



'Let Your Light Shine'

(Matthew 5.v16)

Collective Worship Policy

Approval Date: Spring Term 2025

Review Date: Spring Term 2026

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

'Let Your Light Shine'

(Matthew 5.v16)

At St. Stephen's Church of England Primary School we are proud to be a Church School with a distinct Christian character and ethos. We promote a love of learning within a safe and secure environment, in which every child matters as a precious gift from God. We believe every child is unique, different and special.

Christian values and spirituality are at the heart of all aspects of school life. Our school's Christian ethos reflects mutual care and concern- where faith, love, hope and truth flourish. Our school is a place where children are able to establish and deepen their understanding of God through prayer and reflection in daily acts of Collective Worship and Religious Education.

We provide a creative and challenging curriculum in order to inspire and motivate our pupils. We want all our children to feel secure and happy, enabling them to reach their fullest potential. We believe that happy children learn well and we thrive on celebrating the achievements of all our pupils across all areas of learning.

We aim to create an environment where children develop the confidence to think for themselves; where pupil voice is at the heart of all decision making and where all children feel valued and respected.

Our school ethos is built on mutual tolerance and respect for all human beings, regardless of beliefs culture or race. Charity and caring for those in need is fundamental to our work in school. We are all children of God so we aim to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves.

We work in partnership with governors, families; the wider community and our local Parish Church to ensure everyone has a voice in achieving the best possible education for our children.

Ultimately we are committed to excellence for all and through a process of continual reflection and evaluation we ensure that standards are continually raised and improved.

'Let Your Light Shine'

(Matthew 5.v16)

Our school motto encompasses all that we are about as a school.

'Let your light shine'

The motto incorporates three fundamental elements:

The light of the Gospel message of Jesus

The light of individual talents

The light of learning

At St. Stephen's C.E. Primary we believe, 'there is something potentially wonderful in everyone', and therefore our vision is to nurture and inspire our whole school community, to use their God-given gifts, to be the best that they can be, so that they can let their light shine to the world.

Policy Statement

Collective Worship is an integral part of our school day at St. Stephen's C.E. Primary School and takes various forms across the week. The Collective Worship we offer is varied, invitational and thought provoking. It includes prayer, time for quiet reflection, song, direct biblical teaching and creative approaches to provoke thinking, reflection and prayer.

It is a time where we come together to share in God's love and celebrate our achievements together. The school worship is based on promoting the Christian character and values which permeate the ethos of our school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly.

Aims

Through collective worship we aim to provide pupils with the opportunity to:

- engage in worship that is considered worthy
- consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues
- explore their own beliefs
- develop their spirituality
- participate and respond
- promote a common ethos and shared values
- develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others
- promote respect, tolerance and understanding for those with differing beliefs and backgrounds.

Organisation

Our worship follows a biannual values theme, with every half term exploring a particular Christian value, using the 'Roots and fruits' scheme as a resource to support. Charity events are often linked into the values, for example, within our generosity theme, we invite our families to give to the local Food Bank. Father David, our local vicar, leads worship every week, following a Church year focus, while complimenting the value. We felt it was important for our children to understand the seasons within the Christian year and 'walk' through the year marking these special dates and understanding their significance. 'Quiet time', which takes place on a Wednesday, is a class based worship which invites children to reflect spiritually on a range of Christian themes and topics. Children have the opportunity to worship through a creative response within their

spiritual journals, which the children seem to particularly enjoy. Every Friday, we hold a Celebration Worship which cements our vision in nurturing our children to be the best that they can be, enabling them to let their light shine to the world. In addition to this, we have a flexible and fluid worship on a Monday, which changes focus depending on school priorities, but often cements the ongoing exploration of the Christian theme.

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. The weekly organisation of our worship is shown below but it should be noted that this may be subject to change.

Monday – Whole school worship led by Victoria Suddes

Tuesday – Whole school worship led by Father David

Wednesday – 'Quiet time' in class

Thursday – Whole school worship led by Victoria Suddes

Friday – Celebration Worship led by Mrs Richardson

We are most proud of our monthly Open Worships in school, which provide an opportunity for parents, carers, community and Church congregation to join us in worship. Feedback from pupil voice suggests that the children particularly enjoy these special times as they feel it makes worship seem more important and special. Our children across the school have the opportunity to lead Open Worships: Y2 lead our Harvest Open Worship, Y3 lead our Easter Open Worship, Y4 lead our Ascension and Pentecost Open Worship in St. Stephen's Church, Y5 lead our Farewell to Y6 Open Worship and Y6 lead our Reception Dedication Service to welcome the new Reception families into the family of our Church School.

Worshipping through song is a huge part of both our school culture and worship style. Our pupils genuinely love to sing and we pro-actively exhaust many opportunities to lift our hearts in joy and worship. Worshipping through song is part of everyday worship, with the children enjoying a huge repertoire of hymns, both traditional and modern. We are proud of our school choir, who meet every Friday night, singing a large array of songs, both secular and religious.

Planning, Content and Detail

Mrs Suddes, our Deputy Head Teacher, plans an engaging worship experience for all pupils across the year with the support of the Worship Committee. Father David, liaises with Mrs Suddes, planning and delivering the 'Church year' elements of the worship package. Christian values are explored within worship and our 'Quiet time' within classes.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and reflection. A range of prayers are used within worship and are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. From pupil voice, pupils requested that they had a few minutes of silence at the beginning of worship, in which they could 'talk to God' on their own. This is now part

of our worship each day. At the beginning of whole school worship, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of a candle. A cross is also displayed on the table.

At the beginning of the lunch hour, grace is said by either an adult or child in each class. Prayers are also said at the end of the school day. There is also a school prayer, which we use regularly as part of our worships. Every class room has an Area of Reflection, and children can use these spaces if they need a moment to reflect during the school day. In addition to this, due to the overwhelming success of our Prayer Spaces event (July 2018), we now have a permanent 'Prayer Space' in our school hall for children to access and use throughout the day.

Other Faiths

At St. Stephen's C. E. Primary our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values. However, we are also committed to respecting other faiths and cultures, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs. Children are encouraged to discuss and share their own beliefs and those of others in an atmosphere of tolerance, trust and compassion. Across the year, other faiths are explored within worship, linked to our Christian values. For example, we explored the generosity shown in a Sikh Langar hall, when learning about generosity.

Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring

The worship co-ordinator alongside the parish priest has overall responsibility for planning worship each term. The worship co-ordinator actively seeks the opinions of pupils through pupils' voice, which is also used to evolve and mould the style of worship to suits the needs of all pupils.

Visits and visitors

As part of our engaging RE curriculum, St Stephen's C. E. Primary School ensures that meaningful visits are made for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed to share their experiences and knowledge. The school has close links with St Stephen's Church.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Headteacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Equal Opportunities and special needs issues

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, religion, age, sex, gender and ethnic origin will have access to a wide range of opportunities to take part in school worship.