



St Faith's

Church of England
Infant and Nursery School

Our inclusive St Faith's family strives to enable all to achieve their full potential and inspire a community of hope and friendship.

We seek excellence by ensuring a safe, respectful and flourishing learning community, where differences are celebrated and our genuine love and high expectations make a difference to all." Aspire not to have more, but to be more." (Oscar Romero)

Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

Worship in its truest form is a very personal experience and is different for every individual. However, the act of worship also encompasses celebration, reflection upon beliefs and values and exploration of life's mysteries.

As a Church School, the distinctive Christian values of respect, compassion, trust, justice, friendship and community are promoted through the experiences we offer to all our pupils, to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding that they require to lead confident, healthy and independent lives as well as to encourage individual spirituality. Linked to the teaching of these Christian values are the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for, and tolerance of, those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith. Teaching the fundamental British and Christian values helps the children to become informed, active and responsible citizens.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of **collective worship** in our school. It reflects the consensus of opinion of all members of staff. It is based on current practice and has the full agreement of the governing body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Head teacher, teaching staff and support staff. It is our collective responsibility to raise awareness and to ensure that all policies are known, understood and used in an appropriate way.

Vision for teaching

The teaching during collective worship is lively and engaging, involving a blend of imaginative approaches that direct the children's thinking and reflection. The children will also be encouraged to initiate their own responses, using and applying skills that they have acquired within their day-to-day lives. The children in Key Stage 1 regularly help to plan and lead collective worship as well as give feedback. They also are actively involved in the collective worships led by teachers and other adults, both in acts of whole-school worship and in class worship.

Nature of subject

The purpose of collective worship is to provide an occasion when pupils and staff can consider and express values and concerns which are the basis of deeply held beliefs. Collective worship provides an opportunity for all children to worship God should they wish to do so and to consider the purpose and meaning of life. It allows children to explore their own beliefs and to consider spiritual and moral issues as well as providing an opportunity for calm reflection. This is introduced in an appropriate manner by the playing of calm music on entry to the setting, the lighting of a candle and sharing of the peace, reading of special words which explain why we light our candle at the start of collective worship, an action which signals the beginning of our worship time together, and singing a welcome song. The worship leader(s) provide a variety of opportunities and ways to allow the children to engage in prayer and reflection. We explain that it is not a requirement for children to engage in prayer if they do not wish to do so but it is an expectation that children show our school value of Respect while others pray. Collective worship aims to promote a sense of community through the affirmation and celebration of the values and ethos of the school. It may be appropriate on occasions to use collective worship as a time for hymn practise, celebrate children's achievements and to address times of national significance.

Entitlement

The 1988 Education Act states that:

- All pupils must take part in a collective act of worship every day
- The act of collective worship may be as a whole school, in different age groupings or as a single class
- It may happen at any time during the school day
- It has to take place on school premises
- The head teacher is responsible for ensuring the legal requirements for Collective Worship are met.
- All staff, including the head teacher, have the legal right to withdraw from the Act of Collective worship. The head teacher remains responsible for finding someone suitable to organise and lead the acts of worship.
- All parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, wholly or partially. The school's responsibility for the child's health and safety is still paramount although there is not a requirement for staff to find an alternative activity for those withdrawn from worship.

Implementation

We understand and tell children that collective worship is a special time, a time to show reverence to God, a time for everyone in school to come together, both as a whole school and as a class in our weekly class worships, and we expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We talk about 'our St Faith's family' and how we come together as a family during collective worship. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, welcoming everyone, lighting a candle and saying a special verse to reiterate why we light a candle at the beginning of collective worship. During collective worship, there is usually a song followed by the main input. We conclude our collective worship with either a prayer and/or time for quiet reflection. The headteacher and other members of the teaching staff normally conduct collective worship but members of the clergy, other representatives from local Christian organizations, members of the community and the children themselves are also regularly invited to conduct worship. The Collective Worship committee also have input into the planning and leading of collective worship and our church services. Our collective worship is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" and, as such, we try to incorporate Anglican traditions within our worship such as sharing the peace, making reference to the Eucharist and beginning to learn The Lord's Prayer. We are however sensitive to individual faiths and the beliefs of all members of the school, whether religious or secular. Our whole school prayer is based upon our school's Christian values but is non-denominational in wording and tone. This prayer is reviewed annually by each consecutive collective worship committee.

Themes

We take the themes of our collective worship from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we reflect the festivals and many of the events of the Christian calendar. During each term, we focus on a core value. The six core values that are a focus for our school are: friendship, compassion, service within the community, trust, justice and respect. Our collective worship each Monday focuses on a specific aspect of the focus value and is taken from the Values for Life resource. The worships which follow this initial assembly, from Tuesday to Thursday, aim to build on and develop that particular aspect. Every Friday there is a Celebration Assembly instead of regular collective worship which honours children who have made good social and emotional choices (these children receive Shooting Star certificates), and children who have achieved their 25 Team points Certificate which is a reward for excellent work or learning. At the end of each term, we hold a Values Assembly which aims to celebrate children who have regularly demonstrated the focus value. Parents are invited to attend this assembly where the children are given certificates and star badges to acknowledge their achievement.

Although collective worship held on other days also reflects the term's focus value, we plan additional themes with representatives from St Faith's Church. Occasionally we hold assemblies, distinct from collective worship, which reflect and build upon curriculum topics, e.g. there are special assemblies at the start of Anti-Bullying Week and Internet Safety Week. Collective worship offers an opportunity to celebrate children's achievements both in and out of school. This plays an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements recognised. Parents are also usually invited to assemblies such as year group assemblies, Leavers' Assembly and school services in church. Our church services comprise of Harvest Festival, Christmas Carol Service, Easter service and an End of Year Celebration/Thanksgiving Service.

Children in Reception have their own collective worship held separately from Key Stage 1. These are taken from the Jack in the Box: Big Bible Story resource and involve the telling of key stories from the Bible. These begin with the Big Bible Heroes stories (Old Testament), followed by Christmas, All About Jesus (the Gospel stories), Easter and finally Living God's Way (the New Testament). These worships give children the chance to reflect on the theme of the story and to pray if they wish to do so. Reception children join Key Stage 1 children on Thursdays and on Friday for Celebration Assembly.

Right of withdrawal

We expect all children to attend collective worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship totally or partially. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this in accordance with both the 1944 Education Act and the 1988 Education Reform Act. Alternative arrangements do not have to be made for children who have been withdrawn from assembly although the school still has responsibility for the child's safety and wellbeing during this time. The Headteacher will keep a record of children who withdraw from collective worship.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring occurs informally through staff discussion with valued feedback from parents and visitors. This allows for the Collective Worship leader to review the impact and effectiveness of Collective Worship. The governor responsible for Collective Worship will also monitor the policy and practice of worship in school and liaise with the Headteacher.

Review

Approved by the governing body on:	January 2024
Signed (Governor)	<i>Dave Vincent</i>
Signed (Subject Leader)	<i>Sally Frecklington</i>
Review Date	January 2025