

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

ST MARY'S LEWISHAM CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Vision

To be a learning community that promotes the unique gifts, wellbeing and potential of every person. Our work is founded on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, building on His message of equality, peace and justice, guided by His words *'As I have loved you, so you must love one another' (John 13:34)*.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's School serves our community by providing the highest quality of education and experiences so everyone can achieve their full potential. Faith is at the heart of our life together which celebrates our diversity. Christian values unite and guide our relationships based on respect, responsibility and forgiveness.

At St Mary's school we place Collective Worship at the heart of our school's daily life. It is a time when we come together to share Christian Values through an ethos of tolerance and care. We strive to nurture our school community in this goal with the help of prayer and reflection. Collective Worship supports and encourages us in these goals. It is carried out in accordance with our Trust Deed.

AIMS FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Through Collective Worship we aim to:

- express praise and thanksgiving to God
- reflect on the teachings of Christ and the Bible
- affirm Christian values and attitudes
- celebrate special times in the Christian calendar and those faiths represented in the school community
- bring the whole school community together to share each other's joys and challenges
- experience stillness, peace, awe, wonder, mystery, reverence and belonging
- foster respect and unity
- deepen spiritual awareness
- provide opportunities for reflection, prayer and meditation and develop our ability to be reflective
- help children develop their own search for meaning, to consider what is important in their lives, faith, beliefs and values, and the wonders of all creation
- teach children to understand and respect the beliefs of other cultures and religions

STRUCTURE

Collective Worship contributes to the development of pupils' understanding of Anglican traditions and practice. The school's Value words provide the foundation for worship content. At least once a half-term, special services are held in the Church to recognize significant events in the Christian calendar. There is also regular leadership by a range of clergy at worship held in school. Year 6 pupils annually attend services at Southwark Cathedral. An annual Prayer Day is held in St Mary's Church which provides all children with the chance to experience a varied range of prayerful activities. Each activity is led by children from the Faith Group. An annual Easter Journey is also held in St Mary's Church or in School, the children follow in Jesus' footsteps as they recall the events of Holy Week. Each half-term includes a reflective worship when children sit in small groups around candles and reflect on Bible passages, Values and key themes and questions.

Collective Worship forms an integral part of our pupils' spiritual development. It is an opportunity to place children's needs, ages and stages of development at the heart of our communion with God. Worship is underpinned by our Values Education which we link to themes for social and emotional development and learning about moral, spiritual and cultural education.

St Mary's School encourages all staff and children to contribute to leading worship. Staff are provided with guidelines outlining the basic structures to be included. Parents are invited to class led worship and special celebrations / significant times in the Church calendar. Sharing worships provide opportunities for pupils to share from other cultures and for pupils to lead and share with each other aspects of their learning and development as spiritual individuals.

TIMETABLING

It is a legal requirement to provide an act of school worship for all pupils every day. All Worship is timetabled for 20 minutes and a half-termly plan is prepared by the Senior Leadership Team. On a weekly basis, Collective Worship follows these regular timings:

- Monday 9.00 – whole school worship led by the Head teacher, linked to the termly Value
- Tuesday 9:00 – whole school worship, often including Hymn practice
- Wednesday 9:00 – whole school worship led by clergy (or class-based worship)
- Thursday 9:00 – class led worship OR 9:00 KS2 / 10:25 KS1 worship led by teaching staff (or class-based worship)
- Friday 9:00 – whole school achievement worship

During the course of the year we aim to provide the opportunity for pupils, staff and visitors to:

- celebrate festivals and special events
- explore aspects of a variety of belief systems and cultural heritages
- reflect on local and national issues
- share and celebrate our learning through class led worship
- identify and establish shared values and deepen our understanding of what each value means to us and how to apply them in our lives
- promote positive attitudes towards our stewardship of the world and its inhabitants

This is achieved through Bible teaching, storytelling, the use of artefacts, art, song and music, visiting speakers, drama and role play activities, performance and class presentations.

ENVIRONMENT AND BEHAVIOUR

Clear behaviour expectations for worship are shared and consistently applied. Resources have been prepared to enhance the experience, including embroidered cloths linked to the colours of the Church calendar, candles, images, incense, a crucifix and music. Children support the worship by preparing the hall and leading elements of the worship.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Children are regularly asked for their feedback on Worship. A children's Faith Group of 2 children from each KS1 and KS2 class meet and coordinate the children's reflections and suggestions for developing Collective Worship at St Mary's. The children's Faith Group also plan and lead worship, for example when planning events to support the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Appeal. A Faith Group made up of members from the School Governing Body (including the incumbent at St Mary's Church) and the Senior leadership team meet every term and observe, monitor and reflect on the Worship offered at St Mary's.

WEBSITE

Worship is celebrated and shared on the school website:

<https://st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk/worship>

and is also regularly featured in school newsletters. The school website also includes many resources to support children and staff in exploring and reflecting on our school Values, as well as ideas and resources to support staff in planning worship.

INCLUSION

Collective Worship is planned and led so that all pupils have equal opportunity to take part and benefit from the experience. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship as identified in the Education Act 1944 and in subsequent legislation. St Mary's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School where Christian values and principles underpin the whole curriculum and the experience of daily worship by the school community is an important part of school life. In order to preserve the distinctiveness of this church school community, we encourage everyone to be involved in the religious education and collective worship. Parents who have concerns about this should discuss them with the Chair of Governors and the Head teacher before their children are admitted to the school.

*St Mary's CoE Primary School, Lewisham – Collective Worship policy written by Matt Wright
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