

St Johns CE VC Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

At St John's School, all aspects of school life reflect a Christian ethos.

Why is it important?

At St John's we hold a daily act of worship (referred to as service) that reflects the broad traditions and the principles and practice of the Church of England. It aims to be consonant with the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government.

We follow the principles listed below:

- School services should be inclusive for all.
- School services should promote pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, including time for reflection.
- School services should contribute to the religious education of all pupils.
- School services should promote Christian values.
- Whenever possible, school services should have a sense of occasion.

What do we aim to achieve for the children?

- To foster a sense of fellowship, bringing pupils together.
- To create an atmosphere where those who wish to worship may do so.
- To encourage in pupils a reflective approach to life and to develop the skills to do this.
- To increase sensitivity towards, and awareness of the search for meaning in the face of life's mysteries.
- To encourage children to express their responses in a variety of ways: music, drama, questions, dance, art, poetry and prose.
- To encourage pupils to make changes to their behaviour or attitude as a result of the meaning of the service.
- To encourage respect for and an understanding of the significance of faith and Christian (and other religions') practices and beliefs.
- To introduce pupils to various aspects (prayer, hymn, drama, art) of religious worship in an open and honest atmosphere.

How do we do it?

- Provide pupils with an engaging encounter (window), a time for reflection (mirror) and a time to consider how they can put the meaning of the service in to action (door).
- Provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the challenging aspects of life.
- Ensure, as far as possible, that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the pupils.
- Give time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space, and over time, consider each of the 4 quadrants of spiritual development (self, others, world and beyond). This includes giving time for prayer.
- Illustrate forms of worship that others have found helpful in their spiritual development, eg silent contemplation, dance, singing.
- Celebrate all that is good and lovely about life - our school, local community and natural surroundings.
- Link our services to the Christian values of the school.
- Involve pupils in the service in a variety of ways and provide opportunities for them to plan and lead worship.
- To provide an environment which is conducive to worship and adequately resourced eg literature, visual aids, music, artifacts and guest speakers.
- To invite, (never coerce) a response from the children which is appropriate to the occasion.

ORGANISATION

Services are planned in advance on a termly basis using the school Christian values but following a yearly overview which reflects the seasons and traditions of the Anglican Church as well as festivals of other religions.

All teachers are encouraged to take school services on a rota basis and parents and Governors are invited for special services. Visitors, eg local clergy, are invited to lead services linked to the appropriate theme. Children often participate in and even lead services and their achievements are regularly shared and celebrated. On a weekly rota classes compose and recite a class prayer. In addition to the regular services listed below, key festivals and events are celebrated together as a whole school, often in All Saints' Church.

The regular timetable for school services is as follows:

- Monday Whole Site Service

- Tuesday Junior hymn practice, including an act of worship
Infants Class services linked to whole site theme
- Wednesday Infant hymn practice, including an act of worship
Junior Service
- Thursday Juniors Class services linked to whole site theme
Infant Service
- Friday Whole Site Service

RECORDING

Services are planned in advance in termly themes with the content and relevant comment recorded by the pupils in our Services Book. Regular evaluations of services are undertaken by the pupils through annual pupil voice questionnaires; by staff through evaluation forms and governors through observations. Class Service follows up the main service for the whole site and a record is made of the message and the impact. All this information is reviewed regularly by the Worship Working Party and changes implemented as appropriate.

WITHDRAWAL

Parents (and staff) have the right to withdraw their children from acts of worship. Where this is requested, contact must be made with the headteacher to discuss the request to ensure clarity.