

JENNETT'S PARK C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL



Policy on Collective Worship

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Introduction

Collective worship is central to the life of Jennett's Park CE Primary School. Worship offers the pupils and staff in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian vision and ethos. Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other and that collective worship is an entitlement for all. In worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live. We warmly invite all members of our school community to join our worship. Pupils, staff and parents of all faiths and none are welcome to worship which is an expression of our distinctive Christian vision. Our principles of worship means it is inclusive and contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils, It is invitational and respects the dignity of all participants, it is inspiring and experiential.

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- Celebrate -
 - Christian seasons and festivals
 - school values associated with our vision
 - Pupils' and adults' achievements
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed
- worship God on their own terms.
- provide a sense of occasion that is separate from the rest of the school day

Worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth
- enable participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today
- encourage participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage
- reflect the teachings of Jesus and a trinitarian theology.

Collective Worship is an expression of our vision and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. At Jennett's Park we aim to ensure we live out our vision:

Empowering our children to flourish and achieve under God's love. This comes from the passage in the bible where Jesus says: I have come to let you live life in all its fullness (John 10:10)

Our Rainbow Promise underpins everything we do at school. Just as the Rainbow was a sign of God's promise to Noah that from that moment God would enable Noah and the people of the earth to flourish and experience life in all its fullness. So as a school community we promise to do our best to enable all the pupils and adults of our school to flourish academically and professionally so that they might reach their potential.

The Rainbow is also a symbol of the diversity of our school community, but as a church school we recognise that we are all created and valued by God, and so as a school community we commit to care for and value each other.

The dove symbolises our need to persevere in some aspects of life as it is not always the first time we find success. It was not the first time that Noah had tried to find dry land and so we much seek strength within ourselves and from God to achieve.

All children and young people have a right to a primary education, which should be free. Our aim is that learning at Jennett's Park CE Primary School should empower children. It should celebrate success and progress for all, and be part of our role as heart of the local community.

These are our Promises to keep to our children to be able to serve the common good with our work as part of the Church of England. By following our Promises we know our curriculum suits local needs.

At Jennett's Park we are:	Our Promises:
Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills	To help grow resourceful, resilient and reflective children who are equipped with the skills, knowledge and tenacity empower themselves, their learning throughout their lives.
Educating for Hope and Aspiration	To inspire and enrich lives beyond current opportunities and experiences in order to open minds to the potential their future holds
Educating for Community and Living Well Together	To be a multi-cultural, inclusive community of individuals loved by God who feel valued and involved where we create qualities of character to enable people to flourish.
Educating for Dignity and Respect	That children might know how much that they are loved and valued by so that they might show dignity and respect for themselves and others by carefully and safely thinking through their actions.

Purpose and Aims of Collective Worship

Collective worship at Jennett's Park CE Primary is of a clearly Christian character, recognising the diversity of our community. It provides occasions when the school community pupils gather together whereby pupils are given opportunities to reflect on relevant Christian, moral and spiritual issues, drawn from a variety of sources, thereby enriching their experience of life. Worship is an expression of our Christian vision and is a means of recognising and celebrating our associated values and achievements. In worship all participants are recognised for their personal achievement, both within school and in the community.

Collective Worship aims for the following:

- introduce pupils to worship appropriate for their age, which although inclusive, draws upon the riches of the Anglican and other Christian traditions.
- provide an experience of worship which allows participants to reflect and respond to the presence of God.
- introduce pupils to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year.
- allows participants to explore a variety of ways of praying and introduces them to some well-known Christian prayers, e.g. the Lord's Prayer and the Grace.
- encourage participants to wonder and reflect on the 'big' questions that life poses. Assist pupils to have an increased awareness and to reflect upon fundamental issues about life, wonder and mystery of the world around us
- enhance, complement and extend curricular work
- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, lifestyles and faiths which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils
- strengthen and support the school community by giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school.
- celebrate the gifts that each person brings to the school community, recognising that we are all unique yet special to God and made in God's image.
- foster an appreciation of the natural world and an awareness of our responsibility to care and maintain it
- Include appropriate references to and elements of other faiths and secular worldviews
- include opportunities to celebrate the academic, social, personal and wider achievements of pupils.
- develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community.

The Pattern and delivery of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in a variety of ways, for example, in the school hall, in classrooms, in the music room, in the dance studio, our community centre and on occasions outside. We follow the seasons of the Church year and within these significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost. Important days in the school calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service also feature in collective worship. The content for each term's collective worship will broadly reflect the Christian festivals of that term and the values of the school's Rainbow Promise.

A typical week at Jennett's Park will follow the Worship timetable below:

Monday	Headteacher Assembly – live or pre-recorded
Tuesday	Candle Time and class assemblies or zoom playgrounds
Wednesday	Church Member Assembly (St Francis and St Clare) (KS1 + KS2)
Thursday	Singing Assembly
Friday	Celebration Assembly (KS1 + KS2)

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Nursery will engage in Candle time every week to introduce Collective Worship to our youngest pupils.

Reception will also have Candle time in class every week and from the summer term will join KS1 and KS2 for Collective Worship in the hall.

The Contemplative Toolkit for schools Written by Charlie Kerr, Yvonne Morris & Ian Macdonald in a collaborative process between the Education and Mission departments of the Diocese of Oxford will be used across the school from EYFS to Year six. This is to enable Jennett's Park CE Primary school to embrace some of the ancient wisdom of the Christian Tradition via the contemplative pathway of ignition spiritual practices and connect spiritually to themselves and the wider community to promote well-being, flourishing and positive mental health. The toolkit will enable the 'growing faith agenda' to allow for positive relationships between church communities, school and communities. Pupils will foster the tools, techniques and experiences to hopefully pass on to their families and wider community. There are five exercises to engage in over the school week to transform pupils and staff into a sense of calm and school culture and ethos. The design of the toolkit is as follows:

Design

It is proposed that the toolkit should have three modes. Jennett's Park CE Primary school will adopt the first two modes and the third mode where appropriate.

1. **A 5-10 minute daily practice**, A daily calming and settling tool after a breaktime, at the start of the day before lessons begin, or at the end of the day in a summative fashion.
2. **A 15-20 minute weekly practice**, which can be used as a focus for an act of Collective or Form Worship. This takes one of the 5 daily practices but focuses more closely and intentionally on it, in order to develop deeper understanding of its interpretative framework, which can be used every half term.
3. **A 30 -45 minute version**, which might be used for a school trip to a local church, where the church community might host a simple but meaningful prayer/contemplative experience, a little like a more focused PrayerSpaces/Bespace installation. This might be more distinctively Christian than the daily practices, as the church context will lead to a deeper exploration of spiritual meaning.

Outline

The toolkit comprises five different practices, designed to fit within the shape of a normal five day school week. They are:

1. **Stilling** – teaching young people to adopt appropriate posture for becoming aware of surroundings and the self, with breathing techniques and the introduction of a simplified form of the Examen.
2. **Noticing** – this is a deeper cultivation of the Ignatian Examen technique, focused on noticing the presence and absence of God and the Good in your life. By noticing moments of 'desolation' and 'consolation' young people are encouraged to act, choose and seek consolation, that which energises and inspires.
3. **Dwelling** – this is the cultivation of the Benedictine practice of Lectio Divina (or holy reading of scripture), which was also thoroughly embedded in Ignatian spirituality. By giving young people time to dwell with short, carefully chosen and inclusive phrases from scripture, they are invited to choose words or phrases which they connect to

personally. This can also be practiced by engaging the senses and inviting participants to enter imaginatively into a scene from scripture, thus drawing out personal meanings and reflections. The listening skill can then be further developed by asking each of a partner to summarise the meaningful phrase or word from his opposite number, and vice versa.

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4. **Mending** – this is focused on the central Christian theme of reconciliation, which is also a prominent and pivotal feature of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and the focus here is on the cross as a symbol of both human brokenness and the power of redemptive expressions of love. Techniques may be borrowed from circle time activities/Bespace stations. A brief activity with stones representing life's hurts, pain and sorrows and the 'web of wool' activity representing community strain and tension are also proposed methods
 5. **Blessing** – This final tool focuses on human flourishing and growth, using the metaphor of Root/Shoot/Fruit. Ignatius talks of the spiritual exercises leading to contemplation in action (i.e. they do not exist for their own sake, but rather to build 'the kingdom'). Consideration is therefore being given to blessing as the 5th tool. Having received blessing through the other 4 tools, how do we move forward to bless our families, homes, schools and communities: what fruit might emerge for all to share?

The Collective worship lead will monitor the impact of this tool on pupils and staff termly.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content, experience, what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. It is important for pupils to encounter a wide range of experiences through acts of worship such as drama, music and art. In collective worship the community gathers and worship takes place; there is no expectation or compulsion placed on pupils. Collective worship is an *opportunity* during which the participants, through a variety of experiences, can spiritually reflect. It is important to note that pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their own, should they wish to. The themes of worship are reflective of our visions and values.

Collective Worship will overtly reflect the Christian faith and traditions and will recognise a belief in the Trinitarian nature of God. It should be non-confessional and inclusive of all participants, whether they are of another faith or of no faith. Acts of worship may include moments of creative silence, Bible stories and stories from other faiths and traditions, pictures and symbols, artifacts and materials, children's contributions, sacred/ secular readings, prayer, hymns and songs and music. Acts of worship may include lighting a candle, reading sections from the Bible, song, reflection and/ or meditation. Pupils will frequently be involved in the leading of worship by introducing and concluding the time of worship and invited to offer a Hope, a Wish or a Prayer at the end of an act of worship.

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 are addressed to 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.

Pupils are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from our worship policy. Leaders from faiths are welcomed to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

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

The time dedicated to Collective Worship is separate from the time given to Religious Education.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Collective Worship subject leader and SLT will monitor and review the practice of worship to ensure it's meaningful, appropriate and meeting the needs of the pupils. Our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

Collective Worship will be monitored and evaluated in a variety of ways, including:

- A Candle Time book in which pupils and/ or teachers are encouraged to document the activity/ outcome/ impact of an act of worship.
- Governors to observe and feedback an act of worship

- Composition and review of an action plan to self-evaluate the effectiveness of worship and meeting the different areas of the SIAMS inspection criteria
- Pupil interviews

A worship council has been formed, led by the Collective Worship leader, to monitor the impact of worship across the school and evaluate improvements.

The Legal Position

By law, Collective Worship must be provided for every child every day and reflect the school's Trust Deed. This policy clearly sets our aspiration that collective worship is to be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community irrespective of their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and will never coercive or indoctrinatory.

The Right of Withdrawal

Parents and/or guardians have the legal right to withdraw their child from all or any parts collective worship, provided they give written notification. However, the aim for Collective Worship is to be inclusive of all, including those of other faiths and none. We believe Collective Worship to be crucial to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and development of our pupils. It is our expectation that all children will appreciate this time as an opportunity to come together as a whole school family to engage reflect. Therefore, we ask parents who may wish to exercise the right of withdrawal to speak with the headteacher first.

