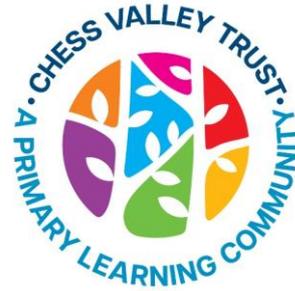


St. Mary's Rickmanworth Church of England Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

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Our school's distinctive Christian Vision:

Aspiring, nurturing, flourishing; together shining a light

Biblical passage:

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5: 14 - 16 - Sermon on the Mount (New Revised Standard Version)

Mission:

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School, we believe that everyone is created in the image of God and is of infinite worth. We passionately believe education is a powerful gift and are committed to providing joyful, engaging learning experiences that centre around a curriculum of academic excellence, that creates meaningful and lasting memories. We support each child to shine a light inwardly by understanding and respecting themselves, and outwardly by reflecting thoughtfully and confidently on their place and impact in the world. Together, we embrace this journey of growth and strive to make a positive, lasting difference in every child's life.

Our vision for Collective Worship

Aspiring, nurturing, flourishing; together, shining a light

Our vision statement is woven into every aspect of our school. It stems from our strong belief that we are called, together, to shine a light on ourselves, each other, on God and on our environment, so that we can ultimately be a light 'shining before others.'

Our aim for Collective Worship at St Mary's is that we aspire to become more like Jesus, be nurtured by God and that in turn, we would bring care into every relationship. We specifically shine light on the biblical values of friendship, compassion, trust, forgiveness, courage, perseverance. We have daily worship times as well as having built in times for reflection and prayer in our classrooms.

Policy Statement

As a Church of England school, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos in which children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. It is an essential and prized part of our school life – a time to gather and reaffirm our vision and associated values. It is an oasis in the day when we meet together in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and are given the opportunity to reflect and participate. It is quality time and represents something special and separate from the ordinary school routine. It is inclusive, invitational and inspirational.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. It is well supported by all staff and governors. Collective Worship makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

The Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Principal/Headteacher.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).¹ Collective worship therefore will be:

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to ‘do anything’. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community’s behaviour and actions.

The ethos as laid down in the school’s Instrument of Government is: -

Recognising its historical foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Structure and pattern:

At St Mary’s we love being together as a school community so we gather together 4 days out of 5. We spend time unpacking the themes in more detail through a variety of ways in class-based worship as we believe it is important to allow time and space for more personal reflection as well.

Collective Worship is led by a range of staff members as well as the Vicar of St Mary’s Church. On occasions visitors come to school to lead or take part in Collective worship. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in both planning and leadership and we have an Ethos group consisting of 2 children from each class (Y1 – Y6), the CW lead, and often the Vicar.

The school year has been divided into 6 half-termly Christian values (friendship, compassion, trust, forgiveness, courage, perseverance). Collective worship follows these values and uses biblical passages and stories as a centre point for each worship, as well as encompassing religious festivals, known national or international events, and aspects taken from the school calendar.

Candles are usually lit followed by a prayer. Music is also used to create atmosphere when the children enter and leave assembly or when reflecting. A typical Collective worship follows this structure:

Gather – the school community is welcomed. 3 candles are lit to signal the start of worship and the school is invited to pray the school prayer.

Engage – The thought or learning idea is introduced through a biblical story or moral issue. This could be through a re-telling, drama or video.

Response – a searching question may be posed followed by a time of reflecting quietly/silently; then a prayer or a song

Send Out – the school community is ‘sent out’ to continue to dwell on the concept or thought shared, signalled by the blowing out of candles, a closing sentence, music (quiet)

Monday	Led by the Headteacher, the whole school gathers. It is a time to introduce and explain the theme for the week.
Tuesday	Singing worship – a time for the school community to worship and celebrate through song
Wednesday	Vicar of St Mary’s - whole school CW – developing the theme of the week more fully
Thursday	class-based – a time to continue exploring the theme through a range of creative activities. (9 spiritual temperaments)
Friday	Led by the Headteacher - celebration worship – whole school celebration of achievements in line with the values

Aims

The aim of our Collective Worship is to provide a variety of opportunities for our school community to:

- Express praise and thanksgiving to God.
- Reflect on our school vision (aspiring, nurturing, flourishing; together shining a light) and our school values of friendship, compassion, trust, forgiveness, courage and perseverance
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ.
- Help pupils appreciate the relevance of faith in today’s world through knowledge of the Bible and Jesus’ teachings
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, for all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- Develop a sense of community and shared ethos
- Be still and reflect.
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events.
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness.
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar and the life of the community
- Consider spiritual and moral issues
- Provide opportunities for prayer and reflection
- Give an appreciation of the variety of ways that Christians worship (music, silence, story, prayer, reflection)
- reflect some of the practices and traditions of the local church and diocese
- reflect the school’s Trust deed and the vision of the CVPLT
- celebrate special occasions in the church year, those of other faith communities and the life of the community
- show pupils that Christianity is a world–wide tradition

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be considered as part of the RE lesson (for time purposes).

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to St Mary's, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of Collective worship is undertaken on a termly basis by staff or governors. This process supports the school's self-evaluation and is reported to the governing body. Pupils are also involved in evaluating collective worship through pupil voice. Ethos Council members regularly review Collective worship in their half-termly meetings. All leaders of collective worship are asked to evaluate and reflect, to develop and improve their practice.

Implementation of Policy

The SIAMS lead as Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Links to Other Policies:

- Spirituality/Spiritual Development Policy