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**Collective Worship Policy**

**‘Learning, Transforming Growing’**

Genesis 28:12 *“I am with you and watch over you wherever you go”.*

St Mary’s Primary School is committed to collective worship as we believe it is an essential component of our vision; Learning, Transforming and Growing.

The community at St Mary’s know that they are loved and this love enables them to flourish. Love is woven through all that we do and worship is an opportunity to deepen our sense of community and encounter faith.

Never has this been more strongly felt than during the restrictions imposed during the Covid 19 pandemic. During a time where we had to stay apart, worship brought us together. Innovative use of online worships, worships delivered to families in food parcels and home learning packs and smaller bubble worships enabled our community to be anchored in troubled times. Our children have said that worship was one of the most important aspects of their day whilst they were at home and the opportunity to explore faith as a mechanism of support was appreciated.

Coming together to worship enables our children to learn from stories from the bible and other faiths, learn from each other and to celebrate our fabulous learning. We believe worship provides opportunities to participate in conversations about God individually and together.

Worship is integral to the transforming element of vision; our learning may bring a new experience, an awakening or connection that enables us to change and grow.

Inclusive, Invitational, and Inspiring

Inclusive

At St Mary’s we love to learn from each other and recognise that pupils, parents and staff bring a wealth of experiences to our school and especially to Collective Worship. Our multi faith and non-faith backgrounds enrich our community and help us to create a culture of openness and curiosity that will support children on their journey through our school and beyond.

Invitational

We fully embrace the right of all to decide on their level of involvement in the worship and all members of our team who facilitate worship ensure that children know that worship is a collaboration. Pupils are involved in the planning, leading and evaluating of worship. We also recognise the right for withdrawal from worship and details of this are in Appendix 1.

Inspiring

Through our worships we aim to develop our children as members of a loving and caring community both to each other and for themselves with the intention that this transforms them in to 21st century citizens who are loving, passionate and aspirational. We draw on figures from religions, history and today to help them see what is possible. We use Christian values to support children to make good choices and uphold our vision.

We aim to encourage a sense of Awe and Wonder and foster a respect for the environment so that children are stewards for our world so wonderfully created. We aim to create an atmosphere in which those who wish to can pray, reflect or meditate and worship God. We use many forms of communication and expression including music, singing, prayer, rituals, story, poems, drama and dance to inspire our children.

Organisation

We have a pattern of worship to guide our time together.

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| Gathering Together - Greeting  As we arrive for collective worship, we remember that we are meeting with God. We meet in the name of God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the focus of our worship. We might share an action like lighting a candle and say some words of greeting together. | Learning Together - Engaging  There will be something special and enjoyable for everyone to learn together about God, themselves and/or others. Whether we talk, use video clips, puppets, drama, meet a visitor or something else, our learning reflects the ‘ows, wows and nows’ of life. It is usually based on themes, stories and verses from the Bible. | Responding & Reflecting Together - Responding  Then we pause to think, feel and imagine. What have we learnt and what difference will it make to our lives? The way we respond may include silence, singing songs that reflect the learning, praying, time to look at images and/or questions. | Leaving Together – Sending Out  An act of worship can be transformative. It can change how we feel or think and leaving is an opportunity to take something from the worship back into our classrooms or homes. Words or actions for the end of the time of worship remind us to take our learning with us and make a difference to our lives. |

The Foundation pupils will build up their attendance to whole school collective worship, after the first term, they will attend all worships. Nursery pupils will attend as appropriate. They will develop and understanding of Worship within their setting each day.

## Our pattern of worship varies according to the liturgical season, local, national and international events but a typical week would run as follows;

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| Day | Time | Organisation | Led by |
| Monday | 2.45 pm | Vision and Values worship | SLT |
| Tuesday | 2.45 pm | Class worship | Class teacher and worship team |
| Wednesday | 2.45 pm | Connecting with our community and beyond. | SLT |
| Thursday | 2.45 pm | Singing worship | Katie and SLT |
| Friday | 2.45 pm | Celebration Worship for whole school and all friends and family \* | SLT or led by a Class |

Children from each class get the opportunity to participate in either a sharing or community worship, giving them the opportunity to share their learning and celebrate the gifts God has given them.

Friday is also a time to celebrate the school’s vision values in action. Children are awarded Head teacher awards in recognition of their effort in embodying our Christian values and living out our vision.

Collective worship builds upon our whole school curriculum and is educational for all members of the school community as follows:

* A basic framework is provided by the cycle of Christian year including Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saint’s days.
* Collective Worship is planned into themes that can last several weeks or just one week.
* There will be opportunities to celebrate and study other faith festivals e.g. Jewish New Year, Ramadan, Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year.
* In addition there are whole school celebrations, some of which take place in the Church, for Harvest, Christmas and Easter.
* Collective worship will include the exploration of silence through stillness and meditation. There will be Christian prayers, although children are given a choice whether to say them or respond to them. Hymns and songs are chosen from a collection that the children know and are linked to the main theme of the assembly where possible. The Bible and other holy books can be used for drama and story, for providing opportunities for reflection and deeper understanding.
* Worship will usually involve the whole school meeting together in the school hall giving children an opportunity to learn how to behave in large social gatherings, how to perform in front of an audience and respond to such a performance.

## Record Keeping and evaluation

The teacher with responsibility for Collective Worship will keep a worship log and review and evaluate Collective Worship with Foundation Governors as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.