

**St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School**

Headteacher: Mrs S Pearson

Assistant Headteachers: Mrs R Turvey and Miss E Cave



# **Collective Worship Policy**

March 2026

<b>Policy:</b> Collective Worship Policy
<b>Approved by:</b> Governors
<b>Date:</b> March 2026
<b>Review cycle:</b> Annually

<b>VERSION CONTROL</b>			
<b>VERSION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>CHANGES</b>
2	12.2.25	S Robinson	Added version control Updated values Updated worship organisation Added QA format Added values vocabulary
3	10.03.26	S Pearson	Added version control Updated Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers Updated worship organisation Added outdoor prayer boxes Updated use of prayer spaces

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **Introduction**

In accordance with legal requirement, but also reflecting our status as a Church of England school we provide an act of worship every day for all pupils.

### **Values**

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you.” (Joshua 1:9)*

**In our family, we have the courage to embody Jesus’ love for us. We put others’ needs above our own. We act with integrity and respect. And when others fall short of our expectations, we support them to atone and extend our forgiveness. In doing this, we prepare children to live life in all its fullness: its joys and celebrations, its sorrows and struggles.**

### **Courage**

We are called to create an environment where both children and staff aspire to be, and give, their best. Everyone is emboldened to take risks, overcome challenges and be courageous in their efforts to achieve their potential. Leaders make bold curriculum choices that enable children to:

- gain knowledge, skills and experiences to navigate life in an evolving world; and
- develop characteristics such as self-belief, ambition, and resilience to overcome life’s challenges.

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you.” (Joshua 1:9)*

### **Love**

Jesus embodies the love and compassion of God for each person, and Christians are called to follow him in this. In our family, love impels us to:

- put others’ needs above our own;
- act with humility and without entitlement;
- empower all our community to flourish and succeed;
- provide a haven of compassion and safety, where children and adults know that they are cherished; and
- support those experiencing suffering and sadness – in our community and beyond.

*“Let all that you do be done in love.” (1 Corinthians 16:14)*

### **Respect**

We seek to model to children an ethos of living well together. The flourishing of pupils goes hand in hand with the flourishing of the wider school community: staff, families, governors and friends of the school. Just as Jesus respected people by taking the time to care for them, we endeavor to:

- celebrate the Christian faith;
- foster deep respect for other cultures, faiths and traditions;
- provide an inclusive environment where special provision is afforded to those with disabilities or special educational needs; and
- challenge inequality.

*“Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them.” (Matthew 7:12)*

### **Forgiveness**

Faults, flaws, and mistakes are an unavoidable part of human life. Though Jesus preached the importance of repentance, even in moments of great personal torture, he prayed for forgiveness for his tormentors. Therefore, in our family, we seek to:

- hold ourselves and others accountable for our/their actions;
- have a robust approach to dealing with situations when things go wrong;
- repent when we fall short of our own and others’ expectations; and
- forgive others for their indiscretions.

*“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.” (Luke 17:3)*

### **Honesty**

An honest person makes a habit of making accurate, trustworthy statements about life, self, others, and God; they represent themselves just as they are and tell others the truth about themselves. That said, the Bible tells us that honesty should always be accompanied by gentleness (Colossians 4:6). With this in mind, we strive to build kind and trusting relationships by:

- speaking and acting with integrity;
- ensuring that children have a strong voice in every aspect of school life, and acting on this; and
- working openly and compassionately with others, even when messages might be difficult to give or receive.

*“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)*

### **Aims**

Collective worship should reflect some of the essential features within the rich traditions of Anglican prayer and worship. We acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but we aim to make clear the difference between the two. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and is not subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education. The responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body. Collective worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement, but an integral part of school life and central to the Anglican tradition.

### **Objectives**

Collective worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils

- To explore Christian values and beliefs
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging to a community and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in knowledge and understanding of Church of England practise
- To encourage participation and response (active and/or passive)
- To learn Christian prayers and to actively take part in worship acts

- To inspire awe and wonder
- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- Time for quiet reflection

## **Guidelines**

### Planning, content and delivery

Whole school collective worship takes place daily in the hall. We follow 'Roots and Fruits' to guide our planning: this specifies the bible themes and Christian values that will be covered each half term.

Each worship contains four elements.

1. **Gathering:** drawing into worship, creating a distinctive atmosphere and feeling of expectation. The lighting of the school made candle and response signifies the start of worship.
2. **Engaging:** main input of the worship as outlined in the long term plan. This could be bible input, telling a story on a Christian value with props or through drama, using visual images (photographs/paintings) to explore a Christian value, having discussion based on moral dilemmas and asking how Jesus might respond, learning a power verse by heart.
3. **Responding:** Offering all present a time to respond to what they have heard in a way that is appropriate to them, in the spirit of invitation not compulsion.
  - This could be: saying a prayer.
  - Asking those present to offer prayers
  - Having a time of silent reflection
  - Having a time of reflection with music
4. **Sending:** Leaving the act of worship, which should have a purpose. Sharing together our school prayer.  
Those present should leave with a sense of being sent out in the power of God's love. This could involve extinguishing the candle, singing a song, leaving to a selected piece of music.

Every opportunity is taken to involve the children in the planning and leading of collective worship, primarily through the worship leaders group. They light candles, choose music, take part in drama and share prayers.

### **Prayer and Reflection**

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection. A range of prayers in use including the Lord's Prayer, the School Prayer, prayers written by the children and others. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. At the beginning of collective worship, a time of welcome and reflection is encouraged by the lighting of the school candle. The school cross is displayed on the worship table. Cross bearers, display class crosses at the front of the hall.

Outdoor prayer boxes provide a flexible, special place for prayer and reflection during outside times e.g. lunch and break times. Grace is always said before lunch and at the end of the school day: this is led by teaching staff in classrooms.

There is a permanent prayer space in school where the space will change to reflect our focus value and season. Each classroom has a prayer and worship opportunities, this

includes prayers spaces for KS1 and Lower Key Stage 2, and tabletop prayer resources for Upper Key Stage 2.

### Other Faiths

Although our worship is wholly Christian in nature, we are committed to the faith traditions and cultures of others, showing tolerance and understanding.

We affirm the purpose of a Church school as being, in the words of Lord Runcie:

- to nourish those of faith
- to encourage those of other faiths
- to challenge those who have no faith

### Specifics of Worship

Collective worship is led by a variety of staff and regular representatives from Churches, overseen by the Reverend and the Children’s and Families Team Lead from our local Church. Members of the community, local religious groups, pupils and other positive role models are also encouraged to deliver Collective worship.

Acts of Worship are also held in the Parish church. These include Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and the end of the academic year.

Annually there is to be a ‘Retreat afternoon’ where all members of school and church are invited to join together to explore Christian spirituality and practice together in house groups.

Opportunities are given for pupils to embrace the Christian faith in a variety of ways.

### Weekly Overview of Worship

Organisation of Collective Worship					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday – OPAL	Friday	Prayer Spaces
<p><b>Planned by:</b> Church</p> <p><b>Led by:</b> Church</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Whole School – Hall</p> <p><b>Approach:</b> Godly Play, Choir to lead singing</p> <p>Old or New Testament Bible Story</p>	<p><b>Planned by:</b> SLT/Class Teachers</p> <p><b>Led by:</b> SLT/Class Teachers</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Whole School – Hall</p> <p><b>Approach:</b> Open the Book</p> <p>Old or New Testament Bible Story</p>	<p><b>Planned by:</b> Worship Leaders, supported by Kitty Clifford &amp; Jessie Harding</p> <p><b>Led by:</b> Worship Leaders</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Classrooms</p> <p><b>Approach:</b> Prayer &amp; Praise with Godly Play follow up activities and reflections.</p> <p>Prayers taken from class/whole school prayer box.</p>	<p><b>Planned by:</b> OPAL Lead</p> <p><b>Led by:</b> Class Teachers</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Classrooms</p> <p><b>Approach:</b> Spirituality through outdoor play, risk taking, exploring new ideas.</p>	<p><b>Planned by:</b> Headteacher</p> <p><b>Led by:</b> Headteacher</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Whole School – Hall</p> <p><b>Approach:</b> Values Celebration</p> <p>Pupil nominations made by class teachers on half term focus value</p>	<p>Most classes have a designated prayer space, all classes have opportunities for classroom based prayer and reflection. Activities are set up and maintained by Worship Leaders on a half termly basis.</p> <p>The theme will be decided during the first Worship Leader meeting each half term.</p>

- When gathering in the hall, children will walk into the hall, in their lines, with the child at the front holding the class cross. Children will sit down in their rows ready for worship. The child with the cross will take it to the front of the hall. Music will be playing at this point and the children will be encouraged to sing if they wish.
- Collective Worship leader will greet the children and adults. The school candle will then be lit by a pupil worship leader, who will then lead by saying 'Jesus is the light of the world'. The response 'and he is with us in our lives today' is said by all gathered.
- During all Collective Worships, at least one hymn will be sung and one prayer said. This could be the school prayer.
- Collective Worship in the hall will end by the leader inviting the cross bearers to come and collect their cross. They will stand at the front holding the cross as the children say a prayer.
- The leader will blow out the candle and say, 'May the light of Christ', all gathered respond, 'shine in all our hearts.' At this point, music will start and the cross bearers will go to the end of their lines to lead their class out.

During Friday worship, in each year group, each week, a certificate is awarded linked to our Christian values. Below, progressive language from each value descriptor is identified and mapped progressively. Class teachers will focus on that value when awarding their year group's award. This way, vocabulary is taught systematically throughout the school and, each week different ways of living out our values are modelled to all children.

	<b>Courage</b>	<b>Love</b>	<b>Respect</b>	<b>Forgiveness</b>	<b>Honesty</b>
<b>R</b>	Risks	Love	Live well together	Mistake	Kind
<b>1</b>	Self-belief	Needs	Community	Flaws	Difficult
<b>2</b>	Achieve	Cherished	(In)equality	Forgive	Gentleness
<b>3</b>	Resilience	Flourish	Faith	Repent	Trustworthy
<b>4</b>	Aspire	Compassion	Culture	Accountable	Accurate
<b>5</b>	Ambition	Humility	Special provision	Expectations	Represent
<b>6</b>	Potential	Entitlement	Inclusive	Indiscretions	Integrity

### **Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring**

Termly overviews are completed. Monitoring and evaluation activities include observation of worship by both adults and children, records of children's comments and drawing, photographic records and parent, pupil and staff feedback. Appendix 1 shows the QA standards for worship.

### **Race Equality**

At St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School we value and respect all people equally regardless of race, religion, colour, cultural background or language. We recognise that while providing a daily act of worship which is broadly Christian in nature, our pupils are from diverse backgrounds. This diversity is highly valued and means that differing responses to material presented during collective worship are both expected and respected.

Every effort is made to ensure that a diverse range of role models are represented positively, challenging stereotypes and highlighting inequality.

### **Withdrawal**

The education Reform Act, 1988 makes provision for pupils and staff to withdraw from Collective Worship, following appropriate notification to the Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed annually

# Appendix 1

St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School  
 Headteacher: Miss S Robinson  
 Deputy Headteacher: Mrs S Pearson



## Collective Worship Feedback

Leaders Involved:

SNMAT Officers Involved:

Date:

Teacher(s):

Subject:

Year Group:

Question	Not yet effective	Effective	Ambassadorial	Evidence Sources
<b>Worship</b>				
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils do not enter the hall respectfully.</li> <li>Pupils do not behave in a respectful manner throughout worship</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship leaders set up for worship, including the worship table at the front.</li> <li>Pupils will walk into the hall silently, in their lines, with the pupil at the front holding the class cross. The doors are held open by worship leaders.</li> <li>Pupils sit down in their YG rows ready for worship. The pupil with the cross will take it to the front of the hall.</li> <li>Music plays to welcome; pupils are encouraged to listen/sing as appropriate.</li> <li>Worship leader greets the children and adults.</li> <li>The school candle is lit by a pupil worship leader, who will then lead by saying 'Jesus is the light of the world'. All gathered are invited to respond by saying 'and he is with us in our lives today'.</li> <li>A high quality powerpoint will be displayed to guide pupils through worship: this should include sections for 'welcome, learning, reflect &amp; respond'</li> <li>At least one hymn/song will be sung and at least one prayer said (this is usually the school prayer)</li> <li>Worship ends by the leader inviting the cross bearers to come and collect their cross. They will stand at the front holding the cross as those gathered are invited to say a prayer.</li> <li>After this, music will recommence, cross bearers go to the end of their lines and wait to lead their class out silently. Doors are held open by worship leaders.</li> </ol>		
<b>Values focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key values are not discussed</li> <li>Children are unclear on the links with school values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key school values are highlighted through the worship</li> <li>Key associated vocabulary is explained i.e. repent, humility, entitlement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pupil Voice:</b> pupils can articulate the school values and associated language. They can give examples of when they, and others, live them out in everyday life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship strengthens pupils' and adults' spiritual development and plays a central role in deepening understanding of the vision and values and what these look like in daily life.</li> </ul>	
<b>Inclusive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assumptions are made that everyone present is Christian – no consideration is given to those who wish to stand back.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Worship is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all because:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pupils are given the opportunity to think and ask questions;</li> <li>there is space to consent, and dissent; to participate, stand back and to consider;</li> <li>language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching;</li> <li>it involves meaningful contributions from the whole school community;</li> <li>pupils are involved in planning, leading and evaluating worship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of pupils and adults play a significant role in the planning, leading and the evaluation of worship, including those from different faith and home backgrounds.</li> </ul>	
<b>Invitational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a result, pupils are absent from worship</li> </ul>	<p><b>Worship is invitational because:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there is no compulsion to 'do anything', rather it provides the opportunity to engage;</li> <li>those present with different faiths, or no faith, can be present and engage with integrity (the metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' 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);</li> <li>pupils and adults are only invited to pray if they wish to do so and are invited to pray in their own way, or to reflect</li> <li>songs used in worship connects with the theme and those leading consider what is most appropriate for the spiritual life of the school community.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Worship is invitational beyond the school because:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many representatives of the local church and community have strong links to the worshipping life of the school, bringing diversity and a vibrant range of practice</li> <li>Parents join worship and have strong links to the worshipping life of the school.</li> </ul>	
<b>Inspiring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship is not yet inspiring for pupils: this is evident through disengagement</li> </ul>	<p><b>Worship is inspiring because it:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enables pupils and adults to think deeply about big (existential) questions about who we are and why we do what we do;</li> <li>highlights local/global issues and inspires pupils to respond thoughtfully;</li> <li>encourages them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Worship is profoundly inspiring because it:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>motivates pupils and adults into action, thinking differently, and reflecting on their behaviour and actions;</li> <li>highlights local/global issues and inspires pupils to become courageous advocates of causes.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CW is not valued by adults/pupils in school; this is evident as staff are absent without good reason.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults and pupils understand the meaning of spirituality and how this impacts their lives (NB. Spirituality is to do with the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It is to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live)</li> <li><b>Pupil voice:</b> Collective worship is valued by pupils as a time to refresh their understanding of the school's values and as an opportunity to join as a community for reflection and to nurture spirituality.</li> <li><b>Staff voice:</b> Collective worship is valued by staff as a time to refresh their understanding of the values and an opportunity to join as a community for reflection and to nurture spirituality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pupil Voice:</b> Pupil led collective worship has a profound impact on the spiritual life of the school community: it is highly valued by staff and pupils alike</li> <li>Pupils contribute significantly to the leadership and evaluation of worship</li> </ul>	

**Overall strengths:**

- ✓
- ✓
- ✓

**Next Steps:**



**Date to be re-checked:**

**Suggested DPE to support staff**