



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP STATEMENT

Leigh St. John's CE Primary School

*"The Lord has told you what is good.
He has told you what he wants from you: Do what is right to other people.
Love being kind to others.
And live humbly, trusting your God."*

Micah 6:8

COME CELEBRATE TOGETHER

At Leigh St. John's, collective worship is the heartbeat of our Church school and the highlight of our day. It is the moment when we stop, breathe and gather as one family: to encounter God, explore the teachings of Jesus, celebrate one another, ask big questions and consider how we might live differently because of what we have heard, seen, sung and felt.

Worship is central and transformative. It sustains the stunning ethos of our school because it is built upon the same bedrock as everything else we do: loving, trusting and respectful relationships. It gives pupils and adults a shared language for hope, challenge, forgiveness, courage and compassion. It helps us become the people God calls us to be and gives daily life to our mission to 'Be a decent human being'.

Our Christian vision, mission and values

Our theologically rooted Christian vision is grounded in Micah 6:8 and the example of Jesus. It calls us to act justly, love kindness and walk humbly with God. This vision is not confined to words on a wall. Through worship, it is repeatedly encountered, understood, questioned and lived.

Our mantra, 'Come celebrate together', expresses the welcome at the heart of worship. Every child and adult is known, valued and invited to belong. Our six God-given values—justice, humility, love, kindness, responsibility and respect—make the vision tangible. They are explored through scripture, the life and teaching of Jesus, contemporary people and events, stories, music, film, prayer and reflection. Most importantly, pupils are challenged to turn each value into action.



The purpose of collective worship

Collective worship enables pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. It offers a positive, authentic and joyful encounter with Christianity while respecting the integrity of those of other faiths and those who hold no religious faith.

Through worship, we seek to:

- offer pupils and adults meaningful opportunities to encounter God and understand the person and teachings of Jesus;
- develop an age-appropriate understanding of the Bible, the Christian story and God's Big Plan;
- make our Christian vision and values visible, memorable and relevant to everyday choices;
- create space for prayer, stillness, reflection, gratitude, wonder and spiritual growth;
- strengthen belonging, wellbeing, emotional regulation and the relationships that hold our community together;
- inspire hope, moral courage, service, courageous advocacy and care for God's world;
- celebrate the gifts, achievements and inherent worth of every member of our school family; and
- enable pupils to participate, lead, evaluate and shape worship with increasing confidence and insight.

Inclusive, invitational and inspiring

Worship at St. John's reflects the Anglican foundation of the school and the traditions of the Church of England. It is deliberately inclusive, invitational and inspiring. Everyone is welcomed; nobody is compelled to pray, sing or make a declaration of faith. Pupils and adults are invited to

participate in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to them, including through attentive listening or respectful stillness.

Inclusion is active rather than assumed. Leaders consider age, language, SEND, sensory needs, faith background and prior experience when planning worship. Rich imagery, music, objects, signing, carefully chosen vocabulary, repetition, movement, drama and moments of quiet provide different ways to engage. The result is a shared experience in which pupils know they belong and understand that their response matters.

Inspiration is measured by more than enjoyment. Worship should open hearts and minds, prompt deeper thinking and lead to action. A powerful story, question, song, prayer, testimony or film may move pupils emotionally; skilled reflection then helps them connect this response to the Christian vision and to the choices they make beyond the hall.

The daily rhythm of worship

Collective worship takes place every school day. Its rhythm provides continuity while allowing leaders to respond sensitively to the Church year, school life and local, national or global events.

- Monday – Key Stage worship, enabling close reflection, dialogue and response within the community;
- Tuesday – Superstars celebration worship, recognising achievement, character and values in action;
- Wednesday – whole-school worship led by the Headteacher;
- Thursday – whole-school worship led by the Headteacher; and
- Friday – whole-school worship led by the Headteacher, drawing together the week's learning and sending the community out with purpose.

Once per half-term, whole-school worship is led by Vicar Jonathan, strengthening pupils' encounter with Christian ministry and the life of the parish;

This pattern remains flexible. Special worship may mark significant events, festivals, times of need or moments of joy. Half-termly and seasonal services at St. Mary the Virgin Parish Church deepen pupils' experience of Anglican worship and connect school, church and families.

A recognisable shape with space to encounter

A familiar liturgical shape gives pupils security and helps them understand that worship is distinct from an assembly. It is never a performance checklist: leaders preserve space for wonder, questioning, silence and the unexpected.

- Gather – music and stillness draw the community together; a focal point is prepared, the candle is lit and the greeting 'The Lord is here' receives the response 'His Spirit is with us'. Children understand the three candles as a reminder of The Trinity, God is three persons in one.
- Engage – a biblical text, story, image, artefact, question, testimony, drama or short film opens the theme. Songs and hymns allow the community to respond together.
- Respond – pupils are given time to think deeply, talk, wonder, pray or remain still. Reflection makes explicit the connection between the message, our values and the way we live.
- Send – prayer, blessing or a purposeful challenge sends pupils and adults back into daily life ready to put faith and values into action.

Planning for depth and transformation

The Headteacher, as Collective Worship Leader, maintains strategic oversight of worship. Long-term planning secures a coherent journey through the six values, key biblical narratives, the life and teachings of Jesus, God's Big Plan and the Christian year. The Manchester Diocesan Board of Education's guidance and resources inform development, including the RIPPLE principle of sustained exploration that leads from reflection to response and change.

Themes are revisited with increasing depth rather than treated as isolated words. Leaders ask: What does this value reveal about God? How did Jesus show it? What does it look like in our school? What might it require of us? How will we know that worship has made a difference?

Individual acts are carefully prepared but responsive. Creative media are chosen because they deepen meaning, not simply to entertain. Biblical texts are handled respectfully and explained accurately. Current events and human stories help pupils see that Christian values speak into real life, while sensitive facilitation protects pupils from simplistic answers and creates room for honest questions.

Pupil leadership: the JAM Squad

The JAM (Jesus and Me) Squad ensures that pupils are not passive recipients of worship but genuine partners in its life and development. Members help prepare focal points, select music, introduce themes, read scripture, dramatise stories, write and lead prayers, create signs and presentations, gather pupil responses and evaluate impact through discussion and video.

The JAM Squad listens to classmates and brings their views to regular meetings with the worship leader. Their feedback influences future content, pace, participation and resources. Leadership is developmental: pupils grow in theological understanding, confidence, responsibility and service as they learn that their voice can strengthen worship for others.

Spirituality and flourishing

Worship creates daily space for the spiritual life of the school. Pupils describe spirituality through 'wow moments': experiences that stop them, move them and help them notice something greater than themselves. Through beauty, silence, music, nature, story, prayer and human experience, pupils connect with themselves, with others, with the world and, for many, with God.

This has a discernible impact. Pupils speak of feeling calm, reassured, hopeful and connected. Stillness supports emotional regulation; shared celebration strengthens belonging; reflection helps pupils make sense of difficult feelings and experiences. Worship does not avoid challenge, but holds challenge within a culture of dignity, hope and love.

Spiritual growth is seen in changed attitudes and actions: when pupils repair a friendship, speak up against unfairness, take responsibility, show humility, choose kindness, serve others or care for creation. In the words pupils themselves use, a 'wow moment' should help us to 'be kind and good'.

Celebration, justice and courageous advocacy

Superstars celebration worship affirms that every child is uniquely gifted and worthy of recognition. Service, perseverance and values in action are celebrated. The St. John's Heart Award recognises a child whose consistent choices embody the character of the school, while values awards make visible the everyday actions through which our ethos is sustained.

Celebration is balanced by challenge. Worship helps pupils recognise injustice, listen to experiences beyond their own and understand that faith calls people to act. Pupils encounter

individuals and communities whose courage, generosity and service have transformed lives. They are then supported to respond through advocacy, charity, environmental stewardship, prayer and practical action—not because change is fashionable, but because justice, love and responsibility lie at the heart of our Christian vision.

Church, family and community

Our partnership with St. Mary the Virgin Parish Church is integral to worship. Vicar Jonathan and other clergy lead worship in school, welcome pupils and families into church and help the community encounter the richness of Anglican tradition. Harvest, Christmas, Easter, leavers' services and other significant occasions are shared celebrations of faith, belonging and hope.

Parents, governors, parish members and visitors are welcomed appropriately. Weekly communication shares the worship theme and thought for the week so that conversations can continue at home. Reflection areas in every classroom—with a cross, Bible, candle, prayer or worry box, pupils' reflections and God's Big Plan—ensure that worship continues beyond the hall and remains present in the daily life of each class.

Environment and resources

The physical environment communicates that worship matters. Music supports a calm and purposeful transition. A carefully prepared focal point may include a coloured cloth linked to the Church year, a cross, candle, Bible, natural objects, artefacts or pupil contributions. These elements focus attention and develop pupils' understanding of Christian symbolism and worship.

Resources are maintained centrally and shared electronically so that all leaders can prepare with confidence. Appropriate investment is made in books, Bibles, music, visual media, artefacts and professional development. Resources are selected for theological accuracy, accessibility, representation and their capacity to provoke meaningful thought.

Monitoring, evaluation and improvement

The quality and impact of worship are evaluated continually rather than reduced to a compliance exercise. The Headteacher, JAM Squad, staff, pupils, clergy and the link foundation governor contribute to evaluation. Evidence includes pupil voice, observation, video reflection, staff and governor feedback, engagement, the quality of pupil responses and examples of values translated into action.

Evaluation asks whether worship is genuinely inclusive, invitational and inspiring; whether it deepens understanding of the Christian vision; whether pupils encounter a coherent range of biblical teaching; whether they have meaningful opportunities to pray, reflect and lead; and, crucially, whether worship contributes to the flourishing of pupils and adults. Findings shape planning, staff development, resources and the school's ongoing self-evaluation for SIAMS.

Leadership and governance

The governing body holds responsibility for ensuring that collective worship reflects the school's trust deed, meets statutory requirements and is consistent with its Church of England character. The Headteacher leads the strategic vision, planning, quality assurance and development of worship. All staff understand that they help create the culture in which worship flourishes through their presence, modelling, participation and relationships.

New staff, including Early Career Teachers, receive explicit induction into the school's Christian vision, worship practices and six values. Coaching and modelling enable them to understand not

only the routines of worship but its theological purpose and transformational potential. Clergy and the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education provide valued partnership, challenge and support.

Entitlement and the right of withdrawal

A daily act of collective worship is provided for all pupils in accordance with statutory requirements and the school's Church of England foundation. Worship is conducted in a manner consistent with the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England and is accessible to pupils of all faiths and none.

Parents and carers have a legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship. Any parent considering withdrawal is encouraged to meet with the Headteacher so that the nature of worship can be explained, questions can be discussed and the child's needs understood. A written request is required and appropriate supervision will be arranged. No pupil will be disadvantaged or treated differently because this right is exercised.

The difference worship makes

The success of worship is ultimately found in the people we become. It is visible in the warmth with which pupils welcome others, the courage with which they challenge injustice, the humility to admit a mistake, the love and kindness shown without reward, the responsibility taken for choices and the respect extended to every person.

Collective worship holds our community together. It reminds us daily that every person is precious, every voice can contribute and every action can bring light. It renews our shared commitment to learn, serve and flourish together—and to go out into the world determined to 'Be a decent human being'.

