*This guidance takes into account current requirements for collective worship in the* [*SIAMS schedule*](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-04/SIAMS%20Evaluation%20Schedule%202018_0.pdf) *from September 2018. It should be read in conjunction with the Guidance for collective worship here:* [*https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship*](https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship)

***The place of collective worship in a church school***

*Collective worship is central to the life of a church school. It is part of the outworking of the school’s Christian vision and is a time for the whole school community to gather, pause and reflect on their own spirituality, values and place in the world.*

***Offering this in the context of authentic Christian worship is not ‘religious indoctrination’ but a simple chance for children of all faiths and none to develop spirituality and gain perspective in an otherwise crowded day***

*Nigel Genders Chief Education Officer for the Church of England*

***Legal Requirement***

*It is a legal requirement that all maintained schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled Schools and Academies conduct a daily act of collective worship. In church schools and academies it needs to be* ***distinctively Christian i****n character, reflecting Anglican traditions and practice. God is honoured and worshipped.*

*The term ‘collective’ assumes that the whole school community is gathered, expresses its shared Christian values and the contribution of everyone is celebrated. It is an inclusive time for all members of the school community, regardless of faith background or none. It offers* ***opportunity*** *but is also* ***invitational*** *without compulsion. Whilst some church schools use the term* ***assembly,*** *this can be misleading in that this word simply means ‘gathering’ and it can be applied to any situation where the school meets together for different purposes.*

*Collective worship:*

* *Should be conducted in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and Instrument of Government and be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.*
* *Unless the right of withdrawal has been exercised all pupils must take part each day in an act of collective worship (DfE circular 1/94 para. 51) and the Governing Body should ensure that all pupils* ***each day*** *engage in a distinctively Christian act of worship.*
* *Arrangements for collective worship in foundation schools of a religious character (i.e. church schools) are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consultation with the headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52&53).*

***Collective worship and religious education (RE)***

*Although what has been experienced in collective worship may be on occasion referred to in RE lessons, these two areas of life in a church school are distinct. Collective worship is NOT curriculum time for religious education. RE is an academic subject where children learn about different beliefs and faiths of different believers, whereas collective worship offers opportunity for worship and allows children to engage with their own spirituality and see Christian faith in action.*

*Prayer spaces or reflection areas may be an extension of collective worship where children can be still, reflect on their own spirituality, express their thoughts or questions, sometimes in a prayer of their own. RE displays/working walls are different from this and reflect children’s academic learning in the subject.*

**Policy for Collective Worship in xxx school**

# **Introduction**

This policy is an agreed statement of the values and aims of collective worship at **NAME of SETTING**. Collective worship is valued as a central aspect of the life of our church school, through which children grow spiritually, emotionally, morally and culturally.

**Legal status of collective worship** [delete/amend paragraphs as applicable]

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all children, 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. Collective worship in our school is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions. (If Anglican/Methodist foundation, include appropriate wording.)

The trustees/governing body of this school have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for collective worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

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

**Policy Statement**

In (insert school name) collective worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring our school’s 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.

Collective worship in our Church school aims to enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

For many 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. We recognise that our school is not a church, rather it is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds of families, visitors and staff may vary and therefore collective worship is planned to take account of the differing circumstances of those present.

We aim for collective worship to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and based upon Christian teaching and values. It aims to give opportunities for all present to grow spiritually, whatever their personal philosophy, or whether or not they come from a faith background.

Through collective worship children will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. This will include being invited to participate in prayer, reading and reflection from 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. Children will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in Christian values such as 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 world faiths[[1]](#footnote-1)*) calendar. All present will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.[[2]](#footnote-2)

# **Guiding Principles**

Collective worship has a pivotal place in the life of xxx school/academy. It aims to (select):

* Be the central vehicle by which the school’s vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged andengaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
* Provide an experience that will offer opportunities for those present to grow spiritually as well as to observe and respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians, or to find their own spiritual path. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of different faiths and none to be present and to engage with integrity. It aims to give children and young people the opportunity to develop their own philosophy and moral compass.
* Support those present 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.
* Help all present to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer and reflection, It helps children and young people to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Christian Church’s year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
* Facilitate a deeper understanding of the Christian story narrative, from creation to the present day
* To appreciate that people, cultures and beliefs differ and to demonstrate respect, tolerance and generosity towards them
* To develop young children’s sense of self-worth and to provide opportunities to celebrate achievements.
* To develop a caring attitude to others and a sense of community and loyalty.
* To provide opportunities for children to plan, lead, contribute to, monitor and evaluate collective worship.
* To invite clergy of the parish, other lay members of the parish and other Christian leaders in the community [as are acceptable to the parish church] to lead collective worship and build the parish-school link.
* Give opportunities to explore a variety of ways of praying, giving those present the chance to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
* Offer opportunities to all present 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. Children will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading collective worship.
* Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure children 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.

# **The right of withdrawal**

We recognise that in our school there are children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious worldview. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that we aim to be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community we serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of our Church school, this is 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. By withdrawing from collective worship, it does not mean that children will be exempt from the Christian ethos of our setting, as this underpins our teaching, learning and relationships.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from acts of worship. If a parent wishes to make a request for their child to be withdrawn from collective worship, we ask that they meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. **See Appendix One**

# *What happens if children miss collective worship? The law is clear – all children are statutorily entitled to daily act of collective worship, and it is not within the power of staff to deprive them of this entitlement for e.g. swimming, remedial reading or music lessons. If a whole class is missing, then a class-based act of worship can be held for them at a different time of the day. Individuals or small groups of children should not be timetabled out of collective worship, and the school may need to look at provision e.g. the use of peripatetic music teachers.*

# **Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation**

Outline how this policy was developed who was consulted and what resources and information you took account of eg: This policy has been prepared by (the governors and headteacher with assistance from other staff and diocesan advisers).

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

* Children’ personal development and wellbeing
* Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC) and Personal, Social and Health Education (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 / or on the school website.

# **How collective worship is organised (If preferred, this could be Appendix Two – as it is operational rather than policy)**

The organisation of collective worship should be listed here under the headings

**Leadership**

* Who leads daily worship e.g. the headteacher, a member of staff, a pupil or small group of children, a whole class, a member of the clergy or local church, individual visitors or teams e.g. Open the Book
* How support and guidance is given to visitors leading worship. An information leaflet for visitors is produced by the Diocese of Leicester, which may be a useful example. See Appendix 3 in [this document.](https://www.teachingschool.learnat.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=31&type=pdf)

**Planning**

* How worship is planned and who is involved in the planning. How the school involves children in planning.
* How all members of the school community, especially children, are equipped to plan and lead acts of worship
* How worship reflects the cycle of the Church year (May wish to refer to Appendix liturgical calendar)
* 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
* How a pattern for worship is used 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
* How opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today’s world
* How the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God is explored
* How spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured

**Organisation**

How is CW organised to take account of:

* 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
	+ The structure of collective worship such as Gathering, Engaging, Responding, Sending
* At what point in the school day worship is held and the amount of time allocated

#

# **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/trustees
* The headteacher and the senior leadership team
* Clergy and church partners
* Teaching and support staff
* Children
* 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.

(insert any further information about staff training – this could include the SDBE’s PSA CPD sessions)

# **Monitoring and evaluation**

*Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation should be identified here - eg:*

* The practical strategies used to 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 or/and clergy
* Evidence to show how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time

# **Disseminating the policy**

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all children. This policy is available on our school website.

**Review of this policy**

There will be a review every three years of this policy. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the collective worship leader, together with a senior leaders and governors. This will include discussions with children and other members of staff, observation of teaching and monitoring of children’s work. Evaluation of teaching plans will from part of any review. The outcomes will influence the school development plan.

**Other Useful Documents:**

List any useful documents

Date of last review:

Headteacher signed: Date:

Chair of Governors signed: Date:

**Appendix One – In the event that a parent wishes that their child is withdrawn from collective worship**

**(Outline the arrangements in your school here)**

During this meeting, it may be helpful to establish:

* The elements of collective worship in which the parent 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 will require any advanced notice of such collective 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 headteacher 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.)*

**APPENDIX Two - Liturgical Colours and seasons of the Christian year**



|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Season** | **Liturgical Colour** | **Description** |
| Advent | Purple | The period covering the four Sundays before the 25th December:Period of preparation for Christmas. |
| Christmas-tide | White or Gold | 25th December to 2nd February |
| Gap Between | Green | Gap of Green until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday |
| Lent | Purple | The 40 days of preparation for Easter |
| Maundy Thursday | White or Gold | The Last Supper |
| Good Friday | Red | The Crucifixion |
| Easter-tide | White or Gold | Easter Day until Pentecost |
| Pentecost | Red | 50 Days after Easter (lasts a week) |
| The Rest of the Year | Green | From Pentecost to Advent |
|  |  |  |
| Meaning of the colours | Purple | Penitence, preparation |
| White or Gold | Joy, purity, innocence, Saints who are not martyrs |
| Red | Fire & Blood, therefore Holy Spirit and Martyrdom |
| Green | Everything else |
|  |  |  |
| **In some places** | Blue | The Blessed Virgin Mary |
| Pink | Mothering Sunday (4th in Lent) and 3rd in Advent |

There are different versions of the colours used.

Please consult your parish for the colours used locally.

1. 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 different faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “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) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)