



St John's Church of England Academy



Belonging Believing Becoming

Collective Worship Policy

Date of review: November 2023

Date of Next Review: November 2024

Responsible Group: School Policy



Life

"I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full"

(WORDS OF JESUS FROM JOHN 10:10)

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Name of School: St John's Church of England Academy

School's Vision:

Belonging Believing Becoming

Again, he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

Mark 4:30-32

Legal Framework

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at anytime in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is not relevant. Worship in St John's Church of England Academy should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The schools governing board have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

School Statement on Collective Worship

In St John's Church of England Academy, worship is central to the life of the school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. Belonging, Believing, Becoming - Growing a creative school community that encourages belonging, nurtures believing and works together to responsible members of God's family and the world. Collective worship is a time when the whole school/ key stage/class comes together to listen to Bible stories and sometimes stories from other faiths or simple stories that help us explore our Christian vision and associated values. Collective worship provides a time when everyone can pause, reflect, enjoy some quiet time and pray if they wish. We celebrate belonging to St John's Church of England Academy, the local community and the wider world. Through the use of prayers, liturgy and music the school community is given the opportunity to engage in worship in a way that they are comfortable with.

It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

However, in St John's Church of England Academy the purpose of collective worship will be to lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

*"Worship in Church of England schools promotes theological and Religious Literacy and liberates participants to an imagining of a different order of justice, mercy and hope"*¹

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (and other faiths²) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.³ Collective Worship in our school is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

Aims and Guiding Principles

Collective worship in St John's Church of England Academy aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults' in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.

¹ CEE0 Vision statement "Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good" Autumn 2016

² Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

³ "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God". William Temple (1881-1894)

- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

Collective Worship at St John's Church of England Academy is inclusive

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. Pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all. Many pupils and staff in our schools will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background.

Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils will be given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There are opportunities to agree and disagree, to participate and to stand back and to consider and reflect. Care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating and leading worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

Collective worship will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion requires pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship. Although part of a national legislative framework, collective worship at St John's Church of England Academy grows out of the local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds.

Collective Worship at St John's Church of England Academy is invitational

Parents, pupils and adults can expect to encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There will be no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. The metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' (Speech by David Thomson, Bishop of Huntingdon 2014 quoted in *The Fruits of the Spirit: A Church of England Discussion Paper on Character Education* (The Church of England Education Office 2015) page 13) captures this idea. The warmth of the fire derives from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at its heart. There is no value to an encounter with a watered down, lowest common denominator version of faith. Importantly the door is open, all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable. Pupils and adults will always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and will be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer will always be accompanied by the option to reflect.

Music and liturgies used in worship will reflect the best of traditional and modern Anglican worship, it will connect with the theme and explore the sacred to educate and engage. Music used will reflect the diverse worship experience of the wider Christian community. Though will also be given to what music is most appropriate, at a given time, for the spiritual life of our community.

Collective Worship at St John's Church of England Academy is inspiring

Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter in at St John's Church of England Academy to be inspirational. Worship should be formational and transformational: it will enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It will motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result, of inspirational collective worship, they should be inspired to become courageous advocates of causes. It should encourage them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

There will always be those who are uncomfortable to enter through this open door of worship in our schools and so the Church of England recognises the right of withdrawal from collective worship for those parents or pupils (Under Section 55 of the Education and Inspections Act, it

remains the case that only pupils in sixth form education or over the age of compulsory school age (Section 55. 9) may withdraw themselves from collective worship) who wish to exercise this option. This, and how to exercise this choice, should be explained fully in the school's collective worship policy and referenced on the school's website.

Organisation

Leadership

- Worship at St John's Church of England Academy is led by the headteacher, members of SLT, class teacher, groups of pupils or a whole class. Members of the local clergy also lead worship. There are occasions when we have visitors or teams such as Open the Book.
- The role of the local incumbent is to support and lead collective worship in partnership with the school on a regular basis, including additional services in the church throughout the church's year
- The local incumbent/church is available to support leaders of collective worship to develop their understanding of Christian theology, the teachings of the Bible and develop a deeper understanding of Anglican traditions and liturgy
- Guidance for visitors leading collective worship is provided via an information leaflet. **See appendix 1**

Planning

- A termly plan is produced linked to an area of school life, the wider world, the school vision or values.
- The Diocese of Gloucester's collective resources are used as a focus for worship
- All members of the school community are expected to plan worship with the same degree of thoughtfulness as any other subject. Planning sheets (**See Appendix 2**) are provided so that everyone planning worship knows that there should be a:
 - Beginning – Letting know how the community knows that worship has started
 - Welcoming – words used to greet with the lighting of candles
 - Engaging – Theme or purpose of the gathering – this is linked to scripture
 - Responding – how the community can respond to the ideas or messages in the engagement. This should always provide the opportunity for prayer
 - Sending Out – What we will see lived out in our school community
- Children are provided with a simplified version of the plan and supported and trained by a member of SLT to plan and lead acts of worship.
- Worship is planned to reflect the cycle of the Church's year – Epiphany, Lent and Eastertide, Christmas and other celebrations including Pentecost and Trinity Sunday.
- Our Christian values are identified through our celebration worships where children receiving Superstar Awards and have their name put in the Golden Book for living out our vision and values. At the end of each term one child from each class receives a Shining Star Award.
- Each of our school's Christian values is linked to a piece of scripture from the Bible
 - Perseverance – Hebrews 12:1-2
 - Respect – Matthew 7:12
 - Forgiveness – Matthew 6:14
 - Truth – Zechariah 8:16
 - Aspiration – Mark 11:15
- The range and variety of materials used, including: *websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle*

- Provides opportunities for children and adults to explore faith in today's world - exploring, questioning, and responding
- Explore the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God
- Allows for spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection

Organisation

- The different groupings for worship, including whole school/key stage/class worship/worship group
- Worship usually takes place in the school hall. However, it also takes place in classroom, outside, and we use the local Baptist Church for special occasions.
- The worship space is made special by the use of:
 - The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year on the worship table
 - Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,
 - Ritual and liturgical responses,
 - How the children are seated,
 - An outdoor area e.g. the local church
- Collective worship structure
 - Monday Wholes School 9.00 am
 - Tuesday Whole School (Praise Worship) 9.00 am
 - Wednesday Class Worship Time convenient to class teacher
 - Thursday Whole School Local Clergy 9.00 am
 - Friday Whole School Celebration 9.00 am or 2. 45 pm
- All staff attend worship.
- There is no compulsion for anyone to do anything.

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

Keep term by term records of collective worship.

The Collective Worship leader gathers the views of pupils, staff and the wider community on a regular basis.

The Standards and Ethos committee meets regularly (Subcommittee of the Local Governing Board) to review and evaluate Collective Worship.

The Bishop's Visitor will also evaluate collective worship on one of her yearly visits.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Monitor and evaluate the content of this policy

Regularly attend collective worship

Evaluate acts of collective worship

Liaise with the headteacher and worship lead with regard to collective worship

Ensure that collective worship is inclusive and accessible to all

Headteacher

Plan, deliver, and evaluate collective worship

Ensure that collective worship is inclusive and accessible to all

Support staff and children in the planning and delivering of collective worship

Liaise with local clergy

Attend relevant training

Keep up to date with any statutory changes and ensure that they are implemented

Class Teachers

Implement this policy through their practice

Plan, deliver, and evaluate collective worship

Support children in the development, planning and delivering of collective worship

Ensure that collective worship is inclusive and accessible to all
Attend relevant training

Pupils

Pupils will plan, deliver and evaluate worship.

Pupils will join daily acts of collective worship and engage in worship in a way that they are comfortable with.

Parents

Parents will be regularly invited to join collective worship

Parents will be asked to evaluate worship through the use of a questionnaire

Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Additionally, support and guidance are provided for visitors and the clergy who lead collective worship.

The Right of Withdrawal from Collective Worship

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

In St John's Church of England Academy there are a number of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view.

Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

(This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)

Development and Sharing of the Policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community
- We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and on the school website.

Approval/review by governing body

Headteacher signed: Joanne Peaper

Date: 20/11/23

Chair of Governors signed: Waiting ratification by ILGB

Date of next review:

Date: November 2024

Visitors' Leaflet on Leading Collective Worship
St John's Church of England Academy

Guidelines for those leading Collective Worship

We are delighted that you will be visiting our school to lead our Collective Worship.

At St John's Church of England Academy, we value our daily acts of collective worship extremely highly. Through it we identify, affirm and celebrate those ideals and values that we hold to be of central importance to us as a community.

It is important, for visitors to be aware that children in our school come from a range of faith backgrounds, and none; we therefore ask that those who lead Collective Worship take account of this in the preparation and delivery of their material.

At St John's Church of England Academy, we prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and to that end would like you to have enhanced DBS clearance. If you already have DBS clearance, please bring your certificate with you so that the details can be recorded on our school system. If you do not have DBS clearance, please let us know so we can support your visit appropriately.

If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Joanne Peaper.

Each child at St John's Church of England Academy is involved in an act of worship every day. These take place in a variety of different groupings:

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Whole school</i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>	<i>School Hall</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Praise Worship</i> <i>Whole School</i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>	<i>School Hall</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Class Worship</i>	<i>Time convenient to teacher</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>	<i>Individual Classrooms</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Wholes school</i> <i>Local Clergy</i> <i>Week 1</i> <i>Headteacher</i> <i>Week 2k</i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>	<i>School Hall</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>Celebration Worship</i> <i>Class led worship</i>	<i>9.00am or 2.45pm</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>	<i>School Hall</i>

There is a small team including the Headteacher, Worship Co-ordinator and Incumbent, which meets half termly to plan the school worship. A planning sheet is then produced and made available to all those who contribute to our school worship.

If you have not already been given a copy of this planning sheet, please ask at the school office.

We hope you will find the following guidelines helpful.

We ask that visitors to arrive 15 minutes before the agreed start time ready to begin promptly.

There maybe parking available on site. However, if this is not the case then the only available parking is along the local roads. Please park with consideration to the local residents.

There is no movement of traffic on site between 8.30am - 8.50am and 3.00pm – 3.25pm

On arrival at school please report to the front office where you will be asked to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor identification badge. On your first visit to the school you may be met by one of our older pupils who will be pleased to help in any way they can.

If you require any special resources or equipment e.g. Projector, Laptop or CD player, please let us know in advance and we will endeavour to have them ready when you arrive.

The children enter the hall class by class with their class teacher and when everyone is ready to begin the worship a member of staff will light a candle and introduce you to the children. Whilst the children enter, music is played and focus for worship is displayed on a table at the front. If you have a preference for a piece of music or an object that could act as a focus for your time of worship, you are most welcome to bring it along. If you have a song or hymn which is especially appropriate that you would like to be sung, please let us know in good time.

Some of our visitors like to include a short time of prayer in the worship and it may be helpful to know that we use the modern language version of The Lord's Prayer which can be found on the back page of this leaflet.

We ask that your act of worship should last no longer than 20 minutes and takes the following format:

- Beginning – Letting know how the community knows that worship has started
- Welcoming – words used to greet with the lighting of candles
- Engaging – Theme or purpose of the gathering – this is linked to scripture
- Responding – how the community can respond to the ideas or messages in the engagement. This should always provide the opportunity for prayer
- Sending Out – What we will see lived out in our school community

Please remember to sign out and return your badge to the secretary's office. As part of improving and monitoring Collective Worship, evaluations are completed by adults and children – the Headteacher or lead for Collective Worship will share these with you on another occasion.

Once again may we thank you for your visit.

The version of The Lord's Prayer used in our school worship:

Our Father in Heaven,

hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive,

those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Amen.

The school telephone number is 01594 832046

Our worship co-ordinator is Mrs Joanne Peaper, she will be happy to answer any queries you have and can usually be contacted by ringing the school office.

Collective Worship - Daily Planning Sheet



Date:

Leader:

Venue:

School's Vision:

Theme & Biblical basis of worship:

Gathering

Letting know how the community knows that worship has started

Welcoming – words used to greet with the lighting of candles

Engaging

Theme or purpose of the gathering – this is linked to scripture

Responding

How the community can respond to the ideas or messages in the engagement. This should always provide the opportunity for prayer

Sending Out

What we will see lived out in our school community

Plans for monitoring & evaluating worship