

St James' Church of England Junior School

**Developing the love of life and learning in a caring
Christian community**



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Reviewed by:	Katharine McFarland
Agreed by LGB:	January 2026
Review Cycle:	Every 3 years
Next Review due:	January 2029

Intent

Our school is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Junior School and is part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT).

As a Church of England School, we have identified the following Christian values from consultations with pupils, staff, parents and governors:

Respect					
This is our overarching value that underpins our ethos and is rooted in the Bible teachings: <i>'Do unto others as you would have them do to you' (Luke 6:13)</i> <i>'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'</i> (Matthew 12:31)					
Kindness encompassing friendship, appreciation, thankfulness and global view. <i>"Be kind to each other" (Ephesians 4:32)</i>	Love encompassing hope, faith, trust and peace. <i>"So these three things continue forever: faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13)</i>	Integrity encompassing justice and honesty. <i>"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)</i>	Forgiveness <i>"Do not be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, then forgive him. Forgive each other because the Lord forgave you.(Colossians 3:13)</i>	Perseverance encompassing courage and strength <i>"We must not become tired of doing good. We will receive our harvest of eternal life at the right time. We must not give up!" (Galatians 6:9)</i>	Joy/Reflection What have I learnt? What will I do? What am I proud of? What did I find joy in? <i>"May my friends sing and shout for joy. May they always say 'Praise the greatness of the Lord. He loves to see his servants do well.'" (Psalms 35:27)</i>

These values inform our school's vision, aims and ethos, the design of our curriculum, all policies, planning and the school's management and governance.

At St James,' we value collective worship and it is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian foundation values and ethos of the school. As a school with children and families committed to other faiths, we aim to be inclusive in our worship.

The Collective Worship Policy at St James' C of E Junior School pays due regard to statutory requirements and has taken account of the guidance offered by the LA through its SACRE. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act and the 1996 education Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', and in recognition of the fact that the majority of our pupils are practising members of other faiths we base our assemblies on Christian teaching with a sensitivity to members of the school community with other or no faith.

The Collective Worship Policy of St James' C of E Junior School is consonant with the philosophy and aims of the school as expressed in the school prospectus. Acts of Worship are conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

Definition of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Aims of Collective Worship

For the School:

Collective Worship contributes significantly to the ethos of St James' C of E Junior School and it is our aim that it is a time when the school community can:

- share common aims and values
- celebrate achievement and special times
- explore together the world in which we live
- enable all members of the school community to flourish
- develop a community spirit

For the Pupils:

We also intend that Collective Worship contributes to the development of the pupil as a 'whole' person by providing opportunities to:

- provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God
- enable children to become familiar with the Bible and grow in their appreciation that for Christians it is God's word
- introduce children to Christian language and symbolism, the teachings of Jesus and the cycle of the Church year
- offer opportunities to children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship
- strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school
- celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual
- consider the wonders and worries of the world
- encourage respect of other people's religious beliefs and practices
- provide regular opportunities for stillness, reflection and prayer so that children can begin to think more deeply about everyday experiences
- give children experience of being active members of a caring community by fostering an atmosphere of love, security and kindness
- provide a firm foundation for the future

- reflect on that which is considered worthy
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs
- develop their own spirituality
- reflect on the direction of their lives
- reinforce positive attitudes
- participate and respond using their oracy skills
- reflect on what it means to be human.

The Contribution of Collective Worship to aspects of the Curriculum

Collective Worship time is distinct from curriculum time. However, in St James' C of E Junior School, Collective Worship will at times feature aspects of the curriculum, which will enhance the experiences of pupils by reflecting on the work done in classes. At times, Collective Worship will enrich classwork through its consideration of subject matter from different perspectives.

The provision of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is in line with school policy which informs our practice. To ensure Collective Worship provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development it will address a wide variety of themes and topics, use diverse stimuli and resources and provide pupils with the opportunity to 'respond' on their own level.

The Management of Collective Worship

The RE lead will support planning of Collective Worship, monitor and evaluate acts of Collective Worship and organise a child-led school Worship Team that is open to all pupils who would like to take part.

The Organisation of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is organised to provide a variety of groupings and will take place in the school hall or the classroom.

Day	Responsibility	Focus
Monday	RE lead	Values
Tuesday	RE lead	Time for Praise (Choral)
Wednesday	RE lead	St James Storytellers/ Parish Clergy
Thursday	SLT	Values/Wellbeing
Friday	SLT	Celebration

Collective Worship in the parish church is organised as follows:

Term	Leader	Content
Autumn 1	Parish clergy & head teacher	Welcome to new families
	School – Worship Team led	Harvest festival
Autumn 2	School	Carol Concert
Spring 1	Parish clergy	Christingle – link to school value
Spring 2	School – Worship Team led	Easter Service
Summer 1	Parish clergy	Pentecost/Current value
Summer 2	Parish clergy and School Prefects	Celebration of academic year end & moving up
Rolling Programme	Parish clergy and community	Experience Easter, Pentecost

Leadership

Every member of the teaching staff and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year. The Worship Team will have the opportunity to plan and lead Acts of Worship over the school year in the local church.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

The content of all acts of Collective Worship will be considered carefully, to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils. All Collective Worship will be rooted in the Bible although reference may be made to scriptures of other faiths

Termly assembly rotas including a range of themes, special occasions and events will be followed, but will be flexible to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. We use the Gloucester Diocese 'Values for Life' and draw on online resources such as Worship Workshop and Imaginor to support planning of Acts of Worship. We also observe the cycle of the church's year, and have regard to topical issues and events in school, the locality and the world.

The Act of Collective Worship

A variety of active and interactive methods are appropriate in acts of Collective Worship. Leaders will choose the style/method and resources which are appropriate to the content, the age, aptitude and the background of the pupils.

The content and process must be sufficiently stimulating in order to evoke a response in the individual. Opportunity must be given to express response through reflection and prayer.

Our values rolling programme gives a basis upon which to plan each term's theme. We follow the pattern of:

- Welcome (including the lighting of a candle using our school opening prayer), Learning, Reflecting and Responding in our worship.
- We often use a story to learn from, usually from the Bible but sometimes from another of the principal religions.
- We also use traditional folk tales and modern stories. We sing a song or a hymn and there is time for quiet reflection on the theme of the assembly as well as a prayer.

Our worship reflects the Anglican heritage through:

- the use of the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning
- the making of explicit links between Bible stories and the Christian values of our school
- reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship
- observing the cycle of the Church's year: Advent, Christmas, Candlemas, Lent, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost
- the use of specific prayers including the Lord's Prayer, responses (The Lord be with you – And also with you), hymns and worship songs
- the use of prayer - formal, pupils' own, silence/reflection
- the use of liturgical colours for the cloth on the worship table
- the provision of opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship
- the involvement of the parish clergy
- the invitation to members of other Churches to lead or attend worship from time to time, thus recognising the strong commitment of the Anglican Church to ecumenism
- experiencing the bond of community which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinion
- sharing in a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in our inclusive ethos, the welcome we offer to all pupils and in the celebration of shared values and beliefs

Places to Worship in School

Whole school worship usually takes place in the school hall, where we have access to audio-visual equipment and plenty of space. The classrooms are used for class-based worship. Each class has its own reflection corner with a Bible, candle and cross. We acknowledge that prayer and worship can take place anywhere, and we are flexible in our use of space in and around school.

Making Worship Special

In the hall, a Worship Table is used, covered with a cloth in the appropriate liturgical colour and with a candle and cross as focal points. We use either a candle with 3 wicks or 3 individual candles to represent the Trinity. Music is played as the children enter and leave the hall.

Special Events

Through the year, we celebrate special events. New pupils and members of staff are welcomed individually and at the start of the school year. Our Year 6 leavers attend the Diocesan Leavers' Service in Gloucester Cathedral and have their own 'Goodbye Assembly' at the end of the summer term. Staff who are leaving are also acknowledged in worship, with children leaving mid-year being acknowledged in their own classes. Harvest Festival, Christmas Carol Service and Easter Services are held in the Parish Church and are planned with support from the parish clergy.

Events such as Book Week, Armistice Day, Black History month, Anti-Bullying Week and Children's Mental Health Week are also marked.

Visitors

Visiting speakers from the local and wider community, welfare and charity organisations contribute to and enrich our programme of daily worship in school.

Involving Parents

Details of special acts of worship are included in the school newsletter. Parents are also sent Home School Values sheets, which give background to the term's Value and which will include ideas for discussion, often focusing on a story we have used in whole school worship.

We welcome feedback from parents about our worship, the impact of our Values education and about Church services.

Spiritual Development

Opportunities for Spiritual Development are fostered across the whole curriculum. However, acts of collective worship provide particular opportunities for promoting the spiritual development of pupils.

A Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy is available and published on the web site

Resources

The school budget includes a sum to be used annually for resourcing collective worship.

Monitoring and evaluation

Worship is monitored by the Senior Management Team and by the Ethos Committee.

Evaluations are carried out by Governors, staff and children, by the Worship Team Leaders (Y6 children),

Withdrawal

Our assemblies will be conducted in a manner as sensitive and inclusive as to ensure that all children feel comfortable to attend the assembly. At the explicit request of parents, some children may be removed from Collective Worship in school or in Church.