



St. Mary's C of E (Aided) Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Our School Vision

To provide firm foundations and create opportunities for everyone to be inspired and flourish within a supportive community, demonstrating branches of wisdom, integrity, compassion, patience, and joy.

Our School Values

Wisdom - we think wisely and are committed to learning. We relish and retain knowledge and value high standards. We have high expectations, high aspirations and enjoy challenge. We think creatively and use learning to make good decisions. We have firm foundations for our lives.

Integrity – we uphold our moral code through being authentic and honest. We take responsibility for our actions and are good role models for others.

Compassion – we care about everyone's feelings. We try our best to understand the emotions of others and how we can help them.

Patience – we have the ability to endure difficult circumstances without getting angry. We use our wisdom to pause, take a deep breath and reflect on a situation.

Joy – we would like everyone to have deep rooted happiness so that they flourish within a supportive community. This will be achieved by providing an inspirational curriculum where everyone is challenged to reach their full potential.

Introduction

At St. Mary's C of E (A) Primary School, pupils and staff of all faiths (or none), are welcome to worship, which is an expression of our distinctive Christian vision. Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other, and that collective worship is an educational entitlement for all. In worship, we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live. Our core values of wisdom, integrity, compassion, patience, and joy, which underpin our vision, are reflected in our collective worship.

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the 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.

Collective worships share a number of key features:

- Lighting a candle
- Time to reflect
- A prayer
- Song

The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings, in the school hall, in classrooms and sometimes outside. Collective Worship also takes place at St. Mary's Church. For example, for a Harvest service and for a Christmas Carol Service. We follow the seasons of the Church year and significant festivals, and other special days, are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service also feature in collective worship. Whenever worship takes place, it is planned to promote participants' thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

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. Each year, children (Y2-6) put themselves forward to become our Worship Leaders. These children participate regularly in collective worship. Visitors are also welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders plan the content and activities included in worship using Roots resources. They are also guided by what is most appropriate to the season and the needs of the pupils. The themes of worship express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values. Throughout their time at our school, children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside more traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils 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.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation, and reflection. 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;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

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 invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance, parents who may wish to exercise this right should make an appointment to speak with the headteacher.

Policy updated

Kate Gardner (Subject Lead)

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