



Model Policy for Collective Worship in Church Schools: May 2023

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*With high aspiration for excellence, we are passionate for all within our family of schools
to experience God's love in a culture of care, dignity and hope.*

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Introduction

Schools/academies should note that where 'school' appears in the document it can be substituted for 'academy' as appropriate.

This suggested policy could be used as a template for governing bodies of Church of England schools in the Diocese of Gloucester to discuss, amend and adopt in the light of their unique school context before being signed by the Chair of Governors.

Text in red is for guidance purposes and should not be included in the policy.

Name of School:
School's Vision:

Legal Framework

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. 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 (insert name of school/Academy) should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The trustees/governing body school have the responsibility for ensuring that the school can respond to IQ3 in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework 2023, which asks 'How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually? They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating how collective worship is helping pupils and adults flourish spiritually in consultation with the headteacher.

School Statement on Collective Worship

In (insert school name) worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. (insert school vision and explain the ways in which Collective Worship is an expression of the 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.

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.

However, in (insert name of school) the purpose of collective worship will be to lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish. It is a place where all can flourish spiritually.

“Worship in (CofE) schools promotes theological and Religious Literacy and liberates participants to an imagining of a different order of justice, mercy and hope”¹

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 faiths²) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.³ Collective Worship in our school is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

Aims and Guiding Principles

This school follows the guiding principles highlighted in the document: Collective Worship in Church of England Schools Inclusive Invitational Inspiring Guidance Document, May 2021 which is included as Appendix I at the end of this policy.

Collective worship in *(insert name of school)* aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults’ to flourish spiritually
- 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.

¹ CEE0 Vision statement “Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good” Autumn 2016

² 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.

³ “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)

- 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, through inviting children to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introducing 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 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 offered the opportunity to 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.
- *How is Collective Worship invitational in your school?*
- *How is Collective Worship inspirational in your school?*
- *How is Collective Worship inclusive in your school?*

Organisation

The organisation of Collective Worship should be listed here under the headings below – reference invitational, inspirational and inclusive

Leadership

- *Who leads daily worship e.g. the headteacher, a member of staff, a pupil or small group of pupils, a whole class, a member of the clergy or local church, individual visitors or teams e.g. Open the Book*
- The role of the local incumbent is to support and lead collective worship in partnership with the SLT on a regular basis, including additional services in the church throughout the church's year where possible and appropriate.
- The local incumbent/church is available to support leaders of collective worship to develop their understanding of Christian theology, the teachings of the Bible and develop a deeper understanding of Anglican traditions and liturgy
- How support and guidance is given to visitors leading worship. A suggestion for creating an information leaflet for visitors is produced by the Diocese, please see the Collective Worship Guidance document.

Planning

- How worship is planned and who is involved in the planning
- How *all* members of the school community, especially children, are invited to plan and lead acts of worship
- How worship reflects the cycle of the Church year
- How the Christian values of the school are identified, expressed and celebrated through collective worship
- How explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school

- A pattern for worship which reflects Anglican tradition
- The range and variety of materials used, including: *websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle*
- Provide opportunities for children and adults to explore faith in today's world
- Explore the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God
- Allow for spiritual flourishing through prayer, stillness and reflection

Organisation

- The different groupings for worship, including whole school/key stage/class worship
- The different settings and places for worship; how the worship space is made special; and how the atmosphere for worship is created using:
 - *The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year,*
 - *Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,*
 - *ritual and liturgical responses,*
 - *how the children are seated,*
 - *an outdoor area e.g. spiritual garden, the local church*
- At what point in the school day worship is held and the amount of time allocated
- Involvement of all staff in attending and/or leading worship

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

Arrangements for recording, monitoring and evaluation should be identified here - e.g.:

The practical strategies used to record, monitor and evaluate the impact of worship

Who is involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship e.g. *children, staff, link/foundation governors*

Evidence to show how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time

Roles and Responsibilities

Outline here the roles and responsibilities of each member of the school community to uphold the principles and actions of this policy

The governing body

The headteacher and the senior leadership team

Teaching and support staff

Pupils

Parents and carers

Visitors

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. Additionally, support and guidance are provided for visitors and the clergy who lead collective worship.

(insert any further information about staff training, links to SDP, SEF, Performance Management/appraisal)

The Right of Withdrawal from Collective Worship

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.

In (insert name of school and amend as appropriate) there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non- religious world view.

Part of the distinctively Christian 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.

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. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents 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 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.)

Development and Sharing of the Policy

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.

Outline how this policy was developed within your school, including who was consulted and what resources and information you took account of. Link it to other policies and documentation as appropriate.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Collective Worship in Church of England Schools Inclusive Invitational Inspiring Guidance Document and the Diocesan Collective Worship Guidance Document.

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

Approval/review by governing body

Headteacher signed:

Date:

Chair of Governors signed:

Date:

Date of next review:

Date:

Collective Worship in Church of England Schools Inclusive Invitational Inspiring Guidance Document, May 2021