

St. John's Church of England Infant and Nursery School



Collective Worship Policy

***'Start children off on the way they should go,
and even when they are old they will not turn from it!' Proverbs 22:6***

Statement of Intent

As a church school everything we do at St. John's is rooted in our Christian values. We teach the children about these core values: love, respect, honesty, forgiveness, friendship, courage, cooperation, peace, perseverance, trust, patience and understanding.

Worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos through which children can learn and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. We believe that worship should:

- enable children and staff to gather to respond to the presence, power and peace of God through prayer, reflection, singing, sharing and communicating feelings.
- enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- be inclusive, invitational, and inspiring.

Written by:	Rachel Kutner
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Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Date:	Reviewed September 2025
Review frequency:	Every two years
Target Audience:	All Stakeholders

The governing body conducts the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. St John's Nursery and Infant School is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

1. Aims

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for children and adults to worship God;
- to enable participants to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable participants to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values
- to reinforce positive attitudes.

2. Planning

Planning for Collective Worship is led by the Head of School and the Worship Lead.

a) Pattern of Worship

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups. Where Collective Worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering. Children are to be involved regularly within worship through saying their own prayers, volunteering and planning workshops.

Most acts of worship will take place in the school building but on occasions will take place in St John's Church or Christ Church. Parents, Governors and/or friends are invited to attend special occasions such as Harvest and are welcomed to the end of term services at Christ Church. Links with the local vicar are made to ensure a wider community and knowledge is available to the children

b) Themes and Values

Plans follow the Anglican year and the termly value plan, on a two-year cycle:

Year	Term	Value
1	Autumn 1	Love
	Autumn 2	Peace
	Spring 1	Honesty
	Spring 2	Courage
	Summer 1	Understanding
	Summer 2	Trust
2	Autumn 1	Friendship
	Autumn 2	Patience
	Spring 1	Perseverance
	Spring 2	Forgiveness
	Summer 1	Cooperation
	Summer 2	Respect

The Worship Lead ensures that leaders of worship and visiting speakers receive copies of the plans. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the plans to create and lead acts of worship.

c) Typical format of whole school collective worship

Each act of worship should follow the ‘Gather, Engage, Respond, Send’ format and give children an opportunity to reflect on what they have heard.

- **Gather**

Collective Worship begins with children entering the hall and sitting down quietly while appropriate music is played. Usually at the front, there will be a picture on the IWB or another focus and a table draped in a cloth in the church’s seasonal colour with a candle on it. Worship begins with the candle being lit and the children saying “we light the candle to remind us that God is always with us.”

- **Engage**

Children will listen/watch a story either from the Bible or linked to our Christian Value for the term. The content and presentation will vary depending on the leader and the occasion.

- **Respond**

Children will have time to answer and ask questions related to the story they have heard. Children will have time to reflect on how the story effects them. A prayer will be said in every worship.

- **Send**

Children will be given something to think about related to the story as they leave worship. The candle is blown out and the children say, “Even though the candle is out we still remember that God is always with us.

d) Expectations of Staff

Staff are expected to attend Collective Worship regularly and, if not attending, respect this time by not walking through the hall during worship.

e) Worship Ambassadors

Each year, six children from Year Two are picked as Worship Ambassadors. These children are to help with the planning of Worship, take part during Worship and work with the Worship leader to lead their own Worship / parts of Worship.

f) Liturgical colours and seasons of the Christian Year

The cloth on the alter at the front of the hall changes colour to match the Liturgical calendar. Below is a guide for what colour it should be.

Ordinary Time	Green
Advent and Lent	Purple

g) Example of a typical week for Collective Worship

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Worship as proclamation...	Worship as reflection...	Worship as praise...	Worship as reflection...	Worship as celebration...
<i>Introduce a biblical or secular story linked to value.</i>	<i>Look at previous day's worship or current event in more detail</i>	<i>Singing</i>	<i>Class worship in the classroom or spiritual garden (when warmer)</i>	
Led by: Senior Leadership	Led by: Senior Leadership	Led by: Music Lead	Led by: Class Teacher	Led by: Senior Leadership

h) Suggested Structure for prayer

It is expected that a prayer is said at the end of each worship. It is encouraged that this is usually said by a child. Below is a possible structure for a prayer. Not all prayers need to include every part.

• Thank you, God...	• Thank you for creating the world.
• Sorry, God...	• Sorry for the times when we litter and pollute the environment.
• Please, God...	• Please give me courage to help make the world a better place.
• Wow, God...	• Wow the world is so amazing.

3. Resources

We have several worship books to aid the planning of Worship.

- The main resource for whole school Worship is 'Roots and Fruits' Book 1&2.
- For Class Worship we use 'Jack in the Box' and 'Oscar out of the Box'.
- 'Singchronise' provides a wide range of suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

We monitor and evaluate Collective Worship by keeping records and by surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. We also observe and monitor a range of acts of worship to ensure the aims for school worship are being met. A sample observation form can be seen at the end of the policy.

5. Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability.

We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate. As when teachers prepare lessons, worship leaders should take account of different learning styles and aim to present materials using multi-sensory approaches.

It is important in Collective Worship to ensure the themes being covered are appropriate to children who come from any religious background or whose families do not have a particular religious faith.

6. The Right of Withdrawal From Collective Worship

St John's seeks to be an inclusive community. We recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship on the grounds of conscience, but aim to provide worship that means they do not feel the need to exercise this right.

The right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by children or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

Parents considering withdrawing their child should contact the Head of School to discuss any concerns or anxieties.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- *Religious Education Policy*
- *Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education Policy*

Appendix: Collective worship observation form

Worship Theme: _____ Time Allocation: _____ minutes

CRITERIA	ASPECT	COMMENT
Gathering	<p>Is there a real sense of a marking the start of a very special time in the school day?</p> <p><i>Immediate impact, relevant, welcoming, stimulates interest, has focus...?</i></p>	
Engaging	<p>Does the worship leader capture the attention of the children and staff so they become actively engaged in the content?</p> <p><i>Well expressed, Stimulating, Convincing, enthusiastic, warm rapport...?</i></p>	
Responding	<p>Does the leader allow for a response from the children and adults – whether active or passive, noisy or quiet?</p>	
Sending	<p>Does the leader send us out with a clear “thought for the day” that changes our behaviour in some way?</p> <p><i>Clear summary, learners given opportunity to reflect...?</i></p>	
In addition		
Content	<p>Clear Christian / Biblical content and teaching...?</p>	
Summary		