

St Mary's C of E Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Committee responsible	CWC
Approval required by	FGB
Statutory or Recommended	Statutory
Frequency of review	1 year
Date approved	May 2023
Date of next review	May 2024
Display on website	Yes
Link with other policies	RE
Signed by the Chair Of Governors:	Jack Foster
Signed by the Headteacher:	Emmeline Lawlor

St Mary's Primary School, Church Lane, Chessington, KT9 2DH

<https://www.stmaryschessington.co.uk>

Introduction

St Mary's C of E Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School and as such has a Christian tradition and ethos. Our collective worship reflects and reinforces the schools, vision aims and ethos. Our collective worship both implicitly, and explicitly, demonstrates our Christian values of (Respect, kindness and perseverance)

At St Mary's school we consider collective worship to be an important part of the school day. An opportunity to reflect and develop the school's distinctive Christian character but also an opportunity to contribute to the academic achievement, personal development and well-being of pupils and staff.

Aims of our acts of collective worship

We aim for our collective worship to:

- Be a daily expression of our school's Christian vision.
- Be inclusive, invitational and inspiring for all pupils, staff and parents and visitors
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- Help pupils and adults 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.
- Enable pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.
- Encourage local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.
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Collective worship includes the educational opportunities to:

- Engage and celebrate as a whole school community;
- Share and experience differences;
- Develop a culture of learning;
- Build a sense of group identity;
- Encourage a sense of personal and social responsibility;
- A break from the busyness of life (for stillness and quiet);
- Learn how to behave in a large social group;
- Explore feelings and emotions;
- Understand the rights and responsibilities we have as individuals;

- Learn about fundamental British values;
- Develop inner awareness through stillness and reflection.
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events.

Legal Requirements

The law requires the Headteacher and Governing Body to provide a daily act of collective worship which is in line with the school's Trust Deed and Foundation. The school meets with requirement. This requirement is explained to all involved in the planning and delivery of acts of worship. (See appendix 1: The Legal Framework for Collective Worship)

Staff attendance at collective worship

Collective worship is intended for the whole school community. Although the legal requirement for daily worship applies to the pupils, the greatest benefit is gained when worship takes such a high priority in the life of the school that everyone, all adults and pupils, is present.

There has been a tendency, especially in primary schools, to give teachers non-contact time during collective worship. Although this is understandable, it undermines the important aspect of collective worship as being a celebration of the whole school community. Pupils quickly realise when key adults are not present and begin to wonder whether collective worship is an important part of the school day.

Practically, there may be times that some members of staff may not be able to attend collective worship due to an unforeseen circumstance involving a pupil. However, extra effort should be made for as many staff to attend collective worship as regularly as possible. The message this conveys to pupils is significant: we are community who work and worship together.

The involvement and example of class teachers and support staff play an important part in the developing attitude of their pupils. Whilst their role may well include keeping a watchful eye on the group, their intention to be involved in the worship with their pupils should be clear. Class teachers will also expect to organise occasions when their class leads worship for the whole school, and to be asked to lead worship themselves; this may be for their class, year group, phase or whole school.

The Church of England Expectations of Staff Attendance at Collective Worship. The Church of England document 'Attendance at Acts of Collective Worship in Church of England Schools' (2011) recommends that 'All members of the school staff should be encouraged to attend acts of collective worship and as far as is practicable school staff structures and timetables should enable the maximum number to do so.'

The Church of England model contracts of Employment (July 2017) include the following:

Teachers in Voluntary Aided schools will:

- be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of the School;

- have regard to, maintain and develop the Church of England character of the School;
- not do anything which is in any way detrimental, prejudicial, or contrary to the interests of the School and/or its Foundation;
- give and/or supervise the giving of religious education in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England and the requirements of the Trust Deed of the School;
- take part in, and may be required to lead, acts of religious worship.

Support staff in Voluntary Aided schools will:

- be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of the School;
- have regard to, maintain and develop the Church of England character of the School;
- and not do anything which is in any way detrimental, prejudicial, or contrary to the interests of the School and/or its Foundation.

Right of Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from acts of worship and this is stated in the school prospectus and handbook. NB. In a controlled school (or if they were first employed when the school was a controlled school), staff have the right to withdraw from the act of collective worship. In an aided school the staff are expected to attend the act of collective worship. This right TUPE's over if you are now an academy (only put this in if it applies to your school)

It is intended that consultation will take place before formal requests are made to withdraw from acts of worship. In the case of parents or teachers contact needs to be made with the Headteacher. Guidance for new parents on non-participation in acts of Collective Worship is given in the school prospectus.

Planning of Collective Worship

The person leading the collective worship is expected to plan their worship as carefully as they would a lesson.

Pupils are involved in planning and leading collective worship by:

- Including them in the weekly Open the Book worship;
- Leading class worship at times during the year (festivals from all Religions)
- Welcoming their feedback and evaluation of worship;
- Leading 'Celebration assemblies' and awarding certificates to pupils.

Weekly structure of Collective Worship

Day	Theme	Aims
Monday	Values and vision: including Big Questions	<p>Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events.</p> <p>Learn about fundamental British values.</p> <p>Share and experience differences.</p> <p>Encourage a sense of personal and social responsibility. Explore feelings and emotions. Develop inner awareness through stillness and reflection.</p>
Tuesday	Worship through song	Express school vision and values through singing
Wednesday	Article of the week: Rights Respecting	<p>Encourage a sense of personal and social responsibility. Understand the rights and responsibilities we have as individuals Learn about fundamental British values;</p>
Thursday	Celebration worship	<p>Engage and celebrate as a whole school community Build a sense of group identity Develop a culture of learning</p>
Friday	Open The Book team lead worship, enacting stories from The Bible	<p>Learn how to behave in a big group. Take part in collective worship. Learn about stories from the Bible that can help guide us in life.</p>

Visitors

We welcome visitors to our collective worship. Some visitors are invited to share their experiences, linked to the theme of the collective worship, other visitors present a whole collective worship on a theme requested by the Headteacher. We welcome our Open The Book Team into school every Friday.

Governors

We welcome Governors' attendance at collective worship at any time.

Monitoring, Review and Inspection

It is the role of the Governors to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.

The School Councillors seek feedback from the children and staff about collective worship every month.