St John’s CE Primary School
Collective Worship Policy

Introduction
Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on wider values and issues within the context of our Christian ethos. It reflects the mission statement and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. At St John’s CE Primary School we will strive to introduce children to Christian language and symbolism, and the cycle of the church year whilst exploring a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well-known Christian prayers, e.g. The Lord’s Prayer. We hope to strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school whilst celebrating the gifts that each child brings to our school community; recognising the uniqueness of each individual, made in the image of God, helping them, always, to live their best life in rich abundance.

Our collective worship provides the pupils and staff with the opportunity to:

- worship God
- experience a variety of styles of worship
- Celebrate Christian festivals
- Celebrate school values
- Celebrate achievements
- grow in understanding of, and participation in prayer
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community base, nurtured through Christian values
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed in their personal faith
- encourage children to reflect on the puzzling, sometimes challenging, questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them.
- foster a concern for others within our school and the wider world and develop an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it

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

- nurture spiritual growth
- consider moral issues within a Christian context
- enhance social understanding, through Christianity
- explore a variety of faiths and beliefs
- explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage
- understand the significance of Liturgical colours

The pattern of collective worship  Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings/settings; in our church, in our classrooms and on occasion, outside. 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, Epiphany, Candlemas, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost and Trinity. Whenever worship takes place it is planned to promote thinking beyond the time given to worship itself. We also feel it is important to respond to local, national or world events (or a need from our children/community) that merit reflection and prayer.

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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 at times throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship when appropriate 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.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship  Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, teachers and, on occasion, our 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. Our values flow through the acts of worship; Respect, Empathy, Hope, Trust and Wonder.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced through words that invite but does not coerce pupils to participate - Praying is always by invitation. 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.

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

A legal note
Law dictates, 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. As mentioned, 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. No children have been withdrawn, to date, from our collective worship.

Our Worship  When worship is held in our church, we are ideally placed to acknowledge all focal points; the lectern, altar, crosses, candles and colours. Music is played as children enter and leave our church to encourage an atmosphere of reflection. The Lord’s Prayer is recited regularly, along with our school prayer. Wide ranges of approaches are used in worship, including drama, discussion, reflection, reading, singing and prayer.

The children also lead and participate in a range of services each year, including a Nativity Service, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Service, Easter service and a Service to

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Celebrate our Yr6 children moving on to secondary school. These are wonderful examples of the cohesion that exists between church and school, where we work closely together to provide these memorable occasions for our children.

**Themes**  
We have developed an ‘assembly planner’ which forms the basis of our worship and wider school life. Care is taken to ensure that understanding of each experience is rooted in the Bible and the example of Jesus. We have reflected significant dates in the Christian year and days of particular importance such as Remembrance Day. We are also able to respond to local, national or world events (or a need from the children), that merit reflection and prayers. A range of resources are available to all staff. Most notably, the Discovery RE curriculum and physical resources to support this. Classes all have special worship/reflection areas that may include a range of Bibles and prayer books as well as a worship fabric, candle and other resources and artefacts to promote and nurture opportunities for reflection.

**Liturgical Colours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>25th Dec - 2nd Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>22nd Feb – Shrove Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday – Palm Sunday (Lent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Holy Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Easter Day - Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Pentecost – 31st Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>1st November - Advent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Advent – 24th Dec</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Subject Leadership**  
The subject leader is responsible for supporting staff in their planning of worship where necessary. The leader is also responsible for organising and replenishing resources and for monitoring all aspects of worship within the school. There is an assembly planner which provides an outline of the worship foci for the year.

**Evaluation of Worship**  
The subject leader monitors whole school and class acts of worship throughout the year, in consultation with the Headteacher and governors. From time to time parents and pupils are asked for their opinions through a questionnaire or circle time activities and their views are taken into account in future planning of worship.

M Parsons  
Agreed January 2019  
Review January 2020

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