

St John's C of E Primary School



ST JOHN'S CE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy
For
Collective
Worship

St John's Church of England Primary School

Last Updated January 2024

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Our vision, 'A family of equal, diverse and unique people, made in the image of God, together aspiring to fulfil our God given potential by nourishing 'The Fruit of the Spirit in our lives'.

'Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Statement

At St John's worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned by the Worship Leader, senior leaders, subject leaders and class teacher 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.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and our collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At St John's collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. 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 (*and other faiths*¹) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.²

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at St John's draws on guidance from the Church of England³. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is not relevant. Worship in St John's should be distinctly Christian.

The governing body have 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 headteacher.

The right of withdrawal

At St John's there are children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on

¹ Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

² "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God". William Temple (1881-1894)

³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>

induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within 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.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

Guiding Principles

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

This policy was written in collaboration with school leaders, staff and governors. The voices of pupils and parents have also helped to form the policy of collective worship at St John's.

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE

- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and suspensions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

How Collective worship is organised

Collective Worship, subject to the right of withdrawal, is intended to be appropriate for, and to include all pupils. It may be organised in accordance with any of the following groups: -Key Stage 1 to include Early Years in the summer term, Key Stage 2, Year Groups, Class Groups, Song and Praise, Eucharist Service and a Family Service.

Leadership

Worship may take place in the school hall, music room, class base or church. Consideration should be given to the manner in which pupils enter and leave. Icons are used in classes to symbolise the beginning of worship. A focus for prayer in each classroom is established each year and termly class prayer books are written by the children. This may be half termly at teacher and children's digression.

Assembly is taken by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Visiting Reverend, Class Teacher, pupils or visitors.

Time allocated is 15 minutes per day.

Planning

Worship can be planned by subject leader for worship or by class teachers, phase leaders, deputy head teachers or teachers based on the long term plan planned by the subject leader for Collective Worship.

- All members of school community, especially children, are encouraged to plan collective worship for example by contributing prayers to be shared.
- Worship at St John's reflects the cycle of the Church year which is planned in collaboration with Rev. Lisa
- Christian values of the school are expressed and celebrated through collective worship
- Where possible, links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of St John's

- Where possible worship at St John's reflects Anglican tradition
 - A wide range and variety of materials should be used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
 - Where possible, opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today's world
 - The Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God will be explored
 - Spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection will be nurtured
- **Values**
 - **Patience and Self Control**
 - **Faith and Faithfulness**
 - **Love**
 - **Joy**
 - **Peace and Peacefulness**
 - **Kindness**
 - **Goodness**
 - **Gentleness**

Organisation

Collective Worship can take place in many areas across school or church.

- Key Stage 2 collective worship will predominantly take place in the school hall, Key Stage one collective worship in the small hall.
- Whichever worship space at St John's is used it is made special and the atmosphere for worship is created using:
 - The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year,
 - Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,
 - Ritual and liturgical responses,
 - How the children are seated,
 - Outdoors, the Millennium Garden will act as a space for calm reflection.
- In Key Stage 2 worship will take place at 9.30am and Key Stage 1 and Early Years at 3pm.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The governing body will monitor, take part and assess the impact of collective worship at St John's.

- The headteacher and the senior leadership team will plan, deliver and monitor the impact of collective worship.
- Clergy and church partners will support the planning process and be invited to deliver collective worship.
- Teaching and support staff will support the planning of collective worship and be invited to deliver collective worship including weekly classroom-based worship.
- Pupils will be invited to contribute to the planning of collective worship and volunteer to help in the delivery.
- Parents and carers will be consulted on the delivery of collective worship and invited to family services and termly values sessions.
- Visitors will be invited to collective worship.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Training from Lichfield Diocese is delivered to staff and school leaders.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Daily worship should be monitored by senior leaders.
- Senior leaders, Rev Lisa Mitchell and governors will work collaboratively in monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship
- Evidence will show how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time

Disseminating the policy

We ensure that 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.

Other Useful Documents: (can be found on the diocesan website⁴)

Date of last review:

Headteacher signed:

A. Mills

Date: 8.4.24

Chair of Governors signed:

J. Clarke

Date:

⁴ <https://exeter.anglican.org/schools/christian-ethos-siams/collective-worship/>