sending	Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas covered and to conclude the worship

Usual School specific organisation

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Headteacher or class teachers, following themes provided by the Diocese
Tuesday	Key Stage worship led by teachers
Wednesday	Class worship led by teachers – ‘Picture News’
Thursday	‘Songs of Praise’ – Hymns and worship songs led by teachers
Friday	Whole school Values celebration worship led by the Headteacher and/or teachers

The School may vary the organisation Whole School / Class / Key Stage each year or term.

The school meet regularly with the Vicar of St. Mark’s to organise at least termly school led services, collective acts of worship and projects involving him; combining such with regular trips to the Church when appropriate.

The children take part in, lead and deliver 5 church services a year: Harvest, Christmas, A Thematic service, Easter and Year 6 leavers’ service.

The centrality of prayer

During the collective worship there will be a time for response and reflection, to ponder on a question, statement or thought. This may also be reflected in a prayer, offered spontaneously by a pupil or adult, read out or recited. This prayer can be displayed and used in class and school reflective areas so that:

- Children understand the nature and purpose of prayer.
- Children understand the part prayer may play in their lives and the life of the school community.
- Prayer contributes to the spiritual development of individuals and the whole school community.

There will also be appropriate opportunities for prayer and other worship activities, including reflection, outside of collective worship.

Each class has a ‘reflective area’ to engage and promote individual pupils and adults, as well as designated special spaces around the school.

Management and organisation of resources

The Senior Leaders plan worship on a termly basis, with input from pupils, teachers, feedback from pupils, staff and governors.

Resources and artefacts are available from the Education Centre, Guildford.

All classes have access to Bibles and a board is displayed in the hall, with children’s prayer responses.

Legal status of collective worship

All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship.

In a Church of England School, worship must be in line with the trust deed of the school and will reflect the traditions of the Church of England, i.e. the Anglican tradition.

Right to withdraw

Withdrawal of Pupils

We aim to ensure that collective worship is meaningful and relevant for all children and staff, for those with a faith background and those with none. Our schools exert no pressure on children to become worshipping Christians, or to participate actively in any activity that will compromise their own family faith or lack of faith. However, Christian values are built into our ethos and are reflected in the themes of our worship.

Should parents wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from collective worship, they should inform the Headteacher in writing.

Responsibilities

The normal expectation within our church school is for all staff to view daily collective worship as an important part of their own wellbeing and spiritual development as human beings. The school will endeavour to timetable staff so all have an opportunity to attend regularly.

At interview, all applicants are informed that the school holds daily acts of collective worship that promote the Christian ethos and values of the school.

The normal expectation will be that teaching staff, including student teachers, will participate in and lead collective worship.

The Headteacher is responsible for collective worship and coordinating the programme of induction and training for staff.

Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluation strategies used by staff for assessing the outcomes of collective worship are:

- observation of the children's interest level and attentiveness;
- feedback from pupils, parents and visitors;
- observation of the children's general behaviour in and around the schools', and to one another;
- a focused visit by Foundation Governors and evaluation of Collective worship by teachers and occasionally by the Spirituality team.

Review

This policy was ratified by the Full Governing body in Spring 2024 and will be reviewed in Spring 2025