

Collective Worship Policy



Legal Framework

As a Church of England school, there must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils that takes account of their age and aptitude. Collective worship must be in accordance with the practices of the Church of England. Worship in our school is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions.

The governing body has 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 head teacher.

School Statement on Collective Worship

Collective Worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision.

The vision for our church school is of a caring, Christian community where we light the spark of curiosity, build on individual talents and give everyone the courage to live life in all its fullness.

It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

The fundamental part that worship plays in the life of the school requires that it is given the highest priority and there is an expectation that all members of the school community (children and staff) will be present other than in the most exceptional circumstances.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God. This is the same in our school where there is encouragement to respond to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Through Collective Worship, pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils 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 calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

Aims

Collective worship in St Mary's CofE VA Primary School aims to:

- have a pivotal place in the life of the school. provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to respond to the presence, power and peace of God.
- enable children to become familiar with the Bible and grow in their appreciation that for Christians it is God's word.
- provide opportunities for reflection, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality through WOWs, OWs and NOWs (see annex A).
- help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory focii and introduce them to some well known Christian prayers, such as the Lord's prayer.
- offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship.
- strengthen and support the school community, giving expression to, and reaffirming, the core Christian values which underpin the school's vision, policies and curriculum.
- develop a sense of self-worth and celebrate the gifts that each child and adult brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God.
- encourage reflection on the puzzling questions that life poses and learn to appreciate the significance of mystery i.e. that we can't understand and explain everything.
- foster a concern for others within the school community and wider world.
- deepen appreciation of the gift of God's creation and the importance of acting responsibly toward the environment.
- encourage respect of other people: those with other religious beliefs and practices and those who have no faith.

Organisation

• Worship normally happens at the end of the day when the school comes together with the exception of Thursday when it is held at 9am and led by the Open the Book team.

Worship normally lasts for 20 minutes.

•Worship is usually led...

Monday - whole school by the head teacher

Tuesday - whole school by members of the Church community

Wednesday - whole school by the Collective Worship lead / key stage worship by a member of SLT / class worship by class teachers

Thursday - whole school by the 'Open the Book' team

Friday - whole school by the head teacher / deputy head teacher

- Collective Worship is planned termly by the Collective Worship leader and the parish priest and is driven by our three 'Cs'... Caring, Curiosity and Courage within a Christian context.
- All members of the school community are expected to attend worship.
- A candle, a cross and a Bible are displayed and the altar table has a cloth linked to the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church year.
- As the children lead in and out of worship, music is played which links to theme of the worship.
- At the start of Collective Worship, the candle is lit because as a Church School it reminds us that '*Jesus is the light of the world*'. Everyone is invited to join in with the opening prayer... '*We come together in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit*'
- There is a balance of Bible Stories and children's own life experiences as well as stories with a moral theme. We also use power-points, websites, drama, puppets, art work, music and film clips to engage the children in Collective Worship as much as possible.
- Children are encouraged to participate through talk partners or volunteering to come to the front and help.
- Everyone is given opportunities for reflection within the worship.
- Worship ends with prayer which the children can choose to make their own prayer by joining with the 'Amen'.
- Guidance is given to visitors to the school who are leading worship on the procedures and expectations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of Collective Worship at St. Mary's CE VA Primary School is monitored through the following ways:

- Pupil questionnaires
- Governor monitoring visits
- The Bishop's visitor during their annual visit

The Right of Withdrawal from 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.

Any parents wishing to request a withdrawal will be encouraged to meet with the head teacher to discuss their concerns and requirements.

Development and Sharing of the Policy

This policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

Review Date: September 2024

Signed by Headteacher:

Jo Woolley

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Elizabeth Durning

Annex A - Spirituality at St. Mary's

The importance of spiritual development

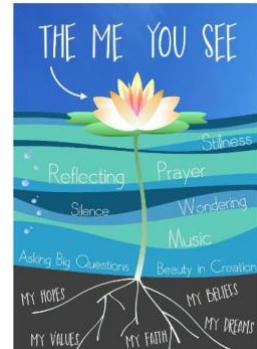
At St. Mary's, we believe it is important for schools to teach children how to connect with themselves, each other and the world in a human way. Children learn about the Christian understanding that we are all valued and uniquely made by God. We provide opportunities for children to explore their thoughts and feelings about themselves, our relationships with others and the world in which we live.

We use the image of a water lily to describe our spirituality and what we can do to support spiritual growth.

The idea is that the flower grows on the water. We describe the flower as 'the me you see'. Children learn that there is much more to people that we don't see.

The water lily has roots which feed and sustain it - we have thoughts, beliefs and values which sustain us.

The water lily lives in the water which helps the plant to flourish and grow and in our spiritual life, we do things that help us connect with our thoughts, belief and values like reflecting, praying, listening to music, walking, silence. Children are provided with opportunities to learn about the feelings we have inside that 'make us us.' These include 'Wow' moments, 'Ow' moments and 'Now' moments.



Finding the 'Wow' moments

The school provides opportunities for children to share and celebrate exciting things - things we are curious about including the beauty of God's natural world, music, art and silence.

Helping with the 'Ow' moments

The school provides time for children to talk to adults when they feel hurt. We recognize the 'Ow' moments and encourage children to use forgiveness, love, prayer and reflection to make sense of hurtful events.

Noticing the 'Now' moments

We provide opportunities for stillness and reflection at different times in the week. Children are encouraged to practice silence and prayer through the use of prayer spaces.