



St James CE Primary Academy Collective Worship Policy

Our School Vision

Together through faith we will aspire to grow in our understanding of ourselves, in our abilities and in our knowledge of God's wonderful diverse world.

'Growing and learning together with faith'

"Planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish"

- Psalm 92:13

Our Christian Values

Trust, Love, Honesty and Truthfulness, Respect, Friendship and Perseverance

'Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10).

Policy Statement

At St. James, worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At St. James, collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

Through Collective Worship, pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian calendar. At St. James, we also mark festivals from other faiths in order to respond and learn from them. This is separate to our Christian collective worship.

Pupils at St. James are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

“To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God”. William Temple (1881-1894)

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at St. James draws on guidance from the Church of England (<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>). This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

Legal Requirements

At St. James, we follow the legal requirement of all maintained schools that collective worship is celebrated daily. Worship in St James is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions.

The Local Academy Committee and St Chad's Academies Trust have the responsibility for ensuring that the academy meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

The right of withdrawal

At St. James CE Primary Academy, we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience, being members of another faith or being members of a non-faith.

Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the Head of School/Executive Principal to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer
- and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the Local Academy Committee and Senior Leadership Team will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

Guiding Principles

Collective worship in St James CE Primary Academy aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by

Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.

- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

What Collective Worship looks like at St James CE Primary Academy.

Our Worship often starts with instrumental worship music playing for quiet, reflective time. The prayer table and the PowerPoints used in worship reflect the Liturgical calendar. A range of resources are using in our worship, such as, websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture.

A candle is lit at the beginning of every worship and the person leading worship says, *‘We Light this candle in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We are one family under God.’* We finish our worship by saying our sending out prayer together; *‘May the Grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, forevermore, Amen.’*

A typical timetable for worship can be found below:

| | Monday Lead by the Executive Head (Mr.Dobson), the Head of school (Mrs Hewkin) or Rev.Jan. | Tuesday Lead by Mr. Stainton or Mrs Whyte | Wednesday Class 1 & Class 2’s class worship is lead by Worship Council. | Thursday Lead by Miss Bullock and supported by choir (Praise) and Miss Machin (Fruits of the Spirit). | Friday Lead by Mrs Hewkin (Head of school). |
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| 9:05-9:30 | Monday welcome (often linked with the liturgical calendar) Whole school | Picture News (Classes 2-4) | Class Worship | Praise worship or Fruits of the spirit worship (2 week rota), Whole school | |
| 3:00-3:20 | | EYFS Picture News (Class 1) | | | Celebration worship, Whole school |

- Our Monday Worship starts our whole week. We talk about our vision and values and often hear Bible stories linked to the liturgical calendar and our school values.

- Picture News (<https://www.picture-news.co.uk/>) helps us to explore faith in Today's world, by discussing current affairs that are linked to scripture. On Wednesdays, the weekly question from Picture News is discussed in detail by classes 3 and 4.
- On Thursdays, one week we have our praise worship, where we sing and praise! *He who sings, prays twice.* – St. Augustine.
The following week, we deepen our understanding of the Holy Spirit by learning about the Fruits of the Spirit (We learn about a different fruit every half-term).
- In our Celebration worship, we celebrate and thank God for our achievements that week, in our academic work and also how we have lived out our school values.

Whole school worship is usually in our school hall or in church. Once a half term, Rev. Jan comes to school to lead Monday worship and individual classes go up to church for worship. We go to church as a whole school community (including pupil's family members) to celebrate Harvest, Christingle, Christmas, Easter and the Leavers Service. Our Remembrance Service takes place in the village with the community.

Worship Council

Worship council is made up of four children from Class 3 (Year 3/4) and four children from Class 4 (Year 5/6). Children were asked if they wished to take part and then elected by their peers. They meet at least once a week with Miss Bullock to plan Wednesday worship for the following week. Class 3 lead worship in Class 1 (Reception) and Class 4 lead worship in Class 2 (Year 1/2). Worship council usually plan their worship around a Bible story and we come up with a theme for every half-term (such as Old Testament stories, The Easter Story or life after Easter).

Worship council also lead their classroom prayers and they are responsible for maintaining the class prayer bags and prayer tables.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Monitoring and evaluation

Worship is monitored regularly by staff, local academy committee, clergy, the Christian Distinctiveness Adviser and pupils. Pupils and parents are given annual surveys to evaluate the impact of worship. Worship is changed and adapted when necessary to reflect monitoring outcomes.

In a recent parent survey (June 2023), parents commented:

'St James often takes the children to the local church for events which we as parents very much look forward to.'

'You can feel the Christian ethos running through all they do.'

'As a Christian I appreciate all that St James teaches my children, the Christian values, the celebrations are very much enjoyed by all the parents here, and visiting and being involved in the local church with Reverend Jan and the local community too.'

Disseminating the policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

Other Useful Documents: [Collective Worship Guidance 18052021.pdf](#)
(churchofengland.org)

Date of last review: June 2023