

Our Vision-Good Ground Grows Well'



ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Through our Christian values, we teach children to hear, understand and live the word of God, Growing to love and serve 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 2025
Date for review:	Spring 2027

Collective worship Policy

Our School Vision

Our Vision - 'Rooted, Grow, Flourish' The vision of St Mary's is grounded in the Parable of the Sower. Through collective and personal prayer, children are taught how to communicate with God in both good and difficult times. We acknowledge that every member of our school community is unique, with their own particular interests, strengths and weaknesses. However, through listening to God, everyone at St Mary's seeks to grow in His grace, becoming more open to His love and giving back to the world many times over. We aim to provide a stimulating curriculum with an environmental focus that will prepare our children both intellectually and spiritually for the challenges of the 21st century.

Our School Values

Love ~ Respect ~ Service ~ Perseverance ~ Faith

At St Mary's our school values enable us to live out our school vision. Through teaching and lived example, children learn to look to the Gospels for inspiration and develop a secure understanding of what it means to hope, persist, forgive and be forgiven. Our school values form the basis of collective worship and we encourage everyone in the community to demonstrate and live out our vision.

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 worship 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 also 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 a child 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 postcard from the Headteacher which is posted home as a surprise for them. Children are also encouraged to bring certificates and cups 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.

At the end of each school term, a service is held at St Leonard's Church for children in Year Reception to Year 6. Members of the school community are encouraged to contribute in a variety of

ways e.g. writing and reading prayers, playing instruments, and reading appropriate passages from the Bible or other suitable texts, drama sketches etc.

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 and with our Parent Prayer Group. 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

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help pupils flourish. Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

The school must grant without question any request from a parent to withdraw their child. To enable clear communication, requests are to be made to the headteacher in writing, by email. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all pupils will participate in collective worship. This is supported by ensuring that prospective families are fully informed as to what collective worship is and how all present are invited to engage with it and benefit from it. If a pupil is withdrawn from collective worship, parents will have the opportunity to revisit and reconsider this decision. The right of withdrawal would normally be through the physical withdrawal from the act of worship. Experience suggests that, to avoid misunderstanding, the headteacher will find it helpful to establish with the parent the practical implications of withdrawal. Alternative arrangements should not be used as an opportunity for additional curriculum time, but should ensure that the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural needs of the pupil(s) are attended to. There is no requirement to provide an alternative 'assembly'. The school will keep a record of all those withdrawn and for how many sessions.

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.

Collective Worship Policy - APPENDIX 1

Weekly organisation of Collective Worship

DAY	TIME	WHO	WHERE	ORGANISED BY
Monday	1.05pm	Whole School singing worship	Hall	Miss Evans
Tuesday	1.05pm	Whole School Worship	Hall In class	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	Staff/Children
Friday	1.05pm	KS2 Class Worship KS1 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.

Collective Worship Policy - APPENDIX 3

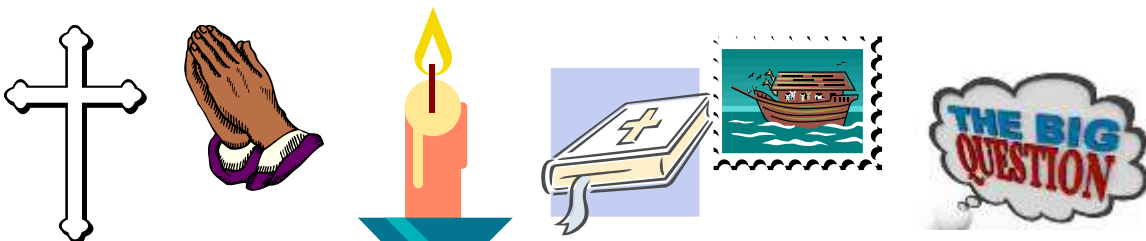
What is a Prayer Corner?

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

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.