



Collective Worship Policy

St Mark's CofE Primary School



At St Mark's, our core Christian Values are: *faith, forgiveness, hope and love*. These values are at the very heart of our school ethos and form the basis of our collective worships throughout the course of the school year. It's a key way that we realise our vision of "Growing and Learning Together in God's Love".

Collective Worship is a very important time within our school day. It provides an opportunity for members of the school community to gather together, to learn about and reflect upon the Christian beliefs and values which bind the school together. Collective worship is part of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils helping to make them aware of what it means to be part of a community committed to serving God and caring for each other and our environment.

Aims

Active worship at St Mark's supports the mission statement of the school through the provision of opportunities for both pupils and staff:

- To promote the joy of worship as engaging, inspiring and transformative.
- To develop spirituality, morality, social and cultural values.
- Sometimes to provide a peaceful environment enabling stillness, reflection and prayer.
- Sometimes to be noisy and joyous with singing, music, dance, drama, gymnastics etc.
- To give an opportunity to acquire a secure knowledge of the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible.
- To understand, celebrate and develop children's knowledge of Christian beliefs celebrations, traditions and religious festivals in the Anglican Church's year.
- To appreciate that people, cultures and beliefs differ and to demonstrate respect, tolerance and generosity towards them.
- To develop pupils' sense of self-worth and to provide opportunities to celebrate achievements.
- To develop a caring attitude to others and a sense of community and loyalty.
- To provide opportunities for children to plan, lead, contribute to, monitor and evaluate collective worship.
- To help children to understand how their lives are impacted by other people, events and things, including technology and their own digital lifestyle.
- To invite clergy of the parish, other lay members of the parish and other Christian leaders in the community (as are acceptable to the parish church) to lead worship.

Worship in our school should:

As worship:

- At its simplest create a time and space where we can come closer to God
- Be distinctively Christian
- Use and promote the clearly identified core Christian values of our school – Faith Forgiveness, Hope, Love
- Have Integrity as acts of Anglican worship whilst being Invitational, Inclusive and inspirational

- Be based on Biblical text or themes
- Enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Be central in importance to the life of our school community, which is part of a wider community that embraces the whole world
- Reflect on human existence Use the seasons and festivals of the Christian year
- Develop understanding of Anglican traditions and the practice of our local parish church.

For people:

- Develop personal spirituality within the school community through a range of experiences including individual and collective prayer
- Engage pupils and adults with collective worship, making it relevant and transformational to the lives of members of the whole school community
- Celebrate the God given gifts and talents of individuals and the whole school community
- Make a significant contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of members of the school community
- Consider the beliefs and values of others, especially those within the school community
- Raise aspirations of individuals and the school community

To comply:

- Reflect the trust deed
- Be clearly outlined on the school website
- Involve learners and adults in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship
- Be monitored and evaluated for the impact it has on the school community by foundation governors

How we achieve our aims

We aim to promote collective acts of worship, which are rich, meaningful experiences that are appropriate and significant to the pupil's needs, age, development and interest by:

- Creating a sense of occasion and reverence following the 4 key elements of worship, in line with the Diocese of Winchester and Portsmouth (see below)
- Planning and linking themes which focus on a particular idea/concept, i.e. the liturgical year; RE curriculum, festivals and celebrations, within Christian and other faith traditions, our Christian values and resource programmes – celebrating achievements, good work and behaviour.
- Using a wide range of resources, devotional aids, artefacts (from religious and secular sources), music, art, drama and external speakers to engage children's interest.
- Encourage children to participate and experience different styles of worship, e.g. prayer, praise, silence, rituals, and become familiar with the language of worship, Biblical readings and liturgy.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to reflect, contemplate on their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs.
- Using the centrality of prayer – personal silent prayer, personal shared prayers, collective prayers, writing prayers.
- Providing opportunities that develop pupil's awareness of what is beautiful, good, wonderful, awesome and puzzling in life experience.
- Involving pupils and members of the wider community to participate in collective worship and activities within the parish.
- Presenting and creating displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas, thoughts and questions.

Across the week, collective worship is held daily, these typically span the week as follows:

- Monday – focus on a Christian Value in a Whole School, KS1 or KS2 worship
- Tuesday– focus on a learning behaviour within a year group worship a HeartSmart focus within class worship
- Wednesday – singing worship, with hymns and songs reflective of the Christian Value, Learning Behaviours and HeartSmart theme
- Thursday – focus on how we develop and navigate a healthy digital lifestyle within Year Group worship, based around the NatterHub resource
- Friday – celebration worship

Central attributes of an act of worship

We will endeavour to fulfil the legal requirements of 1988 Education Reform Act in conjunction with School's trust deed, by holding 'an act of collective worship every day'.

During collective worship, whether in the hall, classroom or outside, we will apply the following 'four key elements' of worship:

Gathering Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony. This incorporates a reflective focal point such as a candle and a cross. Music is played as the children enter and each class bring a lantern to add to the table at the front, representing Jesus as the Light of the World

Engaging Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content to engage all members of the school. This may be achieved through interactive drama, music, film clips or images. Focused acts of worship will be Bible based and linked to the values and themes of the term.

Responding Ensuring there is time and opportunity for individual, group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways, this maybe through shared prayer such as the Lord's Prayer, or Anglican responses.

Sending Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas covered and to conclude the worship. This is often achieved in the form of a question that pupils are encouraged to think about throughout the day and will be given the opportunity to discuss within class. Children collect their class lantern and lead back to class, reinforcing that the message of the worship is linked to the whole school day.

The centrality of prayer

During the collective worship there will be a time for response and reflection, to ponder on a question, statement or thought. This may also be reflected in a prayer, offered spontaneously by a pupil or adult, read out or recited. This prayer can be displayed and used in class and school reflective areas so that:

- Children understand the nature and purpose of prayer.
- Children understand the part prayer may play in their lives and the life of the school community.
- Prayer contributes to the spiritual development of individuals and the whole school community.

There will also be appropriate opportunities for prayer and other worship activities, including reflection, outside of collective worship.

Each class has a 'reflective area' to engage and promote individual pupils and adults, as well as designated special spaces around the school.

Legal status of collective worship

All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship.

In a Church of England School, worship must be in line with the trust deed of the school and will reflect the traditions of the Church of England, i.e. the Anglican tradition.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the daily act of collective worship. Schools must comply with this wish and must ensure a duty of care for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

The school will respect parental requests and will try to discuss the request to see if an accommodation can be reached and to ensure worship remains inclusive and invitational and open to all members of the school community.

Visitors

From time to time, we may invite visitors into collective worship sessions. This may be whole school, key stage, year group or class worship sessions.

- Any visitor must be agreed with the headteacher first.
- The visitor must be accompanied at all times by a member of staff for safeguarding purposes.
- There must be a clear and positive rationale for the visit.
- The content of any presentation/discussion must be agreed in advance, and must always be in line with the school's values and ethos. It should also be age appropriate.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of collective acts of worship is undertaken by pupils, staff, and governors.

All leaders of collective worship are asked to evaluate continuously, reflect after every worship, to develop and improve their practice.

Review

Reviewed: Spring 2024
Review Policy: Spring 2026

St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Founded 1 September 1996



Terms of Union with the National Society

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils.

The governing body will ensure that the school is led by a headteacher who is committed, with the help of staff, to preserve and develop the Christian character of the school in its day to day activities and in the curriculum.

The governing body will endeavour to ensure that the staff of the school include teachers who are practising members of the Church or of Christian religious denominations with which the Church enjoys good relations and ecumenical co-operation.

The governing body will offer a school life that incorporates the values of the Christian faith.

The governing body will ensure that all pupils each day engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church.

The headteacher and the governing body will ensure that religious education is given at least five per cent of curriculum time and that such religious education is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church.

The school should observe the major Christian festivals and, where those of other faiths are present in the school, ensure that they are able and encouraged to mark their major festivals with integrity.

The school should maintain and develop an active and affirming relationship with the parish church of the parish in which the school is situated or a parish church of one of the parishes which the school serves.

The school should proclaim that it is a Church school on its external signboard and on its stationery and make appropriate use of Christian symbols inside and outside the school.

**Produced by the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Board of Education
to mark the 200th anniversary of the National Society in 2011.**

References in these Terms of Union to "the Church" are to the Church of England in respect of schools situated in the Provinces of Canterbury or York.

The governing body and the trustees of the school must ensure that the school is designated by the Secretary of State under section 69 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (or any successor legislation) as having a religious character that is Church of England.

The instrument of government of the school should describe its ethos in the manner set out above or in words to the same effect.