

Leading collective worship

There is an expectation that the children enter the hall or sit in their classroom quietly and respectfully. The music, table and cloth and chairs for adults are prepared by the children.

Gathering: As we gather for collective worship, the leader greets the children with: '**Good morning everybody/St Paul's.**'

The children respond: '**Good morning __, may be peace with you.**'

Leader responds: '**May peace be with all of you.**'

Engaging : This could be a story/ video/ questioning/ talking about an influential or inspiring person or time/ looking at objects/ drama. It should meet the children where they are, be relevant to their lives and be rooted in Christianity.

Responding: Make time for the children to respond to what they have listened to or watched. Try to include their thoughts and ideas without a sense of 'right or wrong' answers. Foster a culture of respect for all faith views and none. Responses can be shared or personal- such as a quiet time of reflective thinking.

Sending: *The candle may be lit by the person leading collective worship or a child who has been shown how to use the lighter.*

As you light the candle, the leader says:

'For all in our community today, may this candle represent the light of love and a future filled with hope.'

Pause to create a moment of stillness, you could suggest looking at the candle as you invite the children to join in a prayer. Say a prayer, or invite a child to share the prayer if they would like to.

As you blow out the candle:

As we put out the candle, we imagine our thoughts, our ideas, our conversations, our prayers spreading out, ready to go with us. Let us go with hearts filled with love.

The leader will then dismiss the children. Everyone is expected to leave quietly as music is played. The vicar of St Paul's may say a blessing. Please ask for responses to add to the collective worship journal.

At St Paul's we aim to follow the guidance from the Church of England about leading collective worship in school. A summary of this is below, for more details please look on our website.

INVITATIONAL Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Worship should provide the opportunity to engage with authentic Christian worship whilst allowing the freedom of those with different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and engage with integrity.

Children, parents and adults are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

INCLUSIVE Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning and responding and, for some, to God. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is 'what Christians believe', saying things like:

'I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?'

'The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...'

Our worship should be accessible for children and adults with a range of experiences and backgrounds who will be at different stages of their spiritual journey whilst at St Paul's. We also offer a variety of activities, so that all can find something they can engage with.

INSPIRING We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. It should enable all in the school community to ask big questions and be motivated into action. It should encourage them to think searchingly about their own faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation?

How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions?

How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?

