



St Michael's School Collective Worship Policy

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It reflects the mission statement and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Our collective worship provides the pupils and staff the opportunity to²:

- worship God;
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- celebrate:
 - Christian festivals;
 - school values;
 - achievements;
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community based in Christian values;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed.

At times worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum³ and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- consider moral issues in a Christian context and to;
- Enhance social understanding;
- explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage.⁴

The Worship Space at St Michael's

St Michael's Worship takes place in the school hall. It is a space which is used for PE, school meals and other activities. In order to ensure the children are supported to see the time of worship as distinctive, we have a focal point to the left, the leader lights a candle to remind the children of God's presence and that God is with us. At the end of Worship, the candle is blown out to remind us God's Spirit is with us as we go. This reinforces an understanding of the Trinity.

The Pattern of Collective Worship⁵

We begin all worship with the words
“This is the day that the Lord has made.”
The children respond with “Let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

Every Monday the children use the Lord’s Prayer
We have a Friday school prayer about the school community
In classrooms Grace is said before lunch and a class prayer, written in September in each class is said at the end of the school day.
The end of the day prayer follows the five point prayer structure of Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and prayers for self and others.
We follow the seasons of the Church year and within this significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost and other days such as Candlemas are celebrated occasionally⁶.
Whenever worship takes place it is planned to promote thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church Community Children are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship from time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils’ awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.⁹

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience.¹⁰ Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in Worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme, and the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils. Throughout their time at our school children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song.¹¹

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to Jesus and God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.¹²

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection. and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.¹³

A legal note¹⁴

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school’s Trust Deed.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the headteacher.

This document was circulated to Pupil and Curriculum Committee October 2017 for approval at FGB on November 16th 2017