



ST JAMES'
Church of England
Primary School



Collective worship policy

Adopted: January 2022

Next review: annually, unless any changes are required prior to this

Person responsible: Becky Rowley, Natalie Beatson

Governors who oversee: Christian Distinctiveness committee

Introduction

St James' CE Primary's vision is to be a happy and healthy place to achieve and believe. Collective worship is central to the life of St James' CE Primary and helps to support this vision. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on and engage with values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Our collective worship provides the pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- worship God
- experience a variety of styles of worship
- celebrate Christian festivals, values (see appendices), achievements
- grow in understanding of prayer
- participate in prayer
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community based in Christian values
- through active involvement, participate and respond in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship
- grow an understanding of God and Jesus' teachings
- show compassion and love for others
- feel safe and affirmed in God's love

Pupils, staff and parents / carers of all faiths or none are welcome to worship.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural

Acts of collective worship will aim to offer opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

- appreciate the dignity of the image of God in all human beings through working for social justice and encouraging students to consider the needs of others through charitable service
- nurture reflection, meditation and prayer
- provide pupils with opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives through music, images and words
- provide a sense of occasion that is distinct from the rest of the school day
- provide the awe and wonder of personal and spiritual human experience within nature
- foster an appreciation of the natural created world and our shared responsibilities for maintaining it
- develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community

Inclusive

St James' CE Primary is a faith community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. Collective worship, whilst rooted in Anglican tradition, is conducted in a manner which is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all pupils, staff and parents / carers of all faiths or none. We are proud of the diversity of our school community and as such hold collective worship that reflects and celebrates the traditions of other religions, particularly those that are represented in the school and the wider community. Through their Christian character, our acts of collective worship will:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, life styles and faiths which exist in our school and local community
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe
- be appropriate for every student to attend
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community – in preparation, participation and leadership

Patterns of collective worship

Collective worship takes place in in the main hall, classrooms and on occasions outside. Usually the school will take part in collective worship at St James' Parish Church to celebrate Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Service, throughout the school year. We follow the seasons of the liturgical calendar and within this significant festivals and other special days are observed:

These always include:	These are occasionally included:
Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Easter, Trinity	Pentecost, Candlemas and Epiphany

Whenever worship takes place, it is planned to promote 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. Visitors lead collective worship from time to time and are given guidance on 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.

Our pupils are integral to collective worship. A small group of volunteers, which change across the year, play a key part in leading worship:

- choosing music
- being at the doors to welcome children into the hall for worship
- plan, organise and lead some worships or parts of worships eg choose and read a prayer
- evaluate worships

In addition, children are encouraged to contribute during worship, and following worship by contributing their views (Tuesday Views Day) and thoughts (Thoughts on Thursday).

Planning worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in collective worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme, and the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of the pupils. Throughout their time at our school, children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants; observation and reflection; and evaluations (see appendices). All stakeholders are represented in this review process: pupils, parents / carers, governors, church leaders and staff. The reviews inform the planning of future worship. On occasions leaders, including children, will be asked to submit a plan (see appendices) for their act of collective worship in order for worship to be monitored and evaluated.

Organisation

Acts of collective worship are regarded as a special moment in the school day and are conducted accordingly. Pupils, staff, parents / carers and all other stakeholders are expected to behave respectfully and thoughtfully throughout. All members of collective worship are invited to participate in worship through song, music, prayer, reflection, discussion or participation. Collective worship is led by a member of staff/leader of the church community and is supported by at least two other members of staff.

Christian values, as chosen by the Church Council, are followed on a half-termly rota and consist of **forgiveness, friendship, honesty, love, peace** and **perseverance**. Throughout each half term, Wednesday's collective worship is dedicated to exploring and reflecting upon the chosen value and feelings around it. This is followed up in the reflection areas and reflection time in each KS1 and KS2 class.

Except in weeks during religious festivals and special days in the liturgical calendar, acts of collective worship follow the following structure:

day	theme	time	leader
Monday	Living & Learning Statement	2.45 – 3.00	teaching staff
Tuesday	Tuesday Views Day – Bible story	2.45 – 3.00	church leaders/teaching staff
Wednesday	Christian Value	2.45 – 3.00	teaching staff / children
Thursday	Thoughts on Thursday	2.45 – 3.00	teaching staff
Friday	Achieve and Believe	9.00 – 9.15	teaching staff

Acts of collective worship typically begin and close with our agreed welcome and dismissal (see appendices). The candle is lit and extinguished at these times.

Reference is made to the Trinity at the start of worship.

Monday's collective worship is the Living & Learning statement with a link to Christianity – such as a Bible story or Bible verse.

Tuesday Views Day is based around a Bible story. At the end of this collective worship, the children are invited to reflect and respond. The children are given an opportunity to share this reflection or response on a flip chart which will be based in the hall – a place where children from across the school can access on their way to and from break and lunch.

Wednesday is our Christian value collective worship.

Thoughts on Thursday is our philosophy-based collective worship. Each week, a new question or thought is posed to the children. Thoughts on Thursday is an opportunity to discuss and reflect on this thought/question.

Achieve and Believe is our name for our achievement assembly. Each week, there are two certificates handed out to each class: one for achievement based upon our learning and one for believing related to our Living and Learning or Christian values.

Prayer and reflection

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 may include formal or traditional prayer and other more reflective situations of quiet meditation. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Our pupils are formally taught and encouraged to know and use the Lord's Prayer and the Grace (see appendices). When appropriate, the vocabulary and semantics are discussed. The Lord's Prayer will be formally said, as a minimum requirement, at the end of Tuesday's collective worship and the Grace will be said at the end of Thursday's assembly and whenever else is appropriate.

A lunchtime prayer (see appendices) is said before lunch and our School Prayer (see appendices) is said at the end of the school day. The children are encouraged to extemporise prayers or suitable messages, or sometimes compilations of prayers made by pupils during times of reflection or collective worship. Prayer may also be used in the classrooms and other appropriate times of the school day.

Legal requirement

It is a legal requirement that all registered school-age pupils take part in an 'act of worship' each day. These acts of worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character' for the majority of the time. They must also be 'appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils' (1988 Education Reform Act and the Education Act, 1993).

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.

Every effort is made to show sensitivity towards personal faiths and to include all pupils and staff in collective worship. A parent / carer may make a request for their child(ren) to be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at school. In the first instance, we ask parents / carers who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the Head of School. Staff also have a right of withdrawal from collective worship; they should inform the Head of Federation of their decision to exercise this right, but should note the requirement that they may be required to assist in the supervision of pupils in collective worship, as necessary.