

United we strive for excellence-together we shine
Self-motivation Honesty Imaginative Nurturing Empathy

Collective Worship Policy

Date: September 2024

Our Theologically rooted vision

Rooted from Corinthians 12:12-26(see below)

Together we are a caring community of ambitious learners, curious to explore the wider world, guided by Christian beliefs and values. As unique individuals we celebrate diversity and support one another in our difference.

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Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision of being a caring community guided by Christian beliefs and the associated values we derive from them self-motivation, honesty, imaginative, nurturing and empathy. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

Everyday we gather as a school to worship together. This is at the beginning of the day and helps to settle everyone ready for a day of learning. Collective worship follows the structure of gather, engage, respond and send and the theme differs from day to day.

It is our intention to offer Collective Worship that meets the requirements of the Statutory Collective Worship and gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection, without compulsion.
- To appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God and its language
- To appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate

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- Engage in an act of community
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect for other members of the school community and beyond.
- Share each other's joys and challenges

Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

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Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).¹ Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship (see format of worship) We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

In St John's, we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster links with our Church, involving the Reverend Beverly in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and summer.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Format of worship

Gather- as we gather for worship everyone is encouraged to join in with a song or simply listen to the

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music. A candle is lit by the leader or a child and everyone is welcomed to worship by answering to a statement as displayed in the hall. During this ritual, if the cloth needs changing then it is done by children as they walk into worship. A slide presenting why are we here? With a question for the children to ponder will display the theme of the worship. This can then be revisited at the end of the day in collect and reflect.

Engaging-This is the main part of the act of worship and will fit within the theme for worship. This is the opportunity to engage with the Bible, Christian teaching and of course God. This can be done in a range of ways including reading stories, watching videos or listening and learning hymns.

Responding- This is time for deep thought and a chance to respond about what we have encountered. The opportunity to worship God(pray) should be clearly and carefully offered, encouraging and inviting but never compelling. Using the phrase "We will now say a prayer and if you would like to make this prayer yours please join me by saying amen,"

Sending- The ending of worship is purposeful and everyone leaves to do differently after what they have encountered. The candle is extinguished after the words of sending (see display in hall) and children leave singing a song of worship.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At St John the Baptist, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavor to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to St John's, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

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Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice

Leadership

Worship is led by a range of teachers with the Headteacher leading on a Monday and Thursday. Below is an example of a half term's weekly rota.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Whole school Bible worship led by HT to develop a broad understanding of 'The Biggest Story'	Whole School Christian Scripture Based upon the liturgical year	Class worship Topical issues using Picture News led by class teacher	Whole school Worship through song often based upon the liturgical year	Whole School Celebration of our Christian vision and values including one of our set bible stories

Planning

Worship is planned by the leading using a range of resources. The themes are discussed as a team and where relevant follow the liturgical calendar. Using the format set out in the policy of worship, teachers plan for the areas. See document (collective worship at St John's for further information).

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

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Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. The welcoming member of staff/headteacher/Collective Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others. This is further explored in our spirituality information.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed by Governors, leadership and our Diocesan advisor through discussions with pupils and staff through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The headteacher as Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Written by: Teresa Gage (Headteacher)

Date: September 2024



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