



St John's CofE Primary Academy

Executive Principal: Matthew Seex

Chair of Local Academy Committee: Greg Shilton

Collective Worship Policy

St John's CofE Academy, Wednesbury

St John's C of E Primary Academy

Our School Vision

We are an inclusive and loving family who celebrate our similarities and differences. Together we face new challenges with endurance whilst generously supporting each other along the way. When things go wrong we forgive others as well as asking for forgiveness ourselves. We are the generation of today, empowered by our personal faith and beliefs.

Together we 'Believe to Achieve' knowing that *"Everything is possible for one who believes"* - Mark 9:23.

Our Christian Values

Our key Christian Values which our patron St John the Baptist taught us are:

G–Generosity: We have generosity in our hands.

E–Endurance: We have ambition and endurance in all of us.

T–Tolerance: We have tolerance in our minds.

F–Forgiveness: We have forgiveness in our hearts.

A–Ambition: We have ambition and endurance in all of us.

B–Belief: We stand on our own belief.

At St. John's we are one big family. We believe in each other and God to aim high and achieve.

'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. John's CofE Primary Academy, 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. John's CofE Primary Academy, 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. 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. John's, we also mark festivals from other faiths in order to respond and learn from them. This is separate to our Christian collective worship.

Church of England Guidance

The Collective Worship Policy at St. John's CofE Primary Academy 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. John's CofE Primary Academy, we follow the legal requirement of all maintained schools that collective worship is celebrated daily. Worship in St John's CofE Primary Academy is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions. The Combined 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 Senior Leadership Team.

The right of withdrawal

At St. John's CofE 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 Combined 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 John's CofE 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 on the school website.

What Collective Worship looks like at St John's CofE Primary Academy.

Our Worship often starts with instrumental worship music playing for quiet, reflective time. The prayer table 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, 'This candle is lit to welcome Jesus into our worship. We are one family under God.'

We finish our worship by saying our school prayer together.

A typical timetable for worship can be found below:

	Monday Led by class teachers	Tuesday Led by Mrs Chesters	Wednesday Led by class teachers on weekly rota	Thursday Led by Head of School	Friday Led by Head of School/Exec Principal
2:55-3:15p.m	Roots and Fruits Worship (whole school)	Songs and Praise (whole school)	Picture News (class worship)	Values Worship - linked with the liturgical calendar and GETFAB values (whole school)	Celebration Worship (whole school)

- On Mondays we deepen our understanding of the Holy Spirit through our 'Roots and Fruits' worship. (We learn about a different value every half-term).
- On Tuesdays we have our sing and praise worship!

“He who sings, prays twice.” – St. Augustine

- On Wednesdays, the weekly question from Picture News is discussed in detail by every class. 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.
- Our Thursday worship is when we talk about our vision and values and often hear Bible stories linked to the liturgical calendar and our school values.
- In our Celebration worship on Friday’s, 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 held in our school hall.

There are services at Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

Where possible, children attend church as a whole school community (including pupil’s family members) to celebrate our Harvest, Christmas and Easter services.

Worship Group

Our Worship Group are made up of children from Key Stage 2. All children are invited to take part and then elected by their peers. They meet at least once a half term with Mrs Rudd to plan and lead a worship. Spiritual Ambassadors 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). Spiritual Ambassadors also lead classroom prayers and they are responsible for maintaining each classes’ worship area 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, the Christian Distinctiveness Adviser and pupils. Worship is changed and adapted when necessary to reflect monitoring outcomes.

Disseminating the policy

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

Date of last review: June 2024