

# ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



The Green, Cassington, Oxfordshire. OX29 4DN

E-mail: [office.3651@st-peters.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.3651@st-peters.oxon.sch.uk) Tel: 01865 880443

Website: [www.st-peters.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.st-peters.oxon.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mr Jon Jeffries



## Collective Worship Policy

### September 2025

This policy was agreed by Governors on:

Date:.....24<sup>th</sup> September '25.....

To be reviewed:.....September '27.....

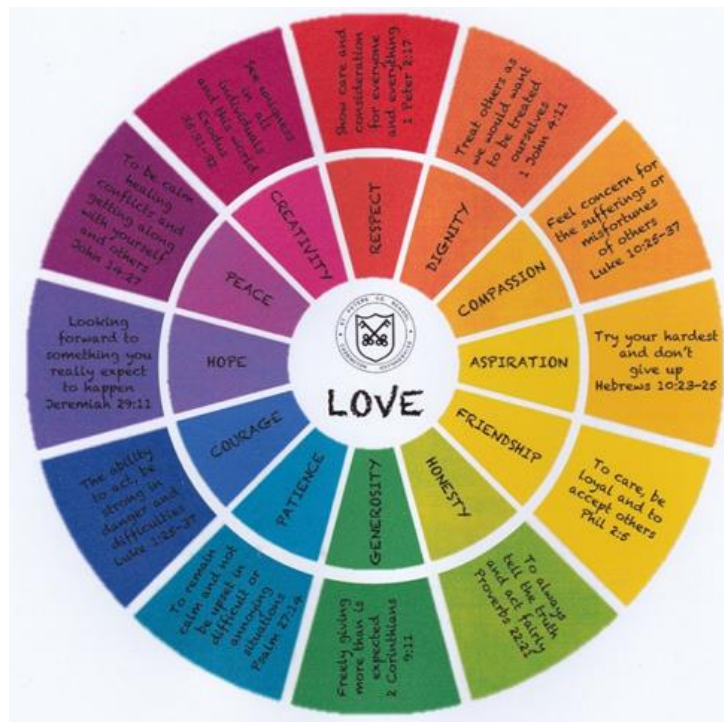
Chair of Governors:.....Anne Armitage.....

Headteacher: .....Jon Jeffries.....

## Vision and Values at St.Peter's School

**Unlocking minds that learn, hearts that love, faith that gives.**

Everyone at St.Peter's is encouraged to embrace life with the boldness and hope of Peter, who stepped out of the boat, walked on water and achieved the impossible. Through Christian worship, values and love, helping hands are offered to support every member of our community to reach their potential.



Unlocking....

Minds that learn, Hearts that love, Faith that gives



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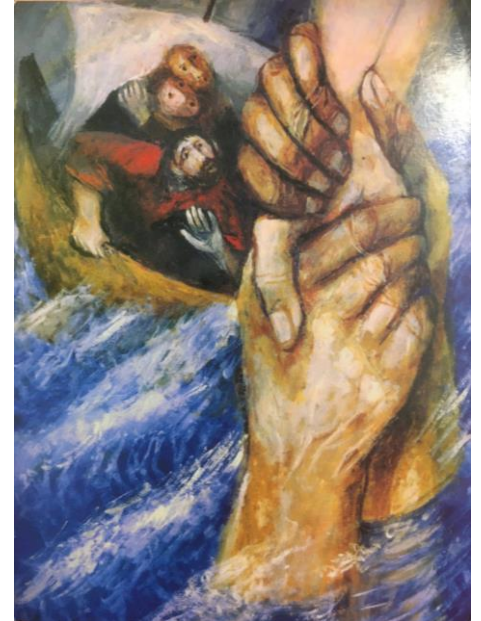
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We are inspired by many of the stories of St. Peter from the Christian gospels, especially the occasion when he was in a boat with the other disciples (Matthew 14 v 22-33):

- The boat was buffeted by the wind and the waves.
- Jesus came to them walking on the water.
- They were terrified thinking they had seen a ghost.
- When they realised it was Jesus, Peter said, "Tell me to come to you on the water."
- Amazingly, Peter did what he never thought was possible and walked out to Jesus on the water - that is, until he took his eyes off Jesus and looked at the scary waves!
- He started to sink but Jesus took his hand and brought him safely to the boat.



This story inspires us at St. Peter's to try things we never imagined possible - in our learning, in the love we have for those around us and further afield, and in our generous striving for good in this world. All this in an environment where there are many sources of support and help, where we are deeply valued, and where even our mistakes are transformed into opportunities to learn, develop and flourish in the life God has given us. The circle below shows what we value most at St Peter's. Taken from Peter's letters and life-changing encounter with Jesus, they are at the heart of our learning and life together.

## Verse

God has given each of you a gift  
from his great variety of spiritual gifts.  
Use them well to serve one another.

[Peter's first letter: 4 v 10](#)

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## Introduction

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Taking place each morning, collective worship is the heartbeat of the school. It is the time when pupils and others in our school have the opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian vision and ethos. It is an expression of our vision: unlocking ... minds that learn, hearts that love, faith that gives. It is an opportunity to reflect on our spirituality and what that means for us at St. Peter's. Worship shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. We warmly invite all members of our school community to join our worship. Our aim is that collective worship at St. Peter's is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- Celebrate -
  - Christian seasons and festivals (Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost)
  - 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;
- experience the liturgical traditions of Anglican worship
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed;
- appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world;
- encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible;
- worship God on their own terms.

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

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## The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in the school hall and sometimes in classrooms. On occasions, worship takes place in St Peter's Church. Collective worship usually involves the whole school however it can take place with a variety of groupings. We follow the seasons of the Church year and within these significant festivals, other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service also feature in collective worship. Whenever worship takes place, it is planned to promote participants' thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

Each week, collective worship follows the same pattern with each day having a particular focus, as detailed below:

- Monday – Value focus – Moral – Teacher led
- Tuesday – Christianity/other faiths – Religious - Clergy led
- Wednesday – Space Makers/Spirituality – Class led
- Thursday – Mindfulness/reflection – Spiritual – Child led or Chaplain led
- Friday – Celebration – Social – Headteacher led

Each term focuses on one of the school values, providing weekly opportunities to reflect more deeply on the importance and practical application of this value. Awards presented in celebration assemblies are also linked to the termly value, celebrating times when children have demonstrated it in their life at school.

Opportunities for contemplative worship are provided through the use of the Spacemakers resource. This introduces the five habits of stilling, noticing, dwelling, mending and blessing within the context of a class worship session.

As we believe collective worship should be inspirational, on occasion there will be a 'people who inspire us' themed collective worship. This is when someone inspirational from the local community is invited in to share their story. Children have the opportunity to consider which of the St. Peter's values have been lived out in that person's life. Children take ownership of these worship times, often suggesting people who they consider to have been inspiring in some way.

## St. Peter's School Song

Singing is regularly included in collective worship. A range of songs are incorporated which express the theme being reflected on. A project was undertaken to record a school song. Each class wrote the lyrics for each verse, which express the school vision and values which are so important to us as a school community. This song with accompanying actions is often used in collective worship.

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## Spirituality at St. Peter's

The whole school community worked together to create this definition of Spirituality at St. Peter's:



*Our spirit is the rudder that guides us through life.*

*Reflection, stillness and questioning helps us to make healthy choices for ourselves and others.*

*Beauty, awe and wonder inspire us to reach towards our faith, the beyond, or the greater meaning of life.*

*The core of our spirituality is LOVE, as shown in the life and teachings of Jesus and St Peter, his disciple.*

Opportunities to reflect on what spirituality means for us are woven into collective worship. This is aided by the St. Peter's spirituality picture which provides a metaphor for our spiritual growth and journey. Each week, there is a question for all to consider during collective worship which encourages reflection on an aspect of the spirituality picture and how it can relate to each person individually.

## Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from within school, from the local Church community as well as the school chaplain. Pupils are given opportunities to lead and contribute to worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from the collective worship policy. Those who lead worship within the school are given the opportunity to receive training on leading collective worship.

Children are given the responsibility of opening and closing collective worship, symbolically lighting the three candles (using liturgy which links to the trinity) and using a variety of forms of greeting and sending out prayers. We aim to give children confidence in public speaking, teaching them specifically the skills needed for public speaking and engaging an audience.

On a fortnightly basis, a group of children take on the responsibility of leading Thursday's collective worship. They open and close the worship with appropriate liturgy; they lead discussions with the whole school; they read or act out stories from the Bible or on a particular theme; they manage participation from other children and lead the school in times of prayer or reflection. Most of the time, this responsibility is given to children from KS2. Where appropriate, some children from Year 2 may be involved later in the year.

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## Planning Acts of Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders plan the content and activities included in worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. The themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values. A Big Question, related to the theme of each week, is included on the collective worship plan. Children have opportunities to respond to the Big Question throughout the week. A wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside more traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song are planned into collective worship. Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection. Our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

## Prayer

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.

The whole school community took part in a project to write a school prayer which drew on our school vision and values. The children chose actions to accompany the prayer. This is regularly used in collective worship.

## A legal note

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the headteacher.

## Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed regularly in line with schools' procedures. An annual review is recommended if possible, but review must be done within a 3-year period.

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