

# ST MARY'S C.E. (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



*Our Motto: 'Let your light shine... as you grow', (inspired by Matthew 5: 15-16)*

*Our vision: St Mary's School vision: 'We nurture our pupils to be the best they can be in every way - in an inclusive and supportive environment, rooted in Christian teachings.'*

## Introduction

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It reflects the mission statement and our school values and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Our collective worship provides the pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- worship God;
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- celebrate:
  - Christian festivals;
  - Other key religious festivals
  - Our school vision;
  - Our school values;
  - Children's achievements;
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values;
- develop as a community based in Christian values;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship;
- Feel safe and affirmed.

At times worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- consider moral issues in a Christian context and to;
- enhance social understanding;
- explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage.

## The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in our hall or in our classrooms (eg via Zoom/Teams or even pre-recorded) on a daily basis.

We follow the seasons of the Church year and within this significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Ascension and Eucharist.

Whenever worship takes place it is planned to promote thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

## Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church Community. All class teachers are involved in leading Collective Worship. Children are also given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. The school has a designated Worship Council who take a leading role during key celebrations within the school, such as Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas and Easter. The Worship Council also assist in leading a half-termly Collective Worship which is planned by them. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship from time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy. Saffron Walden Assembly Trust (SWAT) lead a Collective Worship half termly.

## **Planning Acts of Collective Worship**

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in Worship in accordance to our dioceses yearly plan.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to Jesus and God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Children are encouraged to lead the prayer in Collective Worship with a reflective prayer of their own creation or to reflect on our school day with our own school prayer. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship. We have a dedicated Worship Council with children involved from each year group. They are actively involved in planning and leading collective worship at least once a half term.

## **A legal note**

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

Our policy sets out our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the Headteacher.