



Park Street C of E Primary School



POLICY:

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Date of approval:

AUTUMN 2023

Date of review:

AUTUMN 2024

Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Flourish and
"Let your light shine."
Matthew 5:16

These words of Jesus are our school's vision. They inspire and motivate our whole school community. Jesus reminded us in Matthew's gospel that we are lights for the world. As we seek to follow him, we can share his light with others and change the world, through our words and actions.

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). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Statement

In Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery, 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 Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery 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 (*and other faiths*¹) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

¹ Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery draws on guidance from the Church of England². 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

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, “that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, is not relevant. Worship in Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions. The governing body have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They also monitor and evaluate the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher and other stakeholders.

The right of withdrawal

In Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. 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 is made clear to parents/carers when children join our school.

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

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. Parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. Where parents have withdrawn their child(ren) from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher 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

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

Guiding Principles

Collective worship in Park Street Church of England VA Primary School and Nursery 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 on the school website.





How Collective worship is organised

Leadership

Collective worship is led by senior leaders, teaching staff, a small group of children from KS1 and KS2 (called our 'Leading Lights'), our local Vicar, church leaders and visitors ensuring that worship is an important part of the school day giving children time to think, reflect and develop spiritually.

Planning

- Collective worship is planned systematically, so there is continuity, variety and clear focus on Christian beliefs and festivals.
- Our 'Leading lights' plan and lead acts of worship with the member of staff each week. They include the following four elements when planning:

			
<p>Gather:</p> <p>We are invited to prepare our hearts and minds to meet with God. We gather for this special time as a community</p>	<p>Engage:</p> <p>We engage with the big things and the little things in life We encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible We listen to God's message and how consider how it might apply to our lives.</p>	<p>Respond:</p> <p>We respond to what we have heard and seen through prayer, silence, stillness and reflection. We are given the invitation to worship God in different ways.</p>	<p>Send:</p> <p>We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world We are all sent out with God's blessing</p>

- As a whole school, we follow the Canterbury Diocese planning cycle for the church year which makes explicit links between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school
- Our school's vision 'flourish and let your light shine'; and values of 'love, joy, truth and courage' are identified, expressed and celebrated through collective worship, using a range and variety of materials used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
- Spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured for both children and adults

Organisation

Collective Worship is the heartbeat of our school's life and is centred around our Christian vision of enabling all children to flourish and let their light shine. Acts of collective worship take place at the beginning of each day in our school hall or in classrooms. We draw themes from the 'Collective Worship' Programme from the Canterbury diocese, each of which has a bible reading linked to it. This maintains a focus for our Christian Ethos. Our Collective Worship table is a permanent fixture in our school hall and displays the liturgical colours of the church year, a candle, Bible and other carefully chosen images or artefacts linked to the Bible passages or themes for that week.

At Park Street C of E School and Nursery, we enable pupils to play an active role in collective worship. Our 'Leading Lights' meet once a week to plan ideas and evaluate collective worship. During worship times, these

children take responsibility for setting up, gathering, welcoming, reflecting and responding to a given message. Children lead prayers and encourage children from all faiths to reflect on their own beliefs. All pupils consider what they have learnt during collective worship, then reflect upon how they could change their behaviours, values and attitudes and apply them to their everyday lives. Each classroom has its own Reflection area, which invites children of all faiths or none to develop their own sense of identity, self-worth, personal insight, meaning and purpose in an inclusive and safe environment.

On Monday mornings, we hold a 'Values and Celebration' worship led by our Head teacher, where we recognise children who 'live' our school vision and values. Each class teacher chooses a child from their class to recognise and celebrate a special achievement. The children are presented with a 'Flourishing Leaf' and the teacher shares the reason and value for which they are being celebrated with the whole school. Each leaf is then displayed on our flourishing board to demonstrate individual achievements and how we are living our Christian values.

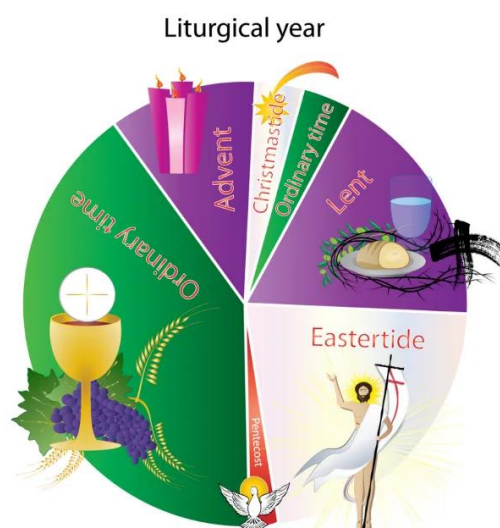
On Tuesday mornings, the school gather for a themed collective worship time. This is planned and led by teaching staff and our 'Leading Lights'. Our school Christian values and stories from the Bible are explored during this collective worship time.

On Wednesday mornings, the Vicar and other leaders of Holy Trinity church lead KS1 and KS2 collective worship times. The children in KS2 will bring their Bible to use during this time.

Each Thursday mornings, during 'Praise and prayer' worship, the children learn a variety of songs and hymns; traditional and modern and reflect on their meaning. They enjoy this time to worship through music and song. Children will lead prayers and reflections during this time.

On Friday mornings, 'Family worship' times are planned and led by the class teacher and children. They provide a wonderful opportunity for the children to shine and share important things that they have learnt during the term with the school and their families. All families and carers are invited to be part of this. This promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way home and school work together to celebrate the achievements of our children.

Our whole school worship space is made special using Christian signs and symbols, candles, music and the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year.



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. Members of the senior leadership team ensure that staff have a clear CPD programme, which includes support and guidance on the planning and delivery of effective collective worship. Staff have a shared bank of resources so that collective worship is a collaborative part of school life at Park Street.

Monitoring and evaluation

Governors and the leadership team monitor and evaluate the impact of worship through observation. Children are also involved in this through the use of pupil voice and through our elected 'Leading Lights'.

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.