

Collective Worship



St. Andrew's

Church of England Primary School

ENRICHING LIVES

Our Vision.....

We believe that every person in our school community should flourish and broaden their horizons. Therefore, it is the element of 'enrichment' that defines our school; we are a church school that endeavours to provide the widest of opportunities for all.

Within our caring and nurturing environment and guided by our shared Christian values, we aim to ensure that all voices in our school family can be heard and all are engaged in learning that develops and challenges them, excites their imagination and provides an opportunity to achieve their full potential.

We see everyone and everything as valued in the eyes of God and recognise that all the members of our family are individuals as we work together towards a society of mutual respect, compassion and justice.

Even the smallest person can change the course of the future."

..... JRR Tolkien

Date Published: 17/09/2024

Review by: 31/07/2026

1 Theological Underpinning

1.1 The parable of the Mustard Seed underpins our vision and drivers; it is a powerful reminder that incredible things come from the smallest of beginnings, but it also illustrates the abundant life-giving nature of God's kingdom for all who seek it.

1.2 **Matthew 13:31-32**

“He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

1.3 Several years ago, our older pupils were discussing how Christians believe that every person is important in God's eyes and that each of us has a purpose. This reminded them of a quotation from one of their favourite authors, JRR Tolkien:

“Even the smallest person can change the course of the future.” JRR Tolkien.

1.4 Tolkien was a practising Christian and, in a letter to a friend written in 1953, described *The Lord of the Rings* as a “fundamentally religious and Catholic work”. We recognise in this quotation Tolkien's Christian beliefs and we also affirm the importance of each member of our school community to creating a future of justice, peace and kindness. Every child and adult associated with the school is not just important because they are members of the school, but because they are seen as unique individuals within God's creation. This quote reminds us that no matter how small we feel, God can still use us for His Glory. We place great importance on every child who belongs to our school and endeavour to plant the seeds to encourage them to show their uniqueness and to reach their full potential.

2 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice

2.1 In our school, we value everyone and actively seek to broaden our pupils' horizons. It is really important to us that every voice is heard and feels it is heard. It is only through this, we believe, that we can fulfil our potential and flourish as a community. For our school, the

sentiment of Liz Fosslien is a meaningful reminder of how important it is that we strive to accomplish our vision and it is not merely an exercise that can be readily accomplished:

“Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice be heard.”

2.2 *At St Andrew’s, every child has a unique song to sing and we must encourage them To sing it.*

2.3 The symbol widely used by our school is the tree. We believe that our school is like that tree, whose branches will not only sustain those who live within, but will also reach out to our community, providing shade, shelter and life for the community of Woodhall Spa.

2.4 This tree, our school, is home to not just the children, but to the parents, staff and member of our wider community. All can be nurtured in and by our school, allowing all to flourish.

3 How Will We Realise our Vision?

3.1 To achieve our vision, we aim to nurture and support each member of our school family to:

- be part of a caring community that is rooted in Christianity and that teaches and promotes Christian values and welcomes everyone, including those with different faiths and beliefs, and those with non-religious worldviews;
- ensure our school is a safe and happy place where everyone is valued and achievements are celebrated;
- encourage our children to ask questions, seek the answers and develop a love for learning;
- experience and enjoy a diverse and enriching range of opportunities;
- promote a healthy lifestyle both mentally and physically;
- reach the highest standards of academic achievement and fulfil individual goals;
- use their imagination freely and creatively, and enjoy music and the arts;
- work collaboratively with the Church, and both the local and global community to care for the school and the world in which they live and seek to make it a better place.

3.2 Fundamental to the school are our Christian values, which provide guidance, support and encouragement to all members of the school community. These are:

- Generosity
- Compassion
- Courage
- Forgiveness
- Friendship
- Respect & Humility
- Thankfulness
- Trust
- Perseverance & Hope
- Justice
- Service & Responsibility
- Truthfulness

3.3 While all the values underpin and are woven through our school life, each term, the school focuses on one specific value. Exploring these values empowers our pupils to understand why it is important to value everyone, how broadening our horizons and engaging with perspectives, practices and beliefs other than our own can help us flourish together and what it might look like to realise our potential and make the world a better place.

3.4 We explore our Christian values in depth through daily collective worship; this is also a space in which we explore the British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. Through collective worship, we also ensure that we reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Collective worship is an important time for us to come together as a school community and to focus on our individual and collective spiritual development. It is inclusive and invitational, and it inspires us to grow into people who can change the course of the future.

3.5 This Policy identifies within the context of the school's vision statement and supports and reinforces the importance at St Andrew's C.E Primary School in valuing all children equally and as individuals and the importance of each child valuing their peers.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 'Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

2.2 At St Andrew's C.E. Primary School worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

2.3 For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

2.4 At St Andrew's C.E. Primary School collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

2.5 Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal

festivals of the Christian (*and other faiths*¹) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.²

3. Church of England Guidance

3.1 Collective worship policy at St Andrew's C.E. Primary School draws on guidance from the Church of England³. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

4. Legal Requirements

4.1 There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at anytime in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England.

4.2 Worship at St Andrew's C.E. Primary School is distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

4.3 The Governing Body school have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the Headteacher.

5. The right of withdrawal

5.1 At St Andrew's C.E. Primary School there are children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non- religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian

¹ Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

² "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God". William Temple (1881-1894)

³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>

nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

5.2 The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

5.3 On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the Headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. On such occasions it is helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

5.4 Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and Headteacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

5.5 If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

(This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)

6. Guiding Principles

6.1 Collective worship At St Andrew's C.E. Primary School aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement

of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.

- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

7. Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

7.1 We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

7.2 We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

8. How Collective worship is organised

8.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. This begins each morning and is an important beginning to our school day in bringing the whole school together either physically in the school hall or spiritually in classrooms (on Thursdays). On Tuesday's, our Singing Service is held at 1.30pm. In general, the services may be whole-school collective worship, separate Key Stage, Music Services, class lead services or individual classroom based services.

8.2 We conduct services in a dignified and respectful way. We guide and encourage the children to understand that collective worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard

it as a special occasion and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings when appropriate and participate fully in discussions, prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children. An agreed standard of prayerful quiet is established in the hall prior to worship. The school prayer or Lord's Prayer is used at the Monday collective worship to begin the week and close of the week on Friday.

8.3 The Headteacher or other members of staff normally conduct collective worship within the school, but sometimes the vicar of St. Peter's Church or other visiting speakers may conduct them instead. It is an expectation that all staff actively participate in services during the week.

8.4 Through collective worship, we ensure that we reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. We take the themes for our services from the traditions of the Christian faith and as such, we embrace the following Christian Values:

- 1. Generosity**
- 2. Compassion**
- 3. Courage**
- 4. Forgiveness**
- 5. Friendship**
- 6. Respect & Humility**
- 7. Thankfulness**
- 8. Trust**
- 9. Perseverance & Hope**
- 10. Justice**
- 11. Service & Responsibility**
- 12 Truthfulness**

8.5 We plan our collective worship both over the academic year and on a termly basis. These scheduled are posted on the school website.

8.6 We do seek to celebrate cultural and social diversity and encourage children to become more aware and reflect on the faiths and beliefs of others. Sometimes our services may build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.

8.7 At St Andrew's, as part of our collective worship, we uphold and teach our children about the British Values which are defined as:

- **democracy**
- **rule of law**
- **individual liberty**
- **mutual respect**
- **tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs**

8.8 The school uses daily opportunities to actively promote our British Values through our daily Collective Worship which is supported by whole school systems and structures, such as electing and running a successful School Council. Both our Christian values and British values are intrinsically linked and as such are also taught explicitly through Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economical Education(PSHCE), and Religious Education (RE), but also implicitly across our full curriculum.

8.9 The values are integral to our vision and our Christian values and as such they are incorporated and integrated into our whole school acts of Collective Worship Religious Education, as well as across both our planned curriculum and our hidden curriculum (for example that which arises from how staff respond to children and children respond to other children).

8.10 As well as actively promoting British values, the opposite must also apply; we would actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British values, including 'extremist' views. The values we espouse are not unique and we acknowledge that they may not differ from the values of the many countries and the cultural backgrounds that may be represented by families within this country.

8.9 Our celebrations reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate and lead services by discussing their work with the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. A special 'Celebration Service' is held where we recognise the achievements of the children through the presentation of individual certificates or groups of children through house points. This service offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. It plays an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

8.11 We welcome governors' attendance at our services at any time. Unfortunately, hall capacity does not allow parental attendance unless this is at church.

8.12 As well as services in school, school services are held in St. Peter's Church on St. Andrew's Day, at Christmas for a Christingle Service and at Easter. As with our daily services, children play an active role. These services are timed either for 9.00am or early evening and at these services, parents are invited to attend.

8.13 The following welcome is used in collective worship as the Trinity of candles is lit:

May God our Father
..... care for us
May the Lord Jesus
..... teach us
May the Holy Spirit
..... guide us and encourage us

8.14 The following words are used for our school prayer which may be used at the close of the Service. The prayer was reviewed with the vicar of St Peter's and a number of older children to ensure that the words are meaningful:

God our Father,

*Bless our school.
Help us to make it a happy place.
encourage us to care about each other,
and to enjoy learning together.
Teach us, like Saint Andrew,
to walk in the way of your son,
our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen*

9. Monitoring and evaluation

9.1 The school continually reflects on collective worship to enhance our provision. We take feedback from staff, Governors and children.

10. Disseminating the policy

10.1 We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.