



ST JAMES'
Church of England
Primary School

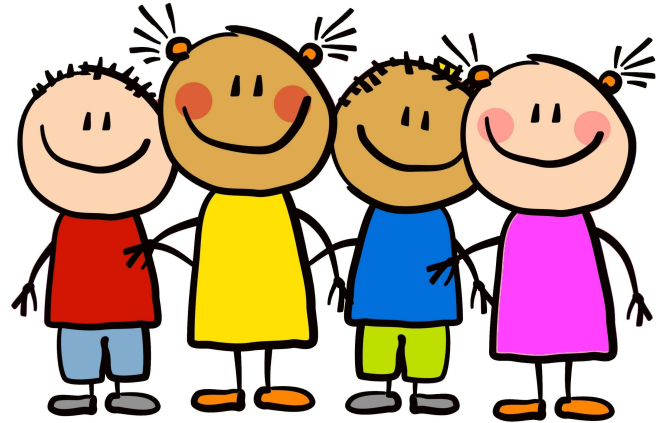


Collective worship at St James' CE Primary

Date: February 2025

Introduction

St James' CE Primary's vision is to be a happy and healthy place to achieve and believe. Collective worship is central to the life of St James' CE Primary and helps to support this vision. Worship offers children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on and engage with values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.



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

- develop as a community based in Christian values
- show compassion for others
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- nurture pupils' personal development, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally
- worship God
- celebrate Christian festivals, values (see appendices), achievements
- recognise festivals from other religions in the context of celebrating equality and diversity
- grow in understanding of prayer and participate in prayer (invitational)
- participate and respond in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship
- develop an understanding of God and Jesus' teachings
- feel safe and affirmed in God's love

Pupils, staff and parents / carers of all faiths or none are welcome to worship.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural

Acts of collective worship aim to offer opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

- provide pupils with opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives through music, images and words
- nurture spirituality, reflection, meditation and prayer
- appreciate the dignity of the image of God in all human beings through working for social justice and encouraging students to consider the needs of others through charitable service
- provide a sense of occasion that is distinct from the rest of the school day
- provide the awe and wonder of personal and spiritual human experience
- foster an appreciation of the natural created world and our shared responsibilities for maintaining it
- develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community

Inclusive

St James' CE Primary is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. Collective worship, whilst rooted in Anglican tradition, is conducted in a manner which is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all pupils, staff and parents / carers of all faiths or none. We are proud of the diversity of our school community and as such hold collective worship that reflects and celebrates the traditions of other religions, particularly those that are represented in the school and the wider community. Through their Christian character, our acts of collective worship:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, life styles and faiths which exist in our school and local community
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe
- be appropriate for every student to attend
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community – in preparation, participation and leadership

Early Years

Children in Reception attend some collective worships, and gradually more as the year progresses. On days when they do not attend collective worship, children enjoy a poem which closely links to one of our Christian values – there is a chosen poem to illustrate each of our six values and the same poem is revisited several times. Children in Nursery do not attend collective worship.

Patterns of collective worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. They are regarded as a special moment in the school day and are conducted accordingly. Pupils, staff, parents / carers and all other stakeholders are expected to behave respectfully and thoughtfully throughout. All members of collective worship are invited to participate in worship through song, music, prayer, reflection, discussion or participation. Collective worship is led by a member of staff, children and/or a leader of the church community and all pupils and staff are invited.

Collective worship takes place in in the main hall or classrooms. Usually, we take part in collective worship at St James' Parish Church to celebrate Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Service throughout the school year. We follow the seasons of the liturgical calendar and, within this, significant festivals and other special days are observed:

These are always included:	These are occasionally included:
Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Easter, Trinity	Pentecost, Candlemas and Epiphany

Whenever worship takes place, it is planned to promote thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

Acts of collective worship begin and close with our agreed welcome and dismissal. A candle is lit and extinguished at these times. Reference is made to the Trinity at the start of worship.

Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from school and the local church community.

Pupils are integral to collective worship. Their roles and responsibilities might typically include:

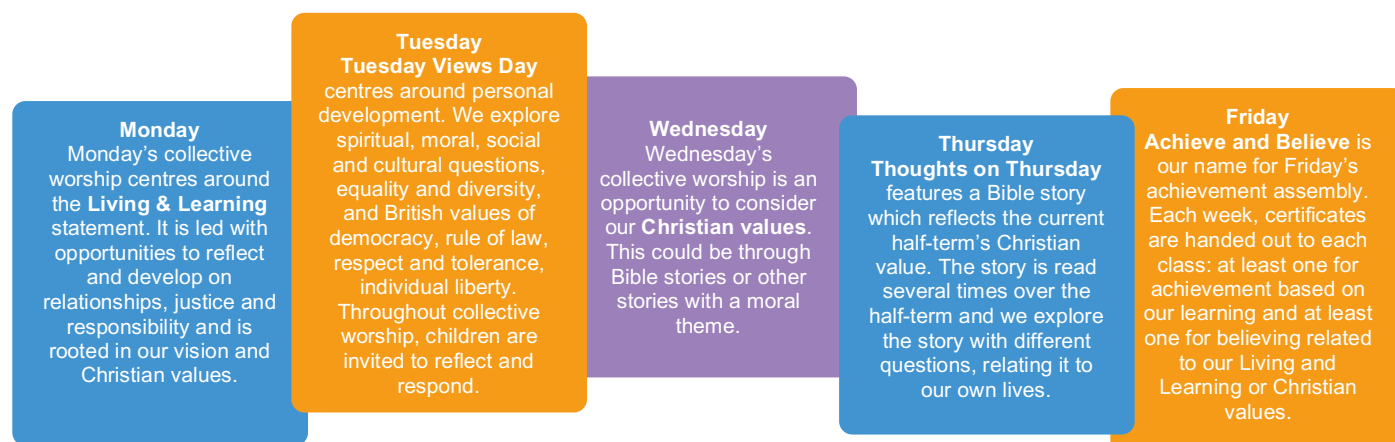
- choosing music
- welcoming children into the hall for worship
- planning, organising and leading some worships or parts of worships eg choose and read a prayer
- evaluating worships

In addition, children are encouraged to contribute during worship.

Visitors from St James' Church community often lead collective worship. They are given guidance on our worship policy.

Organisation

Except in weeks during religious festivals and special days in the liturgical calendar, acts of collective worship typically follow the following themes:



day	theme	time	leader
Monday	Living & Learning Statement	2.45 – 3.00	teaching staff
Tuesday	Tuesday Views Day	2.45 – 3.00	Head of School
Wednesday	Christian Values	2.45 – 3.00	church leaders
Thursday	Thoughts on Thursday – Bible story (The first Thursday of each term has a different focus: the vision, values and distinctiveness of St James' CE Primary.)	2.45 – 3.00	teaching staff
Friday	Achieve and Believe	2.45 – 3.10	Head of School

Throughout each half-term, Wednesday's collective worship is dedicated to exploring and reflecting upon one of our Christian values:

day	theme
Autumn 1	perseverance
Autumn 2	compassion
Spring 1	honesty
Spring 2	forgiveness
Summer 1	peace
Summer 2	courage

To symbolise how important all contributions are, each class brings something to collective worship:

- Reception – the liturgy
- Year 1: the cloth
- Year 2: some music
- Year 3: a cross
- Year 4: a Bible
- Year 5: shells
- Year 6: a candle

Prayer, liturgy and reflection

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 may include formal or traditional prayer. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Our pupils are formally taught and encouraged to know and use the Lord's Prayer and the Grace. When appropriate, the vocabulary and semantics are discussed. Other prayers are more responsive, based on the content of the worship. Typically, these may offer thanks or ask God for something such as courage or wisdom. In addition, some prayer takes the form of quiet meditation – a moment of silent reflection.

Children are sometimes asked to lead a prayer, whether a traditional prayer or one they have written themselves.

A lunchtime prayer is said before lunch and our School Prayer is said at the end of the school day. Prayer may also be used at other appropriate times of the school day.

Legal requirement

It is a legal requirement that all registered school-age pupils take part in an 'act of worship' each day. These acts of worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character' for the majority of the time. They must also be 'appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils' (1988 Education Reform Act and the Education Act, 1993).

Our policy sets out 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.

Every effort is made to show sensitivity towards personal faiths and to include all pupils and staff in collective worship. A parent / carer may make a request for their child(ren) to be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at school. In the first instance, we ask parents / carers who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the Head of School. Staff also have a right of withdrawal from collective worship; they should inform the Head of Federation of their decision to exercise this right, but should note the requirement that they may be required to assist in the supervision of pupils in collective worship, as necessary.

Monitoring and evaluating

The impact of worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants; observation and reflection; and evaluations. The reviews involve key stakeholders, including pupils and staff. They inform the planning of future worship.