



Collective Worship Policy

for

[enter full school name] Church of England School/Academy

Adopted:	
Review cycle:	Three years
Next review due by:	

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Vision

In our Trust, our vision shapes all we do in both our Church and Non-Church schools. Every individual will **aspire, flourish** and **achieve** within the heart of their community.

Rooted in John 10:10, 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), living out the Church of England's Vision for Education (2016). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, developing community and understanding of living well together.

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do. [add school vision statement]

[Consider adding a short paragraph explaining how the structure and planning of collective worship embodies and lives out the school's theologically rooted Christian vision.]

Collective Worship is a central part of our school day; it is a highly valued time where the whole school community can gather together and engage in a journey of discovery and spiritual development. Worship is a 'time to breathe'; a time when all can come together to find a space, silence and quietness to reflect on our own spirituality, values and place in the world. Just as breathing is vitally important to life, worship is a significant and sacred time in the life of our schools; ensuring the time is valued to allow all to 'breathe'.

It offers our children the opportunity to reflect, to consider their own beliefs and values and to come together to share a collective sense of community rooted in values (distinctively Christian in our church schools). 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. It also provides opportunities for the school community to arrive in worship with the right attitude, engage with their own spirituality and Biblical teachings and leave feeling refreshed and inspired. We have considered what spiritual development means to us and have an agreed language of spirituality. This enhances and enriches collective worship and individual's spiritual development.

Church of England Guidance

Our collective worship policy draws on guidance from the Church of England. 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 and adults to flourish. Leaders and governance should ensure that 'collective worship is the unique heartbeat of a Church school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations with God, both as individuals and together.'

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools and academies for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time 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. In

other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is not relevant. Worship in our church schools should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

In community schools, acts of worship, according to The Education Reform Act, 1996 as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 says "each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship" which is broadly Christian.

The school leadership/Trust governing board are tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship in enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. They also have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework, school policy, local and national guidance.

They have a responsibility to ensure that:

- Collective worship reflects the schools Anglican/Methodist foundation and enables the spiritual flourishing of those in the school community
- The school has a regular and meaningful relationship with the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) accessing expertise and support for collective worship, as well as effective regular partnership with the parish/local church

Additionally, the Trust governing board considers the SIAMS sub-questions from IQ3:

- a) How does the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
- b) How do partnerships with the DBE, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?
- c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?
- d) In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?
- e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

The right of withdrawal

We recognise that some children and families are not Christians and are members of another faith or hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that we are invitational and inclusive to all in the community we serve. Collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of all church schools, and the Christian foundation and vision of the school shapes worship and the spirituality in the school. All are warmly welcomed to be part of daily collective worship as part of the school community.

The 1944, 1988 and 1998 Education Acts state that parents/carers have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent/carer may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from collective worship. There is an expectation that parents/carers wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent/carer 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/carer will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents/carers have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher 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

If the parent/carer 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/carer may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)

Guiding Principles

Our collective worship aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school community.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth and development through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Be central in the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school.
- Provide opportunities for pupils and adults to be inspired by the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world.
- 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 non-religious beliefs 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 appreciating that Christians worship in different ways.

- Help pupils to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church's 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 pupils the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well-known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all pupils 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 if it supports their own spiritual development.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the diverse work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.
- Engage in an act of community.
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events.
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar.

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

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

We recognise that in our schools there may be children from a variety of faith traditions, including those who have no faith background at all. Great care and sensitivity will be taken to ensure that all our children feel valued and special. We seek to ensure collective worship that is **Inclusive, Invitational** and **Inspiring**.

Guidelines

There should be an act of collective worship every day, to which every child within the school must be invited to attend (whole school, Key Stage, or in the classroom) The leader should try to create a welcoming and inviting atmosphere conducive to worship by, for example:

- Playing worship or quiet reflective music on arrival

➤ Or displaying an image, quote or question to engage the children in the theme -
Setting the hall up with a table as a focus for worship, including a cross and candle. There should be a welcome, for example, by lighting a candle.

Children always have a role within the worship. This could be planned or spontaneous, individually, in groups or as a whole community. They should be provided with the freedom and opportunities to be creative within the worship experiences.

Children should be given a chance to discuss, in talk partners, share their ideas/answers to a posed wondering question (I wonder what respect means? What does it look like in our school?)

Singing or sung worship may be included to invite pupils to respond in this way.

There should be a time for children to be still and silent to reflect and think about the key thoughts and/or the Bible message

Children should be invited to pray/reflect, which might be personally (silently) or out loud as a group or on behalf of the other children or in other ways

It is important to send the children out with a reflection, thought, verse, prayer or question to enable them to continue their thinking and spur them into action (when appropriate) following the worship session

The end of worship/ the gathering provides a good opportunity to close with a blessing prayer/reflection and to extinguish the candle to show that worship has ended.

The first Act of Worship of the week will set the scene for the week and reflect the Church calendar, our school ethos, key Christian values or current events

Throughout the rest of the week daily Acts of Worship will take place and each school/ academy will determine their own timetable to provide provision for this.

Additional acts of worship throughout the week may include class collective worship, hymn practice, worship led by a member of the local church and worship as part of the celebration of children's achievements that week.

Special services are often held at the local church to celebrate a range of Christian festivals. These may include Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Parents are often invited to share these occasions, either in church or in school.

There will be a place within each Church of England School/ Academy for a Worship/Prayer Corner which is kept fresh, up to date and relevant. In addition to whole School/ Academy Acts of Worship, set prayers in classrooms throughout the day may include the following: 'The Morning Prayer', 'Lunch time prayer' and 'The Lord's Prayer.'

Other opportunities where individuals are invited to pray or reflect may include:

1. Prayer Corners/ Reflection areas
2. Set prayers
3. Prayer Spaces in Schools

4. Visits to the local church in the parish

In addition to this, we also aim to provide opportunities to explore the beliefs and practices of other Christian denominations and, where appropriate, people of other faiths and world views. These may include opportunities to:

- Develop respect and sensitivity for the beliefs and practices of people of other faiths and worldviews
- Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others
- To encourage global citizenship and social responsibility
- To encourage positive contribution to the wider community through courageous advocacy
- To develop a sense of increasing respect and understanding in order to live cohesively in pluralistic societies

The overall responsibility for the leading and monitoring of Collective Worship in each individual academy/ school rests with the Head of School. The responsibility of planning for Collective Worship rests with the Head of School and the Vision Lead within each school/ academy.

How collective worship is organised

[The organisation of Collective Worship should be listed here including who leads.]

Planning of Collective Worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation. The content of Collective Worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning. This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local or national events. A variety of stakeholders are involved in planning and leading collective worship, including school leaders, teachers, clergy and pupils. Worship planning reflects the cycle of the Church's year and special services and is rooted in Anglican traditions. The school's vision and values of the school are central to decisions about collective worship.

Monitoring and evaluating collective worship

The quality of worship is evaluated by the Vision Lead and Head of School. Children, clergy, governance volunteers and parent council members will also form part of the monitoring and evaluation of worship and can inform themes for the next term.

Our Foundation Trustees, through the work of the Hub Boards will have a role in monitoring Collective Worship at the Academy/ School. We also seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on Collective Worship and to be a part of the evaluation process. Evidence from monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development of collective worship.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, each School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Before inviting speakers into school, teachers will complete the proforma in the Trips and Visits Guidance which is then authorised by the Head of School who is responsible for ensuring that the Prevent guidance is adhered to. Visitors to the School/ Academy are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge. All visitors to the school and visits to places of worship are in line with the academy safeguarding and health and safety policies. We ensure that all visitors are in line with the Prevent and British Values curriculum and that they have met with a member of staff pre-visit.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Support and training should also be made available to partners from the local church who lead worship.

The school's named lead for collective worship accesses updates and training through the optional annual training offered by the diocesan education team and through the termly Trust update meetings.

Disseminating and reviewing the policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governance volunteers, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if there is a significant change to the current legislation or guidance.