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## *Collective Worship Policy*

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Policy Agreed: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

Review date: Spring 2025

Head Teacher: Anthony David

Chair of Governors: Eric Sorenson

*We believe that everyone is precious and loved by God. We aspire to let our light shine in all that we do. We nurture and empower one another to flourish. Together we shine in our world by showing compassion and by serving others. Let God's light shine through us.*

## Policy Statement

At St. Mary's School, the daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life.

It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly.

## Our aim for collective worship

We believe that the core aim for collective worship is to enrich children's understanding of biblical knowledge, the character of God and His relationship with us. We do this through teaching a sequence of bible stories, linking our worship to the Anglican year and by focusing on a key 'take-away' thought or action that everyone (child or adult) can reflect on that day.

## Our vision

Our vision, at heart, comprises of these four core elements:

- Nurture
- Aspiration
- Empowerment
- Compassion

Our aim is that collective worship provides a unifying vehicle to unite all four elements. We aim for our time together to provide an opportunity for shared joy but also a time for deeper thought and reflection. Pupils are provided a clear voice through shared discussion, engagement and leadership. Our school faith is shared explicitly throughout this time and provided opportunities to extend into the classroom.

## Organisation

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. Our current schedule is as follows a 2-year plan.

Day	Assembly Theme	Leader
Monday	Bible focussed assembly	Headteacher
Tuesday	Songs of Praise Assembly	Music Teacher & SLT
Wednesday	Bible focussed assembly	Deputy Headteacher
Thursday	Bible focussed assembly	Clergy
Friday	Celebration Assembly	Whole School

## Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including songs of praise. A range of prayers are used including the Lord's Prayer and prayers written by the children and others. Prayers are also written together in assembly time to reflect the children's feelings. Prayers are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet or reflection time. In whole school worship led by the Headteacher, Clergy or Deputy Headteacher, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by using a candle as a focal point. At each assembly a focal table is placed at the front with a Bible, candle and cross displayed on it.

Before lunch in each classroom, grace is said by either an adult or child. At the end of the day, a prayer from the class prayer book is said to bring a close to the school day.

### Church services

There are regular church services no less than once a half term for the whole school. Once a year, the eight deanery schools meet for a special service at St Mary's Church to celebrate the Year 6 pupils of the deanery.

### Candle Prayer

At the start of each service, the children will call and respond the candle prayer. This is a prayer that has been created for both parish schools.

Leader	Jesus is the Light of the world!
<b>Children</b>	<b>A light no darkness can put out</b>
Leader	May the light and peace of Jesus be with you all
<b>Children</b>	<b>Amen</b>

### Meta-narrative

Each collective worship starts by contextualising where in the bible we are talking about. This meta-narrative is (big bible story) is present in all classes and the hall. Worship leaders will read directly from a bible, with the bible quote typically projected on the screen for all to read.

### Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

### Other Faiths

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs. The class-led acts of worship may portray other cultures and beliefs as they reflect the RE studied as part of the curriculum requirements.

### Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring

The school has designed a two-year plan that follows key religious festivals and is also linked to the school's vision and values. Assemblies are monitored by governors, teachers and children. From each monitoring session we aim to take on board advice to ensure our assemblies are interesting, thoughtful and varied.

### Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, St Mary's School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge – their role is to educate, not to evangelise. St Mary's Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the whole school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Services.

### Right for withdrawal

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from religious education (RE) and collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE or collective worship at the school, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn.

### Equal Opportunities and special needs issues

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, age, gender and ethnic origin will have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of R.E. At each Key Stage, the teacher will draw from other religions as appropriate to acknowledge and celebrate the religious beliefs of the children within the class.

St Mary's Collective Worship, Pupil Evaluation form:

*What did you learn about in Worship today?*

*Your name:*

*Year Group:*

*Date:*

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*Is there something today's worship  
helped you think about or reflect  
upon?*

*What could we have done differently to  
make today's worship better?*



What will you do now, because  
of your learning in Worship  
today?