

In Stanground St John's Church of England Primary School, worship aims to truly reflect the spirit of our school's Christian foundation and ethos. Our approach is consistent with the general philosophy of the school:

As a church school, we are determined to give every child the best life chances.

Our motto of **Aspire, Empower, Excel** is underpinned by our Christian Values, which permeate every aspect of our school life:

Love, fellowship and forgiveness
Hope and bravery
Wisdom, justice and honesty
Thankfulness, humility and respect
Peace and freedom

Collective Worship

Worship is understood to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence for God. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', collective worship at Stanground St John's reflects the traditions and festivals of the Christian church and the teachings of Jesus. The word 'collective' rather than 'corporate' implies a diversity of response and belief. It is an activity which is educational and a shared experience, which respects the integrity of all those who participate.

We believe Collective Worship complements Religious Education and the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development of all pupils. It can provide an opportunity of calm in the hurly-burly of everyday school life, where we can all to reflect, appreciate and learn together.

As outlined by the Diocese of Ely, our acts of Collective Worship can provide opportunities for:

- The development of a sense of belonging;
- Personal reflection;
- A consideration of innermost thoughts, feelings and beliefs;
- Expressions of creativity and imagination;
- Appreciating and valuing the feelings and beliefs of others;
- Appreciating and valuing the beliefs and practices of the Church of England;
- Establishing positive school relationships (teacher/pupil, pupil/pupil) based on acceptance and appreciation;
- Exploring commitment and positive social relationships (family/work/society);
- Exploring lives, events and beliefs which exemplify qualities and universal values;
- Raising awareness of the hurt caused by injustice, aggression or rejection;
- Discernment of values by which to live;
- Experiencing and valuing the environment;
- Exploring ideas about the origin of the world and the universe;
- Becoming aware of the order and pattern within the natural world;
- Looking for meaning and purpose in the world;
- Encouraging a sense of wonder, awe and mystery in the natural world;
- Exploring how humans use language to convey inner meaning e.g. symbolism, allegory, analogy, myth, metaphor
- Encouraging links with the worship of the local parish church.

Planning could also focus on what is sometimes thought of as the four key dimensions of spirituality:

- The Inner Dimension – the essence of a person and the search for inner meaning
- The Social and Moral Dimension – behaviour and relationships
- The Environmental Dimension – awareness of the natural world and the environment around us
- The Transcendental Dimension – response to God or whatever we see as the ultimate.

Worship in Anglican Schools should, above all, be of a quality which acknowledges God, stimulates interest, encourages involvement, provokes thought, affirms individuals and communities, encourages reflection, and is enjoyable.

Collective Worship can:

- draw upon the Bible, either as a source book, or as an inspiration for themes and stories
- observe the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Saints Days
- involve learning traditional prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the Grace
- be through singing a wide variety of hymns, from traditional to rap
- use Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning e.g. cross, candle
- use prayer, silence and reflection
- use Psalms with simple responses
- use Anglican sentences and responses e.g. May the Lord be with you / And also with you

Organisation of Collective Worship

A programme is followed, using Ely Diocese guidance and drawing upon the needs and ethos of the school and its community. At regular intervals parents, governors and volunteers are encouraged to join Collective Worship. These acts of Worship have become a feature of Stanground St John's community.

Collective Worship takes place daily in our school, either in a class, phase or whole school. It may be led by staff, children or invited visitors. A sample timetable could include:

- Monday: Whole school – Philosophy – exploring our values and ideas through addressing big questions and the world around us
- Tuesday: Phase - Spiritual development , following Ely Diocese church year themes, explicitly teaching messages using stories, linking into Christian festivals and special days. These link back to our Philosophy
- Wednesday: Whole school spiritual development – through Class led collective worship or from visitors from our community
- Thursday: Whole school Worship through singing - hymn words are explained and their meaning explored. The hymns are often chosen in themes, in line with the church calendar and to complement our exploration of values and dispositions
- Friday: Whole school celebrating achievement – recognising and celebrating, emphasising the community and individual achievements and how we best put to use our God given gifts.

Format of Worship

Planning for Worship should entail the following four stages:

Gather

The Year 6 worship team prepare each morning for us to gather together for Collective Worship. An appropriate atmosphere is created by music, singing or power-points/ video clips to focus attention. A table, covered in a coloured cloth according to the church season, cross, bible and candle form a focus point for worship.

Engage

Worship leaders use a variety of ways to share their message – story, role play, visuals, poetry, drama. Children are eager and encouraged to participate fully.

Respond

We welcome the opportunity to spend a few moments reflecting on the theme and praying at the end, possibly using the Lord's Prayer, saying Grace or prayers, be they spoken, sang or acted. There may also be a blessing. Children are always given the option to join in prayers or to sit quietly with their thoughts. During Philosophy, children will often compose the prayer and then read it themselves.

Send

The thought of the day is reiterated through a question, statement, suggestion or visual reminder. We extinguish the candle at this point and children leave the hall in an orderly and thoughtful manner.

Opportunities and Special Educational Needs.

Staff and Governors are committed to ensuring that opportunities for worship are relevant to all pupils and pay due regard to their ages, abilities, backgrounds and interests. We aim to recognise the equality of each child in God's sight, whatever the child's gender, race, physical or mental ability. Staff, governors and visitors attempt to ensure that materials and subject matter used in collective worship are appropriate for the range of all pupils in school.

Services in Church

The whole school community enjoys services at St John's Church, where we celebrate major Christian festivals and our special services in school where we celebrate our achievements as a school family.

Monitoring and Evaluation.

Strategies currently used for assessing the outcomes of collective worship include:

- Observation of children's reaction and participation during worship.
- Feedback from children in class - written or verbal.
- Parents' comments.
- Observation of children's behaviour.
- Monitoring and dialogue with lead teachers, church and governors

Withdrawal from Collective Worship

Parents have the legal right (in accordance with 1988 Education Reform Act) to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. In this case, the parent should put this request in writing. The school would be happy to discuss the matter with parents to clarify what school worship involves and also to make arrangements for the supervision of the child. Teachers have similar rights.

Collective Worship Policy | 2017

This policy reflects the principles outlined by the Diocese of Ely – <http://www.elydiocese.org/supporting-schools/>

Date of Policy: 11th January 2017

Review due: January 2019

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors) _____ (Head teacher)