

St James CE Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Policy adopted: 1st May 2025
Review date: 1st September 2026

Collective Worship Policy for St James CE Primary School

Vision Statement

As a Church of England School our Christian vision is central to all we do. Our vision is:

“Journeying together to Live, Learn and Laugh with the Love of God.”

The apostle Paul writes about love as a core Christian virtue in his letter to the church at Corinth:

“Do everything in love.”
(1 Corinthians 16:14)

The virtue of love is not only important in Christian discipleship; it is at the heart of how we live our lives at St James CE Primary School.

Love gives us strong links to our PAST, as well as acting as a reminder of what is most important to us in the PRESENT and forming a basis for how we want to help the children in our care to learn, grow and be loved in the FUTURE.

Love also connects our school ethos to the wider Church of England vision for education.

These core value of Love underpins our approach to Collective Worship.

Rationale and legalities

- ✓ The collective worship at St James CE Primary School is in accordance with the school’s Trust Deed.
- ✓ Collective Worship at our school reflects and reinforces the school’s Christian Vision
- ✓ Collective worship is a legal requirement in all schools.

Church of England schools serve the local community which will include pupils of the Christian faith, of other faiths and of no faith. In drawing up this policy, regard has been given to the age, aptitude, and background of the children in our school.

At St James CE Primary School collective worship is central to our life and it reflects and explores the school’s distinctive Christian character and contributes to the academic achievement, spiritual development, and well-being of all – pupils **and** staff. Worship offers our school community an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It reflects our Christian vision and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Collective Worship at St James CE Primary School is planned to:

- be inspirational, invitational, and inclusive. It should engage all present and they should be able to talk about the impact it makes on their relationships and on life in the school, as well as themselves as individuals

- regularly include Biblical material and Christian teaching and this should explore and relate to the school's Christian vision
- have a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit enabling all learners (including adults) to embark on an understanding of the Trinity
- encounter worship and prayer as part of the natural rhythm of the day
- help all learners to understand Anglican and other Christian traditions found in the UK and worldwide
- enable pupils to encounter the vocabulary of worship
- challenge all learners of all backgrounds to understand and embark on their own spiritual journey. They should understand the value of Prayer, Reflection and Stillness
- contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development; by providing all learners with something more than the obvious, something to wonder at and something to respond to
- enable worship to impact all areas of the curriculum
- be an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community, and occasions of significance
- affirm and celebrate our shared Christian Values and beliefs as well as recognising the specialness of key multi-faith festivals
- Acknowledge the uniqueness of the individual, celebrate diversity, create a sense of shared values and of our common humanity within school, society, and the wider world.

Collective worship provides the pupils and staff the opportunities to:

- worship God;
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- celebrate:
 - ✓ Christian festivals (including Saints Days);
 - ✓ the specialness of multi-faith festivals
 - ✓ school values;
 - ✓ achievements (school, locally, nationally, and internationally);
- 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;
- receive the Eucharist.

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

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

Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church. Pupils (such as our Ethos Team) are given opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship from

time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy. Occasionally leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

The positive educational outcomes of Collective Worship at St James CE Primary School include opportunities for:

- the whole community to celebrate;
- sharing and experiencing differences;
- developing a culture of learning;
- building a sense of group identity;
- encouraging a sense of personal and social responsibility;
- a break from the busyness of life (for stillness and quiet);
- learning how to behave in a large social group;
- exploring feelings and emotions;
- learning how to perform in front of an audience;
- learning how to respond to a performance;
- making visible the school's leadership;
- developing inner awareness.
- exploring fundamental British Values

Planning a Collective Worship programme

Specific time is set aside for worship daily and we recognise the importance of marking it out from other assembly activities. We attempt to mark out this special time by having a rota of inspirational music each week (a classical piece to enter worship and a contemporary piece to exit), lighting candles, being still and having time to offer our thoughts to God and also take moments for personal reflection. We also ensure that Christian Liturgy is central to our Worship with set openings and dismissals, the Lord's Prayer at each Worship, reference to Bible verses and responses with which the children are familiar. Our children are becoming more familiar with the concept of the Holy Trinity and we refer to The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit in a way in which the children understand.

Each person leading worship is expected to plan his or her act of worship with the same degree of thoroughness as any other aspect of their teaching. We encourage a 4 stage structure of planning including 'Gathering' 'engaging' 'responding' 'sending'. This is achieved through our 'windows,' 'mirrors' and 'doors' approach to developing spirituality.

Entitlement

All children, whatever their race, gender, faith, age, or ability, are **fully included** in our worship times.

Within the worship experience, books, materials, and activities will be monitored to ensure that there is no race, faith, or gender stereotyping within them.

All parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship.

Organisation and delivery of collective worship

Whole school worship takes place four times a week.

On a **Monday** we enjoy worship led by a member of SLT, usually the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. This will always focus on our value for the half term.

Tuesday is worship through song.

Wednesdays we have in class worship focusing on our Christian value or utilising Picture News Collective Worship materials to explore Global Christianity. This is usually pupil led.

Thursday worship for KS2 is a Eucharist service led by Father Michael Vyse. KS1 have a class worship focusing on our Christian value or utilising Picture News Collective Worship materials to explore Global Christianity.

Friday is Celebration worship- Certificates, Medals, Living Values winners and other out of school awards are shared.

Other teachers may lead worship across the week on occasion based on a theme or event relevant or current to their learning or based on a wider school PSHE theme or current Christian Value.

From time to time, the Ethos Team plan and deliver in class worship which is testament to our commitment to allowing them to develop in their faith and leadership capabilities.

Classes also lead **class services** across the year to which parents, friends and family are invited.

In addition to the above we have services led by **visitors and speakers**, for example speakers from other local churches, charitable organisations, other local faith leaders and speakers representing other faiths, cultures, and religions.

The whole school and staff attend **church** to worship together with parents and friends and celebrate the major **Christian** festivals throughout the year. These special services are led by the children and the talk is given by a clergy member or a special visitor. Some examples are below:

WELCOME SERVICE

We hold a special service in Church for our new Reception children and their parents. Children receive a blessing and are officially welcome to the St James family.

HARVEST SERVICE

We hold a special Harvest Service in Church each October, which is led by the pupils of Year 5, and to which parents are invited.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Head Boy and Head Girl lead us in a service of Remembrance each November.

NATIVITY PLAYS

This is an important act of worship which is organised by the EYFS and KS1 phases. KS2 children and teachers watch a dress rehearsal before the children then perform their Nativities to parents and carers.

EASTER SERVICE

This is organised by the staff and children in Year 3, accompanied by whole school singing. Parents are invited to attend and it is held at Church.

PENTECOST SERVICE

Y4 lead us in a service about the Pentecost. Parents are invited to join us in Church for this important service.

END of YEAR SERVICE

Each year, the children from Year 6 attend the 'Leavers' Service' at Liverpool Cathedral for all those children who are leaving Church of England Primary Schools in the Liverpool Diocese.

We also hold our own special Leavers' Service in Church each year in July, also led by Y6. Each child receives a blessing and a gift of a Bible.

Themes

Themes are developed to ensure a **rich and stimulating** termly worship programme. They are planned to allow for the major Christian festivals and also to enhance and develop them. Key festivals from other faiths are listed and built into our themes as appropriate. They link to a wide range of available worship resources including "**Values for Life**" and "**Roots and Fruits 1**". Children testify to enjoying the variety of delivery, styles, visitors, and songs which we share. They particularly enjoy interactive worship times including role play and prayers.

In Reception, we use Christian Aid's 'Big Justice Sack' to support In-Class Worship as part of our commitment to working towards becoming a Global Neighbours School, encouraging the agents of change of the future.

At St James we feel it is important to allow for flexibility and spontaneity and that there will always be a need to respond to events affecting our school and national community. Also, visitors leading collective worship may not wish to follow the set theme but to set their own.

British Values

Our school core Christian value of love, ensures that British Values are implicit and embedded in all that we do. This is part of our long-term plan to prepare our children for living in modern Britain where we value every individual person whether child or adult. We actively promote equality and diversity. It also means that we will promote through discussion, respect for democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths. Evidence for this will come from work in classes as well as the various pupil

leadership teams. We will challenge opinions or behaviours in anyone who does not uphold these values.

Role of Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader is to work alongside staff and the link governor to plan, implement, monitor, review and support the delivery of high-quality collective worship. The subject leader monitors the standards of collective worship by observation and through pupil interviews and he/she also monitors coverage by scrutinising the worship evaluations.

Resources include:

- A rich selection of collective worship books.
- Suitable music for the various themes.
- Appropriate pictures and photographs.
- Suitable artefacts for each theme will be used as appropriate.
- A Focus table/area in each classroom
- Central Table in the hall.

Staff Development

The Collective Worship leader and staff identify resource needs and training opportunities to enrich collective worship, by developing staff skills and competencies, through appropriate courses and/or staff development time.

Policy Review

This Collective Worship Policy is carefully monitored and reviewed systematically by the subject leader, in liaison with the link governor, as detailed previously. A full review of the policy is built into a two-year cycle.

Monitoring

Monitoring of collective worship will be carried out regularly. Useful strategies for collecting evidence may include:

- written observations
- observing children's attentiveness and level of interest
- conducting occasional formal observations of collective worship and providing feedback
- seeking feedback from children, staff, parents, and governors
- observing the extent of the collective worship's influence on children's (and staff's) attitudes and behaviour throughout the school
- informal discussions with colleagues

Review

The headteacher, governors and staff will review this policy every two years (or sooner if required)