



## ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT FOR WORSHIP

### Philosophy

Collective worship at St Mary's C.E. (A) First School plays an important part in the life of our school. The positive and caring ethos of our school offers the whole school community opportunities to experience, participate in and take responsibility for the living expression of Christian worship that is valued and honoured through the school's Anglican foundation. We provide opportunities for every child to reach their full potential, valuing every individual's contribution, regardless of age, gender, ability, background or religion. We follow the guidance of the Good Samaritan, ensuring we teach the values and morals for kindness, generosity, peace and hope, and this is reflected in our daily worship. We embrace all Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps as children of God.

### Rationale

Our daily act of Collective Worship is in accordance with the Trust Deeds of our school. It requires worship to be consistent with the faith, principles and practices of the Church of England. Our school ethos statement informs the policy and practice of collective worship at St Mary's and our worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian Distinctiveness.

Worship is central to the life and purposes of our school and will reflect the Christian understanding of God as Trinity. This will include belief in God the source of all being and life, belief in Jesus who reveals God's love by his life, death and resurrection and belief in the Holy Spirit who makes the presence of Jesus known in the world.

### DfES Legislation

There must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, which takes account of their age and aptitude. (Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. Since this is a church school however, worship is central to its life and work and is regarded as a very important part of children's education.

### Aims

Through collective worship in our school we aim to:

- Provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God, through reflection, prayer, meditation and silence.
- Introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well-known Christian prayers, e.g. Lord's Prayer.
- Strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school.
- Enhance the spiritual development of the children.
- Celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God.
- Learn about and reflect on Christian teaching, biblical material and Christian festivals.
- Encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them.
- Foster a concern for others within the school and wider world.
- Foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

## Elements of worship

The three elements of worship: affirmation, celebration and response are included in our daily acts of worship.

**Affirmation** provides the children with the opportunity to affirm some value of ultimate worth, such as the importance of each person, which for Christians would be expressed in the image of God.

The act of **celebration** is designed to mark what is affirmed through music, drama, reading, dance or acknowledgement of effort or achievement.

**Response** is encouraged either collectively or individually through prayer or silent reflection.

## The Daily Act of Worship

Worship is held daily at 2.55pm for twenty minutes.

**Monday** - whole school worship led by Head Teacher

**Tuesday** - whole school worship led by Reverend Charles Dale every week

**Wednesday** - Key Stage 2 worship led by Reverend Margaret Sherwin once a month, and Jordan Lambert (Christian Schools Worker) once each half term.

**Thursday** - Key Stage 1 worship led by Head Teacher or a member of staff

**Friday** - Celebration worship led by Head Teacher (when possible, parents are invited to join)

Worship is held in the hall, where there is a wooden cross as a focal point and candles are lit to represent Jesus, the light of the world, at the start of each worship. Our worship table reflects the liturgical colours, mirroring the church year. Music is played as children enter and leave the hall to encourage an atmosphere of reflection. The Lord's Prayer is recited regularly, along with our school prayer. A wide range of approaches are used in worship, including drama, discussion, reflection, reading, singing and prayer.

Members of Year 4 are proud to be part of the Worship Team - setting up the worship area, preparing readings and songs, leading the responses and the prayers and worshipping with the local church community on a Wednesday Communion service at St Mary's church.

The children also attend six services in Church each year: Harvest Festival, Nativity, Love, Easter, God's Creation and a service to celebrate our school leavers in the summer. Families are invited to worship at the family service in St Mary's Church in Uttoxeter.

When possible, children lead a class worship in the small Heath Church, near to school.

We have adopted twelve Christian values that form the basis of our worship and wider school life. Each value is explored and all worship is planned around this value, as well as being promoted throughout the school. Care is taken to ensure that understanding of each value is rooted in the Bible and the example of Jesus.

Significant dates in the Christian year and days of particular importance such as Remembrance Day are also recognised. We are also able to respond to local, national or world events (or a need from the children), that merit reflection and prayers.

## Monitoring

Nominated Foundation Governor, Head Teacher.

Agreed by Governors and Staff January 2022

Review January 2024