

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Fownhope

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

POLICY



What we nurture today, flourishes tomorrow

UPDATED JANUARY 2019

A rich education is more than simply learning reading, writing and maths. It is about helping a child grow into their full potential as inquisitive, well balanced and cheerful adults. As the old proverb has it: "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray" (Proverbs 22:6). As a Christian school we nurture children to display the 'fruit of the Spirit', which is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). At St Mary's you will find children growing in mind, body and spirit as they form good relationships with each other, the staff and discover a faith which will sustain them in a rapidly changing world. As our motto has it: "what we nurture today flourishes tomorrow".

Aims and Purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:-

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship.

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Children are encouraged to take part in planning, leading aspects and subsequently evaluating acts of worship.

The Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. Our collective acts of worship are seen as an important part of our school life. They reflect and support our promotion of Christian values. The children are given time to reflect and to think in a way to help them grow as spiritual beings.

Assemblies in school are organised around termly or half-termly themes. They follow the following pattern:

- ✧ Monday - whole school assembly led by the Headteacher or a member of the local clergy
- ✧ Tuesday - whole school assembly led by a member of teaching staff
- ✧ Wednesday - whole school assembly led by a member of teaching staff
- ✧ Thursday - whole school assembly led by a member of teaching staff
- ✧ Friday - 'Good News' assembly, led by two Year 6 children on a rota basis, when certificates, stickers and praise are awarded to children for effort, work, values, attitudes, citizenship, sporting or musical achievements. Parents are invited to attend our Friday act of worship every week.

In addition to assemblies:-

- ✧ Grace is said each day before lunch in every classroom;
- ✧ Each day concludes with a prayer; children's own prayers are often used.

We also take part in other acts of worship such as:-

- ✧ With other schools - e.g. The Hereford Cathedral Christmas 'donkey' carol service
- ✧ Annual Year 6 leavers' service in Hereford Cathedral;
- ✧ Services in St. Mary's Church Fownhope at Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas, Easter and the end of the school year.
- ✧ As guests of the local community for some of their Sunday church services.

Parents have the right to withdraw pupils from acts of worship and religious education lessons.

Assemblies

Assemblies are entered and exited in a quiet, dignified and respectful way. The children know that assembly time is a period of calm, a special time, a time for reflection. We expect the children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the words and music and to participate fully in the experience. Music is used to create an appropriate atmosphere.

In every assembly we display three 'worship items' on our focus table at the front of the hall. At the beginning of the assembly, the three items (a cross, candle and Bible) are placed around the hall (in different places every day). At the beginning of the assembly, the three children (or pairs of children) sitting nearest to each item brings the item to the front of the hall and all the children in the hall respond by reciting a set of words to accompany the item, e.g. 'God's holy book' for the Bible. These words are changed every so often in consultation with the children. As well as the main content of the assembly, every act of worship also includes a song and a prayer. Where possible prayers and songs are chosen to reflect the theme/ value of the assembly.

The Headteacher and other members of staff conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or representatives of local religious groups conduct them instead. We welcome visitors too such as charity representatives.

The themes for our assemblies are organised by our R.E. co-ordinator after discussion with the staff and visiting clergy. Many of the themes of our assemblies are drawn from the traditions of the Christian faith and often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar, or important events in the world. They are also considered in the light of topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum, including personal, social and moral education.

Our assemblies also reflect our whole school 'value' of the half term. These are taught on a three-year rolling programme (see Appendix 1) and are 18 Christian values which we promote in school and which link to Bible teachings and a good code for living.

Our 'Good News' assembly on a Friday reflects the achievements and learning of the children. Good News Assembly offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. This plays an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

Children's Involvement

Good News Assembly every Friday afternoon is always led by two Year 6 children. They introduce the assembly, accept the worship items, praise other children for their achievements and give out the week's certificates. They also announce birthdays, house point winners and any other special occasions. The children plan the assembly and take responsibility for delivering it, with the Headteacher supporting and guiding them if needed.

Children also sometimes plan other assemblies. They may be given a topic and asked to plan and deliver an assembly, with a teacher's assistance if necessary. Some teachers plan the assembly themselves but use children to help present it, either choosing them in advance or during the assembly itself.

The teacher/ children leading the assembly will also encourage as much participation from children as Possible. This may be through asking them to join in with drama or role play, answering questions, doing actions or sounds or through discussion with a partner.

At the end of every assembly, two children volunteer to offer their feedback on the day's act of worship. They are asked what they liked about the assembly and what could be improved. These comments are recorded in the collective worship planning folder and are read before planning subsequent assemblies.

Every term two Year 6 children are chosen to be 'collective worship prefects'. These children take responsibility for setting out the worship items before every assembly, playing (and sometimes choosing) the entrance/ exit music and song/ hymn for the assembly and operating any slideshows or Internet clips on the interactive whiteboard. The children really enjoy this responsibility and it gives them a sense of ownership of the collective worship.

Parents

Parents are invited to attend our Good News Assembly on a Friday afternoon. They join in with the responses, prayers and songs and enjoy celebrating the children's achievements. Parents are also invited to other themed assemblies throughout the year.

Parents are always invited to attend our end-of-term acts of worship, which we are lucky enough to be able to celebrate in the village church, St. Mary's Fownhope. We appreciate this wonderful facility and feel these services help promote the community spirit of the school and are a practical demonstration of the way the home, the school and the community work together to support the achievements of our children and to promote their spiritual being.

Right of Withdrawal

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Headteacher will keep a record of all children who are withdrawn from collective worship - if this is necessary.

Monitoring and Review

It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the Headteacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

Success Criteria

Children leave St. Mary's with experience of a range of worship, with an emphasis on Christian and specifically Anglican traditions. Children show tolerance and respect for the differing styles of worship. They participate respectfully, can offer their own thoughts and can reflect on what they have heard and relate it to their everyday lives. Children know the Lord's Prayer and are familiar with a wide range of traditional and contemporary hymns and songs.

In line with the school's guidelines this policy will be reviewed every three years.

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on:	
Signature of Headteacher:	
Signature of Chair of Governors:	
Review Date:	January 2022

APPENDIX 1**THREE-YEAR ROLLING PROGRAMME FOR VALUES EDUCATION**

	Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
	1 st Half	2 nd Half	1 st Half	2 nd Half	1 st Half	2 nd Half
Year A (e.g. 2018-19)	Perseverance	Love	Trust	Peace	Respect	Forgiveness
Year B (e.g. 2019-20)	Responsibility	Thankfulness	Co-operation	Hope	Honesty	Courage
Year C (e.g. 2020-21)	Tolerance	Caring	Patience	Unity	Happiness	Freedom