

Our vision - Good ground grows well.



ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Through our Christian ethos, we teach children to hear, understand and live the word of God helping them to give back to the world as global citizens. As every child is uniquely created in God's image, we nurture their individual development through a holistic approach to all aspects of life.

Date policy accepted by the Governing Body:	Spring 2024
Date for review:	Spring 2027

Collective worship Policy

Our School Vision

Good ground grows well. Rooted in the Parable of the Sower, we seek to nurture every child so that they may grow in faith, flourish in their learning, and give back to the world through lives of love and service. Together, as part of the family of God, we are called to listen, to persevere, and to bear much fruit.

Inspired by Matthew 13:23

"But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

At St Mary's, our school values of Love, Faith, Respect, Perseverance, and Service enable us to live out this vision. They help us to be rooted in God, to grow as a community, and to flourish in our learning and in our relationships with one another.

Our School Values

Love ~ Faith ~ Respect ~ Perseverance ~ Service

At St Mary's, our school values enable us to live out our vision rooted in the Parable of the Sower. They help us to be rooted in God, to grow and flourish as a community, and to bear fruit in our learning, relationships, and behaviour. Our school values form the basis of collective worship, and we encourage everyone in our community to demonstrate and live out this vision each day.

Aims and Purpose

The aims and purpose of our Collective Worship are:

- To celebrate our Christian faith through daily acts of collective worship;
- For the children and staff to experience a peaceful, reflective time together and space from the hectic school day;
- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs and to gain deeper understanding of the beliefs of others;

- To encourage participation and response;
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- To teach children how to worship.

Collective Worship

At St Mary's School we understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective Worship involves all members of the school coming together. We expect everyone to take an active part in the Collective Worship. Governors are welcome to join all acts of Collective Worship.

We base our Collective Worship on the teachings of the Bible and the traditions of the Christian Church. We conduct them in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school community. When appropriate we hold collective worships that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in school and in the wider community.

Organisation of Collective Worship

At St Mary's Church of England School, we hold daily active worship. This may be as a whole school, or in Key Stages, year groups or as individual classes. Acts of Collective Worship are held as indicated in the table (*Appendix 1*).

Collective Worship is conducted in a dignified and respectful way. Worship time is a period of peaceful reflection which we regard as a special time when children are expected to behave in an appropriate manner. Staff are expected to prepare the children for a time of worship through promotion of a calm, composed atmosphere in the classroom or the hall before they participate in worship. They should be quiet and thoughtful, listen carefully to the teachings, and participate fully in prayers and hymns/songs. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music at the beginning of Collective Worship as the children are arriving. We then involve children in several ways throughout. One important role the children have during each collective worship is our candle server. This is our RE ambassadors from a chosen year group each week. They light the candle and say our shared opening words. At the end of the worship, the RE ambassadors come to the front again. The candle is blown out and our closing shared words are said by all. (***For guidelines for leading Collective Worship see Appendix 2***).

As well as staff conducting collective worship clergy from St Mary's Church leads our whole school assemblies. Clergy of local churches are also invited to lead worship on a weekly basis. Children are given the opportunity to participate in acts of worship themselves.

There are weekly themes for acts of worship which are built around the Schools Vision and values. These reflect the Christian faith and lifestyles as well as reflecting the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. There is a rota for each term which shows the weekly themes and who will be leading the acts of worship each day.

Our values are celebrated through our Star Learners each week. Each week class teachers select two children from their class to receive praise for specific achievements. These achievements are read out during the Key Stage worship. The child also gets sent home a special 'Good Ground Grows Well' postcard from the Headteacher which is posted home as a surprise for them. Children are also encouraged to bring certificates, cups, shields etc. awarded in out of school activities to share their achievements with their peer group. The birthdays of all children are celebrated at these Collective Worship times too.

Each term, Key Stage 2 children have the opportunity to celebrate Holy Communion with clergy from St Mary's Church who visit the school. These services allow children to engage fully in the sacramental life of the Church, reflect on their faith, and grow spiritually within the school community.

At the end of each term, the whole school walks to St Leonard's Church for a special service, involving children from Reception to Year 6. Members of the school community are encouraged to contribute in a variety of ways, including writing and reading prayers, playing instruments, reading appropriate passages from the Bible or other suitable texts, or performing drama sketches. The RE Ambassadors take an active role in leading these services and sharing their learning. Parents, Governors, and parish members are warmly invited to attend, strengthening the links between home, school, and church.

Class Prayer Area

Each class has a Prayer Area. We encourage children to use the prayer area as somewhere to reflect on the vision and values of the school. Questions are used to evoke discussion and thought and are updated half termly. Prayer boxes are placed in this area for any child to place their prayers in which are then collected to be used in our collective worship together. Staff are encouraged to keep prayer tables attractive and tidy and the emphasis is on quality and appropriateness of the artefacts and pictures. Quality rather than quantity is emphasised as often the simplest picture or artefact can convey a powerful message.

Resources

There are a wide variety of resources available to help with planning acts of worship. In addition, the following websites have material suitable for use: www.assemblies.org and www.barnabasinschools.org.uk.

Right of withdrawal

All staff and children are expected to attend Collective Worship. However, any parent may request permission for their child to be excused from attending daily worship and alternative arrangements will be made for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. This follows the 1988 Education Act and is restated in the 1996 Education Reform Act. The Headteacher keeps a record of any children who withdraw from collective worship.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the named school governor for Religious Education and Collective Worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. On a half termly basis the views of the children are discussed and collected by the RE Ambassadors. These are recorded and fed back to Governors each year. Where appropriate, practical suggestions from the children are put into place to improve and develop this aspect of school life.

Weekly organisation of Collective Worship

DAY	TIME	WHO	WHERE	ORGANISED BY
Monday	2.30pm	Whole School singing worship	Hall	Staff/Children
Tuesday	1.05pm	Whole School worship	Hall	Member of SLT and visiting clergy
Wednesday	1.05pm	Whole School worship	Hall	Member of SLT and visiting clergy
Thursday	1.05pm	KS2 Worship KS1 Class worship	Hall In Class	Staff/Children
Friday	9.00am	KS1 Worship KS2 Class worship	Hall In class	Staff/Children

Collective Worship Policy - APPENDIX 2:

Guidelines for leading Collective Worship

- ✚ The content of Collective Worship should be planned to emphasise the weekly theme and its link with Christianity and the Christian value or if in class, it should be supporting the value of the week, or looking at the 'Bigger Picture' through current events or issues relative to the local community, supporting SMSC

- ✚ Children should be involved wherever possible, either directly in some form of activity, through their responses to ideas presented during worship or by reading prayers.

- ✚ A sense of reverence is vital to all acts of worship. Children should enter and leave the hall quietly.

- ✚ All whole school acts of Collective Worship should include the Lord's Prayer and begin with the adult leading collective worship, saying 'Peace be with you' the response being 'and also with you'. Then the candles should be lit by the RE ambassador followed by, "We light this candle to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world'.

- ✚ A candle should be lit at the beginning of collective worship and remain alight throughout, to remind everyone that Jesus is the Light of our World, and to focus the children's attention. This is chosen and presented to the RE ambassador to light and say the words above. This candle is then blown out with the closing words "Even though this candle is out, we still remember that God is always with us. Help us to grow, flourish and bear much fruit.

- ✚ A prayer and time for silent reflection should end the main part of Collective Worship.

- ✚ An appropriate hymn or song should be sung at some point during Collective Worship.

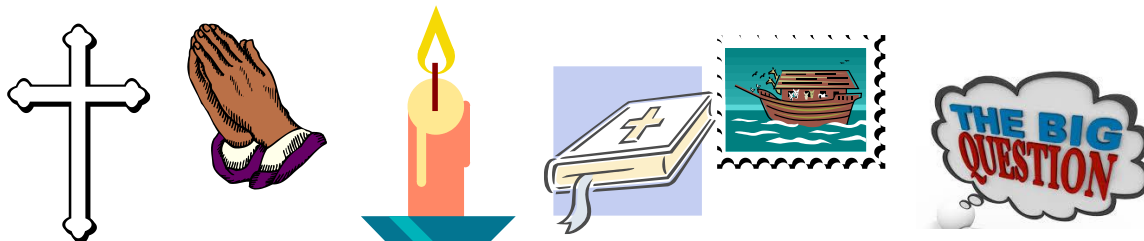
What is a Prayer Corner?

A Prayer corner is an area in your classroom where children, adults and visitors can spend time reflecting and know that God is present.

What would you find in a prayer corner?

Each classroom has an allocated area, which could be a table or a suitable surface including the surrounding wall space, which is exclusively for the prayer corner display. The surface is covered with the special cloth reflecting the church season colour, (This cloth will be provided for you).

Every prayer corner will have the following items:



Cross	Prayers	Candle	Bible	Bible Story	Reflection Question
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Please don't forget that this prayer table is a place of reflection and worship and we would ask you to encourage the children to respect this area and keep it special.