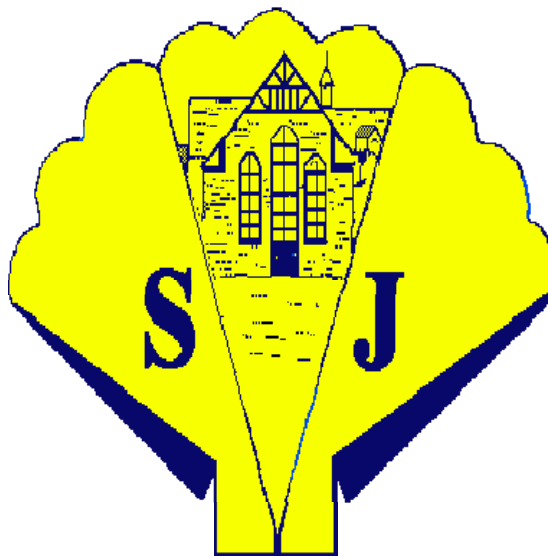


**St James CE Primary School
Hereford**

Collective Worship



Collective Worship Policy

St James CE Primary School

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Collective Worship Policy

As a church school St James CE Primary School seeks to promote Christian values and understanding, ensuring that these values permeate the life of the school. The school's ethos of love and care and its commitment to justice are the foundation of its aims in educating the whole school community to make its proper contribution to society. We aim to create an environment in which each person, child and adult, can feel uniquely valued and in which diversity is celebrated.

What is Collective Worship?

By definition, the word 'worship' is about giving 'worth, honour and respect to'. In specific places of worship the focus of this worship is usually God, or some form of deity.

The word 'collective' suggests the possibility of a number of 'worships' as opposed to the 'corporate' worship of a body of like minded believers. The word collective opens up the opportunities of individuals from many different faith backgrounds, and certainly those with no faith background at all, *discovering* possibilities and opportunities. It is about *exploring* together and individually; discovering what might be 'worthy of honour and respect'.

1 Aims and purpose

We as a school believe that good collective worship should:

- 1.1** Enable children to explore and enjoy praise and prayer.
- 1.2** Be a special time enabling children and adults present to worship together in a distinctly spiritual atmosphere conducive to worship and to have an awareness of God's presence.
- 1.3** Foster a spirit of belonging within the school.
- 1.4** Provide a time to share and celebrate the successes and efforts of the children's achievements providing an atmosphere that will allow for spiritual reflection and response.
- 1.5** Enable children to appreciate, explore and know how others worship God and why they worship in a particular way, thus fostering new insights and empathy about the life of faith of others.
- 1.6** Provide an opportunity to worship together, thinking about the needs of others with care and sensitivity, fostering a concern for the needs of others regardless of race, colour or creed.
- 1.7** Foster and value a search for faith to live by providing an opportunity for children to celebrate, give thanks and share emotions such as love, joy, hope, friendship, acceptance, anguish, fear, reverence and forgiveness.

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1.8 Develop the ability to listen and respond appropriately to a variety of speakers.

2 Collective worship

2.1 Collective Worship at St James' CE Primary School plays an important part in the life of our school. As it's 'living centre' of the work, worship and worth of the school, it offers the whole school community opportunities to experience, participate in and take responsibility for the living expression of Christian worship, valued and honoured through the school's Anglican Foundation and affirms every individual's unique contribution and response, regardless of age, sex, ability, background or religion

2.2 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 an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly, including members of staff.

2.3 Collective Worship at St James should provide:

A breathing space

A time to gather together

A time to be still and to reflect in an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity

A special time with a distinctly spiritual atmosphere, conducive to worship and to an awareness of God's presence

A time for children and staff to feel calm, relaxed and secure

An introduction to the children of the spiritual dimension of life

A time for encouragement, reflection, response and participation.

2.4 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 and Christian values. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

2.5 Values Education is an important theme running throughout the whole school curriculum. As a school we have chosen 22 values, one value for each month, which forms the theme for Collective Worship that month, as well as being followed through into the daily life of the school, Circle Times and PSHE. The Value of the month is always considered from a Christian perspective.

2.6 In our school the process of worship takes place through a variety of media, song, story, drama, dance, music, poetry, prayer, response and reflection.

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3 Organization of collective worship

3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. The normal pattern for worship each week is as follows:

Monday 9.05 – 9.30am Whole school in the hall, led by Rev Paul Towner

Tuesday 9.05 – 9.30am Songs and Praise. Whole school in the hall, led by the Headteacher. Concludes with a time of prayer or reflection.

Wednesday 9.05 – 9.30am Whole school in the hall. Worship is led by a class, using a rota system.

Thursday 9.05 – 9.30am Whole school in the hall led by a visitor or the Headteacher.

Friday: Three week rotation as follows:

Week 1 2.45 – 3.25pm

Infant Community Assembly in the hall. Parents and friends join the Foundation Stage and KS1 to celebrate children's achievements. Songs and prayers are part of the assembly.

KS2 classes hold their own class assemblies in their classrooms.

Week 2 2.45 – 3.25pm

Junior Community Assembly in the hall. Parents and friends join KS2 staff and children to celebrate children's achievements. Songs and prayers form part of the assembly.

The Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 gather together in a classroom for a Key Stage assembly.

Week 3 2.45 – 3.25pm

Whole school assembly in St James Church, led by the Headteacher. Parents and friends are invited.

3.2 We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music as the children come quietly into the hall. Fresh flowers, a candle and a Bible are always on the focus table. Other objects often act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

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3.3 One of the ways our school fulfils its Christian character is by having regular services in our local church and by welcoming the commitment of the Parish Priest, Paul Towner.

3.4 The headteacher, members of staff or the Rev Paul Towner (St James Church and Chair of Governors) conduct assemblies, but local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups regularly conduct them as well. Visitors from the local Methodist, Baptist, Church of England, Salvation Army churches and from the Lugwardine Christian Fellowship regularly lead our worship.

3.5 We regularly invite representatives from charities to take part in our worship, eg Christian Aid, Barnardos, British Heart Foundation, Operation Christmas Child. We believe that it is good for our children to consider the needs of those less fortunate than ourselves, and to help them whenever we can.

3.6 We take the themes of our worship from the traditions of the Christian faith, based on the value of the month and we reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. We plan our worship based on the overall theme of Christian Values well in advance of the day they take place.

3.7 Our collective worship reflects the achievements and learning of the children. During Friday assemblies we encourage the children to participate in showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. We enjoy celebrating the successes of all the children in assemblies and during worship.

3.8 We invite parents to assembly on a weekly basis and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

3.9 We welcome governors' attendance at collective worship at any time.

4 Management of Collective Worship

4.1 The Governing Body have responsibility to ensure the Trust Deed of the school is honoured. The Collective Worship policy sets out the management and delivery of this part of school life.

4.2 The Collective Worship Co-ordinator manages this area of the curriculum, ensuring all legal requirements are complied with. This involves the production of a coherent programme for Collective Worship which has continuity of Christian teaching and experience and breadth and balance as is appropriate to the school community.

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4.3 The Collective Worship Co-ordinator monitors resources available for Collective Worship and ensures that they are accessible to staff and pupils as appropriate. An annual budget is available to ensure that the worship programme can be carried out effectively.

4.4 Resources for Collective Worship are plentiful. They can be found in the Worship Box kept in the hall, on the shelves in the hall and in the staff room worship cupboard. Bibles are kept in the library.

5 Right of withdrawal

5.1 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.

5.2 The headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

6 Equal Opportunities

6.1 Our school worship is about sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives. It is about sharing our common concerns and responsibilities and developing positive attitudes and values. It is about affirming the equality of each individual in God's sight, whatever a child's gender, ethnicity, physical or mental ability.

6.2 The staff and governors at St James CE School are committed to ensuring that every child in the school will derive some benefit from collective worship, whatever their academic ability. Every attempt is made, therefore, to ensure that materials used are appropriate to a range of abilities, aptitudes and interests.

7 Monitoring and review

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

7.2 Records of each act of Collective Worship are kept. Monitoring the quality of Collective Worship is an ongoing process through observation of the children's attentiveness and level of interest, classroom feedback and observation of children's general behaviour in and around the school and to one another.

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7.3 Formal monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship takes place at regular intervals. Different members of the school community (pupils, teachers, parents) fill in an evaluation sheet on a particular act of Collective Worship. Classes of children are asked to evaluate Collective Worship in general and opinions and views expressed are considered when reviewing Collective Worship policy and practice.

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Appendix 1

Guidance for visitors taking Collective Worship at St James CE Primary School

If you were coming to our school.....thoughts on Collective Worship

- Arrive in plenty of time.
- Be prepared! Have your resources ready. Phone ahead to check that what you need is available eg overhead projector, screen, piano, and pianist.
- Don't expect school staff to prepare your resources for you – they will probably be delighted to but
- Check beforehand on what is expected eg timings, prayers, songs.
- Finish on time.
- Be very clear about your aim. What do you want the children to take away with them?
- Simple is better than complicated.
- If you whip the children into a frenzy, have a strategy for calming them down before sending them back to class.
- Try to keep a balance – excitement, energy and joy/calm, reflection/peace.
- Remember that the children should feel secure and safe in this setting, not embarrassed or afraid.
- Don't make assumptions about what the children know already.
- Never be patronizing – to staff or children.
- Involve the children, either physically or mentally – relate to their experiences, their lives, their feelings, their expectations.
- Ask for advice from a member of staff if you're not sure which child to choose to take part.
- Be sensitive when talking about families/Mums/Dads.
- Project! Can anyone hear you?
- Respect the beliefs and view of others.
- Leading Collective Worship is a privilege! Try to look as if you are enjoying it!

Collective Worship Policy

Collective Worship Co-ordinator: Mrs A Mundy

Collective Worship Governor: Rev P Towner

**Policy reviewed: February 2002
February 2006
February 2008**

Next Review: February 2010

8. Areas for development: April 2009 – April 2010

- **To implement 'Listening to the voice of the Learner throughout the school', strengthening monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship.**
- **To build up bank of songs/hymns in common with St James Church.**