



**ST. JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
FRIERN BARNET**

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Aims and purpose

As a Church of England V.A. school, the responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the governing body. Here at St. John's we acknowledge that collective worship provides an opportunity in a Christian context for:

- pupils to arrive at clearly held positions of faith
- encouraging pupils to be reflective
- pupils to share and celebrate what is meaningful and significant to them
- introducing pupils to aspects of religious worship such as prayer and hymn

Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff to:

- contemplate something of the mystery of God
- connect with awe and wonder
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs
- discover the depth of spirituality
- respond to and celebrate life
- experience a sense of belonging to the body of Christ and of community of spirit
- encounter the riches of Anglican liturgy
- develop a common ethos and shared values
- be enriched by religious experience
- grow in liturgical understanding and development

Given the Christian character of the school and in line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character,' we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that Collective Worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it. This includes:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none
- Those from other faith backgrounds

Organisation of collective worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. Assemblies enable children to experience and participate in the breadth of Christian worship and praise: word, song, uttered prayer, silence, contemplation, acclamation, breaking bread, awe and wonder. They are a

focus for the school community, bringing together before God need, hope, joy, fear, our unity as a family and our dependence on God for guidance and strength to live in our world, in our time. We encourage each other to approach assemblies prayerfully, thoughtfully and with an open view of God and his love for all humanity.

The Rector of St. John's Church leads a whole school assembly in school at the beginning of each week. In addition, assemblies are held in church throughout the year to celebrate significant events in both the church and school calendar (including start and end of term assemblies). The house and vice captains are expected to attend several Sunday services at St. John's Church as representatives of the wider school body (eg. Dedication day, Remembrance Day and Mothering Sunday) in the company of senior teachers. Key stage 2 children perform the nativity and sing carols at the Junior Carol Service held at St. John's church each year. Y6 pupils, their parents and staff also attend the end of year Leavers' service. The whole school takes part in a termly Eucharist.

Other daily whole school or key stage assemblies are led by the head teacher and deputy head teacher; class based assemblies are led by the class teacher.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and this does include celebrating the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes too, the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.

Our assemblies also reflect the achievements of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by sharing their work and learning with adults and their peers and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in reinforcing the ethos of the school, recognising, rewarding and celebrating the achievements of all children.

We invite and encourage parents to join us for class assembly presentations as this reinforces the community spirit of the school and strengthens the home school partnership for the benefit of all.

Further opportunities for prayer and worship exist through the end of day class prayer taken from each class's own handwritten prayer book and thanking God for the food provided for us at the start of lunch time.

Right of withdrawal

We hope that all children will attend assemblies and participate in church worship. This is historically and currently, at the time of writing, the case. Many of our parents are members of the St. John's Church community too. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This ensures compliance with the law. The Head Teacher keeps a record of all children who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Monitoring and review

The school's provision for worship will be evaluated periodically to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. The monitoring process will be undertaken by the RE coordinator and senior members of staff. The key outcomes of monitoring will be reported to the Spiritual Life Committee.

Ratified: Summer 2017
Reviewed: Autumn 2022
Next Review Date: Autumn 2025