



St John's Stonefold CE Primary School, Rising Bridge

Whole School Policy for Collective Worship	
Written By	F Brady
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Approved by FGB	Yes
Date of Review	September 2025

Values:

Empathy Aspiration Generosity Love Endurance

Mission:

Rooted and Established in God's Love: Nurture, Grow, Fly (Ephesians 3:17)

Vision:

Our vision is to live and grow together as a loving church school family, who celebrate one another's individuality. Built upon our shared Christian values,

St John's provides our children with excellent teaching of a bespoke and innovative curriculum, empowering them to flourish with the knowledge and skills for life.

From our vision, we inspire our children to have uncompromising aspirations and to thrive and succeed.

Collective worship at St. John's Stonefold

In our school some children come from families who regularly worship together, while some do not. Many of our children come from Christian families with some from other world faiths. Some children are from families who profess no faith. Some children are experiencing worship for the first time at school and others are at the 'threshold of worship'.

In school, we can bring children together but we cannot make them worship. We can, however, organise time and space for worship and prayer to take place but which also allows for a variety of responses. As St. John's Stonefold is an inclusive school, we believe that it is important that worship and prayer is open and accessible to all of our pupils.

Collective worship contributes to the fulfilment of our mission statement, to the aims and ethos of the school, to our spiritual development and to the Christian education we provide. It also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the values of our school. As such, collective worship is at the centre of daily school life. All staff and governors view it as an essential part of pupils' spiritual education. However, the worship and prayer life of the school are not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities are taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum generally, in graces before meals and at the end of the school day.

Management of collective worship

St. John's Stonefold is a Voluntary Aided school and, therefore, the management of collective worship is a distinctive role of the governors and headteacher. Collective worship is managed in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The governing body is responsible for determining the nature of collective worship provided in the school.

Forms of worship within our denomination differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to the Trust Deed. As well as drawing upon our denominational heritage, we also expect to draw upon the rich diversity of practice in the worldwide Christian church.

Collective worship and RE

Collective worship and RE naturally complement and enrich one another. However, they are managed and led separately and collective worship does not form part of the time allocation for RE. Although worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfE regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of RE and the National Curriculum and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussion and question and answer. Pupils may be read to, instructed, asked to listen to readings, think about and respond to stimulus such as a work of art.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of their learning. Pupils are often involved in leading aspects of worship or performing through singing, music, drama and role play. When any such activities occur, they may be counted as teaching time even though they take place within worship. It is appropriate that, within a Church school, worship and learning are seen as a seamless whole even though, for the purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two.

Collective worship and assembly

The school meets together for collective worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, eg important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from collective worship and parents' rights to withdraw their children do not apply.

Aims

1. To create an appropriate environment for worship in which:
 - the opportunity is provided for believers to worship;
 - children and staff may begin to feel and understand what it means for themselves and others to worship;
 - pupils can approach the threshold of worship;
 - a variety of forms of worship can be explored.

2. To develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and to introduce pupils to worship as found in the Church of England by:
 - showing that God is involved in and concerned about all areas of human life;
 - bringing pupils towards worshipping God through Jesus;
 - celebrating festivals and saints' days in the church year;
 - experiencing different forms of Christian worship;
 - developing links with the parish church and other churches locally.

3. To contribute to pupils' spiritual development by:
 - enabling pupils to use silence for reflection, meditation, contemplation and prayer;
 - developing awareness of and allowing for exploration of and reflection upon the fundamental or ultimate questions of life;
 - fostering a sense of awe and wonder at the beauty, mystery and power of the world in which we live;
 - fostering new insights about life and empathy for others;
 - learning about and reflecting upon Christian values and, in particular, the core values identified for our school;
 - exploring all that is of value in life.

4. To celebrate and build up the life of the school in the presence of God by:
 - providing a time to celebrate achievements;
 - sharing that which has meaning, value and purpose for the children as individuals, for the school and for the wider community;
 - providing the experience of and developing the sense of a caring community within school and of being part of the wider community.

Organisation and delivery

Day	Time	Group	Leader	Place
Monday	9.00-9.15/9.20am	Whole school	Headteacher	Hall
Tuesday		Class	Class teachers	Classrooms
Wednesday		Class	Clergy (rota)	Class
			Class Teachers	Class
Thursday		Whole School	Clergy and Teachers	Hall
Friday (celebration)	Whole school	Deputy Headteacher	Hall	

- Parents and families are invited to the extended celebration on the final day of each half term and to whole school, church and class-led acts of worship as appropriate.
- Governors have an open invitation to join the school for worship at any time.
- The school worships at church several times a year, eg start of the school year, Christmas, Easter, end of school year and holds Church services in school due to the location of our closest church of St James.
- All staff attend worship where possible.
- In addition to school staff and clergy, the school encourages other visitors to contribute to worship.

Creating a worshipful atmosphere

- Children enter and leave the hall to music.
- Christian symbols are used on the worship table, eg cross, candle.
- A candle/three candles are lit at the beginning of worship and blown out at the end. □
The greeting 'Peace be with you' and the response 'And also with you' are used at the beginning of each act of worship.
- Music, singing and silence are used to encourage periods of celebration, reflection and prayer.
- Children participate in singing a range of songs.
- If notices have to be given out, this is done either before the candle is lit (preferable) or after it has been blown out.

Content and approaches

Worship is organised around a range of themes which include:

- Major Christian festivals and elements of the Christian year;
- The 7 core values identified by the school;
- Fruits of the Spirit;
- Celebration of curriculum work;
- Special events in the life of the school.

Themes may be developed over a different periods of time. Occasionally, acts of worship stand alone.

Various approaches are used in the delivery of worship. These include:

- Adult and pupil led;
- Story-telling;
- Music and movement;
- Drama and role-play;
- Visual aids including ICT;
- Poetry;
- Silence and reflection.

Evaluation

Evaluation of any act of worship is difficult. Some feedback may be indicated by:

- the response of those involved (immediately or later);
- the concentration span of the pupils;
- pupil and staff comments in worship evaluation notebooks;
- weekly pupil evaluations on a rolling programme ;
- feedback from others, eg. staff, visitors.

Formal evaluations are carried out at intervals throughout the year and involve children (ethos group), staff and governors. Feedback is collated and used to inform future planning.

The role of the collective worship leader

- Overall responsibility for the annual and half-termly plans for worship.
- To keep a record of worship throughout the year.
- To produce an action plan each year to be included in the annual school improvement plan. This will also include a bid for any resources required.
- To ensure that medium term plans support worship leaders/classes in planning individual acts of worship.
- To ensure that reporting to governors concerning worship is included in the headteacher's termly report.
- To review the policy every three years.

Resources

- A range of artefacts, cloths and CDs are stored in the worship trolley situated in the hall.
- A range of files and books are stored on the shelves in the staffroom.
- Useful websites:
- www.bdeducation.org.uk
- www.stapleford-centre.org
- www.sermons4kids.com
- www.thebricktestament.com www.bbc.co.uk
- www.assemblies.org.uk

Parental rights of withdrawal

Parents are legally entitled to withdraw their children from collective worship. However, the worship provided at St. John's Stonefold is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is reflected throughout the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from worship cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school.