



ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

St Mary's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School welcomes children from the local neighbourhood and seeks to serve all, be they of any faith background or none. We acknowledge that most of our pupils are not members of the Christian faith community and respect different standpoints and diversity of religious backgrounds from which the children come. Those of us who lead acts of worship should be sensitive to this and aim to enable all children to feel included. We see our daily act of worship as integral to the life of our school. It should be instrumental in developing, celebrating and exploring the values that are important to us all.

AIMS FOR WORSHIP

It is our intention that worship shall compliment the work done in Religious Education. (see below for curriculum aims)

1) To gain knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith

- explore Christian beliefs about God
- help children develop familiarity with the layout and content of the Bible and an understanding of its significance
- learn about the significance of Jesus to Christians and the nature of God as revealed in the bible
- help children learn and join in using our school prayer and songs which they can take with them to adult life
- help children experience and recognise Christian symbols and forms of worship.

2) To contribute to pupils' spiritual development

- build their understanding of, and relationship with God
- foster a sense of awe and wonder at creation
- to explore and reflect on important issues relating to life and creation including quality of relationships, suffering, loss and death.
- recognise and celebrate things that are of value, for example; truth, generosity, self-sacrifice
- experience what worship is and to develop the skills to worship effectively.

3) To explore and empathise with the beliefs of members of other faiths

- develop knowledge and respect for other religions through sharing; stories, artifacts, music

and dance from different faiths and particularly in relation to special celebrations

- celebrate values and attitudes shared with members of other faith communities.

4) To contribute to pupils' moral development

- help children, know, understand and appreciate the values by which people live
- provide opportunity to reflect, collectively and individually, on moral and social issues
- help children become more aware of, and responsive to the rights and needs of others
- promote self-understanding and high self-esteem, commitment, fairness, equality of opportunity and a respect for self and others

5) To contribute to the general development of pupils

- provide them with opportunities to demonstrate and celebrate skills; prayer, singing, speaking, performance through drama, music and dance, on both an individual and collective basis
- provide opportunities for leadership and the taking of responsibility

6) To celebrate the life of the school in the presence of God through

- class assemblies where children show work achieved in one or more curriculum areas
- 'showing' assemblies where children show individual, paired or group work of which they are proud
- the presentation of certificates for all kinds of achievement
- the inclusion of practices such as birthdays, which reinforce a sense of community and belonging
- sharing the achievements, joys and sorrows of members of our school community

7) To respond to the wider world

- to express sorrow in relation to events in the news and to reflect on their significance
- to celebrate and give thanks for the world we live in

ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY

Special assemblies will be held at key points in the Christian and School Year, for example; Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Book Week, Leavers' Assembly. The Head teacher will lead these assemblies, with assistance from teachers, or groups or classes of children as appropriate. As a Church of England school we are always eager to develop links between school and local churches, as well as other Christian organisations. These links have led to regular assemblies also being taken by local clergy.

Occasional assemblies may be led by visitors from other faiths or from organisations involved in the life of the community. Representatives of charities will be invited to speak on occasions. The school regularly engages in a charity initiative during Harvest and Christmas time and the initiative is introduced and promoted through assemblies.

Parents/carers are invited to attend Thursday class assemblies, Friday celebration assemblies and special assemblies at other times of the year. If for some reason an assembly or singing has to be cancelled, teachers are to take an act of collective worship with their class. School also has a prayer, put together by ideas from all pupils. (Appendix 1)

If the Head teacher cannot take Celebration Assembly there is a rota for staff to take the assembly in turn. Whole school assemblies follow and reflect significant festivals in world religions and complement our RE syllabus. (Appendix 2)

ATMOSPHERE

Efforts are made to create an atmosphere conducive to worship. Preparations for assembly are made in advance. This involves setting up the hall with items such as the overhead projector, relevant song sheet, cassette/CD player and appropriate music, books, pictures and artifacts to be used in the course of the assembly.

Children and adults should enter and take their places quietly. Children sit on the floor and their teachers sit at the end of the rows near them. Year 6 children sit on benches. Adults should strive to model appropriate behaviour for children, maintaining a respectful silence and joining in the worship in a positive way.

Material used during assembly is age related in order to ensure as much relevance as possible for the children. A mixture of materials, traditional and modern is used. Some prayers are written by staff and/or children to complement assembly themes when appropriate.

It is sometimes necessary to deal with administrative matters while all members of the school community are assembled. Efforts should be made to have a clear break between our act of worship and such like and staff should bring worship to a clean and respectful end before dealing with day-to-day business.

RELATIONSHIP TO DIOCESAN POLICY

The provision as outlined in this policy is in line with Diocesan policy on worship in Voluntarily Controlled schools.

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

We see our worship as a vital part of school life. Our acts of worship aim to be inclusive to all and consequently we hope that no pupils will be withdrawn. Whilst acknowledging the legal right to withdraw children we would respectfully request any parent/carer who has concerns to first discuss them with the Head teacher. Should parents/carers wish to withdraw children we will arrange supervision. ***However, as an inclusive school we strive to work in harmony with all parents/carers to support all acts of worship. We have never had a child withdrawn from collective worship and are very proud of this.***

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed with all staff on a regular basis in accordance with the school's curriculum plan. Worship is a living, evolving activity that must reflect both the unchanging character of belief as well as the ever-changing world in which we live. It must also reflect the differing complexion of those who worship in our school as staff and children come and go. Our evaluation must be conducted against this background.

Appendix 1

School Prayer

Dear God

Thank you for giving us the right to come to school and learn.

Please help us to be kind to our friends.

Help us to show responsibility so that we can be the best that we can be.

Amen

Appendix 2

Overview of Assemblies and Collective worship



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Theme	Attendance Assembly	UNICEF Assembly	Singing Assembly	Class Assembly / Pupil voice and whole school assembly	Celebration Assembly
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Responsibilities connected with good attendance. * Reflection * Celebration of achievements * Collective worship * Awards representing success and outstanding attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reflect the Christian values of love, forgiveness, patience, humility, sharing and respect. * To make pupils aware of the responsibilities required to be fantastic learners and citizens of today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To sing songs based on the Christian values of: love, forgiveness, patience, humility, sharing and respect. * Collective worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Whole class assemblies that are topic, religious or RRSA based. All assemblies reflect the Christian values. * Pupil presentations e.g. UNICEF Team, Peer Mentors. * Visitor assemblies * Collective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Celebration of pupil attainment and achievement * Certificates and awards that show achievement and pupils who model the Christian principles and St Mary's ethos * Collective worship

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