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Worship Policy

Approved By: Faith Group
Committee

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Confidently Me Belonging Together Challenged to Contribute



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St. Mary's C of E Primary School's Worship Policy

At St Mary's we live out our faith together - learning to love God, our neighbour and the world around us. Collective Worship at St. Mary's is at the heart of our school: supporting children of all faiths and none to experience Christian beliefs and practices, and understand how these enhance our lives.

Aims

We aim to provide children with an opportunity to:

- Celebrate -
 - Christian seasons and festivals;
 - School values associated with our vision;
 - Pupils' and adults' achievements;
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed;
- Worship God on their own terms.

Worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- enable participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context;
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy;
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today;
- encourage participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage;
- Reflect the teachings of Jesus and a Trinitarian theology.

Organisation

Each day the children take part in an act of worship. This takes place in a variety of groupings, in the school hall, in classrooms and on occasions outside in our Oasis. (See appendix 1 Structure of Collective Worship) Worship also takes place in St. Mary's Church.

We follow the seasons of the Church year and within these significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas and Easter; other days such as Ascension Day and Pentecost are celebrated occasionally when they fall in term time. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service also feature in collective worship.

Children are introduced to a range of bible and other stories, through which life and human issues are discussed. Children are given time to respond to and reflect upon how such situations may affect them and what they can learn.

Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church Community. Pupils are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year during special festivals and during class based worship known as



Class Reflection time. Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from our worship policy.

Planning of Collective Worship

The themes for collective worship are drawn up by the RE leadership team. The starting point for worship is our school vision; *Confidently Me, Belonging Together, Challenged to Contribute*. This vision, which is at the heart of our school, is underpinned by Christian and British values.

Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. Worship may include some or all of these aspects listed below:

- Drama/role-play
- Artefacts
- Music
- Pictures/PowerPoint presentations
- Bible stories

The pupils enter the hall quietly whilst music plays. The leader welcomes everyone and worship begins with, 'We come together in His light' to which the response is 'Jesus be with us'. Candles are then lit. This reminds that we are welcoming God in to our hearts and lives. The act of worship usually includes a hymn and prayers, which may be led by staff or children. The end of worship signalled by, 'Peace be with you' in sign language.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. Pupils are invited to participate. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship. Pupils and the adult Faith Team developed our school prayer. It is used to mark the beginning of the day. We also have a prayer to use at the end of the day. (See website).

Collective worship provides opportunities to share each other's cultures, to hear about charity projects and overseas links, for pupils to lead and share with each other in expressing their spiritual lives and understanding.

Monitoring Arrangements

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

A legal note

By law, Collective Worship must be provided for every child every day;

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is planned and led so that all pupils have equal opportunity to take part in worship and benefit from that experience. A variety of Christian songs and translations of the Bible are used from the range of Christian traditions represented in the school. A variety of multi-cultural material is also drawn upon encouraging engagement, respect and understanding. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship as identified in the Education Act 1944 and in subsequent legislation. St. Mary's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School where Christian values



and principal underpin the whole curriculum and the experience of daily worship by the whole school community is an important part of school life. In order to preserve the distinctiveness of this church school community, we encourage everyone to be involved in religious education and collective worship. Parents who have concerns about this should discuss them with the Headteacher before their children are admitted to the school.

The governor's Faith Team committee will review this policy every two years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing body.








Appendix 1 Structure of Collective Worship

Humility 	Perseverance 	Compassion 	Friendship 	Trust 
Creation 	Koinonia 			Wisdom 
Hope 	<p>Monday: <i>Collective worship</i> We come together to explore one of our Christian Values. Due to the size of the school, two assemblies take part simultaneously one in the infant hall and one in the junior hall. Pupils not involved in either of these will be involved in worship in their class.</p> <p>Tuesday: <i>Picture News Collective worship.</i> This takes place in class. A chance to reflect on a thought-provoking question based on a current news story, exploring the links to our Christian and British Values. (NB: Picture News and Prayer and Praise are interchangeable regarding days.)</p> <p>Wednesday: <i>Collective worship</i> We come together to explore one of our Christian Values. Due to the size of the school, two assemblies take part simultaneously one in the infant hall and one in the junior hall. Pupils not involved in either of these will be involved in worship in their class. The Rev'd James leads collective worship on a rota basis so all children will see him over a three week period.</p> <p>Thursday: <i>Prayer and Praise!</i> An opportunity to use our voices for worship</p> <p>Friday: <i>'Star of the Week!'</i> celebrating the achievements of our school community.</p>			Forgiveness 
Justice 	Thankfulness 	Reverence 	Service 	Peace 



Overview of Worship 2024-2025

The liturgical year is explored in parallel with these values, mirroring different Christian traditions, the seasons of the Church's year and Christian festivals. This enables children to understand the key features of Anglican practice.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
2024-2025	<p>Koinonia (Fellowship & Belonging)</p>  <p>Perseverance</p>  <p>Compassion</p> 	<p>Creation</p>  <p>Forgiveness</p> 	<p>Thankfulness</p>  <p>Koinonia</p>  <p>(Moving on, becoming a part of different communities & Your legacy)</p>