



St Mary's

CE Primary & Nursery School

Where Every Day Matters & Everyone Counts

St Mary's is committed to the spiritual, educational and social development of our children. We seek to inspire and nurture a love of learning, independence and self-belief in a peaceful and stable environment. We aim to support each other and the wider community.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God' (Matthew 5:9)

We are proud to be part of Empower Trust



Collective Worship Policy

Date	Detail
January 2024	Original policy

Date of next review: January 2025

Philosophy

St Mary's Church of England Primary School and Nursery is a place where collective worship is an extremely important part of the day where we offer the opportunity to explore, reflect on and respond to the mystery and meaning of the Christian faith.

We are proud to be part of Empower Trust which has a shared vision to mutual flourishing within all Trust schools. Flourishing refers to prospering, thriving, and growing. Empower Trust has a clear vision about creating successful schools for the benefit of their communities. All schools provide rich and diverse curricula which evolve to meet the needs of their children and local communities, as well as delivering educational excellence to enable them to continue to flourish in later life.

All acts of worship are in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England. We make the most of our opportunities in Collective Worship giving pupils and staff alike the opportunity to:

- developing our children's understanding, awareness and appreciation of those messages and beliefs founded through our faith and the value we have of all around us.
- express praise and thanksgiving to God
- share each other's joys and challenges
- celebrate special times in the Christian calendar
- developing our children's understanding, awareness and appreciation of those messages and beliefs founded through our faith and the value we have of all around us.

Vision: St Mary's seeks to inspire and nurture a love of learning, independence, and self-belief in a peaceful and stable environment. Building on a strong framework of Christian beliefs and values, we aim to support each other and the wider community.

With peace as our core Christian value, we learn to have trust and faith in Jesus to face life's challenges, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.' Matthew 5:9

School Motto: "Where every day matters, and everyone counts."

We believe that every child is striving to be the best they can be to make every day matter and to be part of a community that works together so everyone counts.

We recognise that worship plays an essential part in the life of our school since it contributes to:

- a. The **spiritual, moral, social, and cultural** development of the child
- b. The child's exploration and development of their own spirituality and beliefs through reflection, enquiry, praise, celebration, engagement, and empathy
- c. Other subjects of the curriculum such as Music, English, Drama and RE
- d. The ethos of our school and the expression of our Vision and Christian values, as seen around our school

The Legal Requirement

As a church school, we seek to comply with the legal requirements for collective worship:

- a. Provide an act of worship for all registered pupils every day
- b. Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds
- c. The daily act of worship will normally take place within the school building, but all school/academies are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church)
- d. Ensure that collective worship is in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- e. Include a statement on the school website that makes it clear that parents may withdraw their children from all or any part of collective worship
- f. Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Board in consultation with the headteacher

There may be a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups. Worship may take place at any time during the school day. Most acts of worship within a school term must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature.

Pupils (via parents) and teachers have the right to withdraw from Collective Worship.

What is Worship?

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School and Nursery, we believe that worship is:

- a. A response to things of worth
- b. A recognition of and response to the spiritual dimensions of human experience
- c. A celebration of love for God by believers
- d. An expression of praise and gratitude, of awe and wonder, and of love and compassion
- e. An invitation to participate or observe

Worship can be achieved through a variety of approaches and forms including music and hymns, words and scriptures, ritual, movement and drama, and stillness and reflection. We have a variety of reflection areas in the school grounds (shelter),

including classrooms, which provide the children with the opportunity for quiet and personal contemplation.

Aims

Through our Acts of Worship, we aim to:

- a. Strengthen the community spirit of our school
- b. Promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and mental development of each child
- c. Prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life
- d. Share emotions and values such as love, joy, hope, friendship, fear, tolerance, understanding, forgiveness and reverence
- e. Give time to celebrate and give thanks for the beauty of life and living
- f. To appreciate that people differ and are all unique and should be approached in a spirit of openness
- g. Allow time to reflect on success and failure and to encourage expressions of determination to always do one's best
- h. Create an atmosphere congenial to silent reflection, inner response and active participation
- i. Introduce children to the value of the Bible and the messages it holds
- j. Give children practical and first-hand experience of prayer
- k. Promote the understanding of the nature of God
- l. Introduce the children to the discipline of the Anglican liturgy in the broadest sense
- m. Demonstrate the Christian belief that God cares about us and the world

Collective Worship organised in our school is principally of a Christian nature, as defined within this policy, reflecting the traditions of Christian belief and in accordance with the principles and practice of the Church of England. The governors in consultation with, and guided by, the Headteacher are responsible for the Collective Act of Worship within our school. Collective Worship takes place on every school day, but the time of day and its organisation varies. Collective Worship is taken as a whole school or in individual classes.

Our distinct Christian values form the basis of our themes for our worship throughout the year. These are supported by '**Roots and Fruits**' resource. The result is a framework combining the best elements to form the basis of our Collective Worship Programme.

In addition, we use Picture News resources for collective worship. It gives the opportunity for children to learn about themselves and the world we live in as well as developing respect for other's beliefs, feelings and faiths. It encourages exploration, discussion and challenge through a current news story and thought-provoking questions. We believe it brings the world closer to children's everyday lives. Picture News links to a Christian value, and to our Big Frieze, as well as relevant Bible

stories and verses, talk time, reflection and prayers. We also discuss the link to our British values and UN Rights of a Child.

Other relevant aspects of learning and development of issues and values to further enhance our children's faith, understanding and beliefs of course supplement this.

Our children regularly attend our Church; particularly to celebrate key events and festivals in the church calendar. From time to time, we welcome speakers into school from other denominations, charities and organisations.

What is broadly Christian?

Acts of worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature. Our understanding of 'Broadly Christian' is that through our acts of worship children should come to a greater understanding of those principles, values and characteristics displayed by Jesus throughout His life, in His ministry and teaching and by His own example. These are linked to our Trust values and other important values which include: generosity, thankfulness, compassion, trust, courage, perseverance, forgiveness, justice, friendship, service respect and truthfulness.

RE and Worship

We feel it is important that the relationship between RE and Worship is understood by teachers and pupils. They are distinctive activities which all contribute to our broad and balanced curriculum and to pupil learning; they should endorse one another.

RE is about developing knowledge and understanding, concepts, skills and attitudes in order to make decisions about fundamental questions. It involves both learning about religion and learning from religion. We believe that a classroom context is more appropriate for effective RE to take place.

Worship can take place within an assembly and can be seen as one element or dimension. But an act of worship is far more than just a coming together of the school; it should fulfil the definition of worship as described in this policy. Themes that are introduced in an act of worship may be further developed in RE lessons or in other areas of the curriculum, and so help the child to interpret the experience of school worship.

Our school collective worship timetable is as follows:

Monday – Worldwide Worship led by SLT (Picture News)

Tuesday – Reflection (Picture News)

Wednesday – Praise and Worship around values/special services/festivals

Thursday – Teacher led/reflection of praise and worship

Friday – Celebration Worship

The contribution of worship to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We clarify these four areas as follows:

- a. **Spiritual Development** relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence and the relationships they form within their life experiences and our world.
- b. **Moral Development** refers to pupils' knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is right or wrong.
- c. **Social Development** refers to pupils' progressive acquisition of the competences and qualities needed to play a full part in society. It is concerned with the skills and personal qualities for individuals to live and function effectively in society.
- d. **Cultural Development** refers to pupils' increasing understanding and command of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge, and skills which, taken together, form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups.

We believe that the whole school ethos and programme of learning contributes to this development. Through our acts of worship, a very significant contribution can be made to the development of these areas for all our children and adults for the reasons stated earlier in this policy.

Reasons such as - worship provides opportunities for the children to:

- a. gain a sense of self-knowledge
- b. gain knowledge and inspiration to become agents for change
- b. experience a sense of awe and wonder
- c. appreciate the values and attitudes upheld by the community
- d. be encouraged to keep/maintain/develop a quest for truth and meaning
- e. observe and encounter varieties of expressions of belief and commitment

At St Mary's Church of England School and Nursery we want to make the most of our opportunities in Collective Worship; developing and building our children's spirituality and their understanding, awareness and appreciation of those messages and beliefs founded through our faith and the value we have of all around us.

We have evolved and are still developing through practice and through the ever-increasing involvement of the children and staff to our worship, belief and faith.

Monitoring and Review

To ensure our Collective Worship keeps evolving to meet the needs of our children in an inspirational, inclusive and engaging way we evaluate and learn from responses given to us by the people involved including children, staff, governors and parents. Children think about what they enjoy in collective worship and what could make it better.

Children also evaluate Collective Worship through the whole school Worship book and the newly formed worship leaders' group. In this way, we are able to develop and improve worship in school.

Policy to be reviewed every year.