



The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Aided Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

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Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H. (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)

At 'The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Primary School', our children & families are at the centre of everything we do. In our inclusive & unique learning community with two distinctive Christian Foundations, every experience enables all to flourish as individuals so we thrive together as God intended. We are blessed with beautiful outdoor & indoor spaces which we use fully to play and learn, nurturing one another mentally, physically, emotionally, academically and spiritually. We strive for our school community keep being compassionate, loving, kind, responsible citizens who act wisely and keep giving.

Love your neighbour as you love yourself.

The John Wesley is a Church of England and Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School and our Christian values are at the heart of everything we do.

- ❖ **Koinonia**
- ❖ **Love**
- ❖ **Compassion**
- ❖ **Wisdom**
- ❖ **Forgiveness**
- ❖ **Service**

These are underpinned by our learning values:

- ❖ **Promoting curiosity** – asking questions, delving deeper and analysing
- ❖ **Developing communication** – listening, empathy and relationship-building
- ❖ **'Prove it' opportunities** – problem solving, decision making and exploration
- ❖ **Sharing views and opinions** – visual, spoken and written
- ❖ **Encouraging creativity** – innovation, imagination and spirituality

Our whole school vision is built upon and guided by these. Every school policy is written with this in mind and implemented in way that reflects our vision of our children being able to '**Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H**' (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)'.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

As a Church of England and Methodist school, collective worship is the beating heart of our school life. It brings and gives life to all we do. Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a school family, giving opportunity to learn, worship and grow. It is not simply a statutory duty.

In our school, we want to see Collective Worship enable pupils and staff to gather together to respond through prayer, reflection, singing, celebrating and sharing feelings.

Collective worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of koinonia, love, compassion, wisdom, forgiveness and service, celebrating the central role that each pupil and adult have to play in our community.

We recognise that not all staff or children have a Christian faith. We welcome everyone to Collective Worship and offer it as a shared space for reflection and spiritual growth where our communities grow together in love and respect.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and Methodist churches and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality.

Collective worship therefore will be:

- Inclusive – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- Invitational – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to ‘do anything’. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- Inspiring – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community’s behaviour and actions.

2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The legal requirements of collective worship in Voluntary Aided schools are:

- Be conducted in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deeds of the school and Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- The Governing Body should ensure that all pupils each day engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church
- Arrangements for collective worship, in foundation schools of a religious character, are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consulting with the Headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52 & 53)
- All acts of worship in Church schools must be Christian in character (based on Biblical teachings)
- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw) must on 'each school day take part in an act of collective worship'.
- If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, then the school must comply. (Education Reform Act 1988. s9 (3)) The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from collective worship.

3. AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship offers pupils, staff and the wider school community the opportunity to:

- Gather together to share sacred moments of joy, challenge, grief and love.
- Explore the school's distinctive Christian vision and values in action
- Reflect on the nature of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still, pray and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Explore Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate significant and special times in the Christian calendar
- Develop in children a sense of community spirit
- Enable children to explore their own beliefs
- Encourage participation and response

In line with the requirements of the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection whether they are engaged in learning in school or at home.
- b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.
- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

4. THE ANGLICAN FAITH AND PRACTICE

In addition to the above, we provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England and Methodist church as a part of the heritage of our schools.

We seek to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with thought given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster links with our link Churches (Church of England and Methodist), involving clergy in leading / joining us for Collective Worship and providing coherence with worship in church.

Throughout the year, we aim to visit our link churches regularly for worship times as part of the Christian calendar and we also offer the opportunity for all children to experience worship in the wider church e.g. at the cathedral or on a Sunday morning.

We aim for our Collective Worship to be creative and to inspire pupils into action.

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship through invitational and inclusive language:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses – Taizé style

We may also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using prayers from Common Worship
- Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship

5. CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND FAITHS

We recognise that some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, some worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which no-one's integrity is compromised and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

We aim to provide a space for reflection, where everyone finds something positive for themselves.

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND PLANNING

Overview and Long-term planning for Collective Worship is led by the Headteacher but is delegated to an appropriate member of staff, our Collective Worship Leader for weekly planning. Responsibility is not be delegated.

Daily collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbents and key leaders of our link churches and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader, guided by the weekly planning.

The Headteacher and collective worship leader ensure that visiting speakers receive copies of the plans. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the plans as a basis for developing their own plans for individual acts of worship.

Pupils as well as adults engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of Collective Worship. Aspects of Collective Worship are discussed regularly in a staff meeting and by the school council or a team of children, designated as Collective Worship leaders.

Our school plans systematically and cohesively using Canterbury Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year, celebrating festivals and saints' days as appropriate. Our chosen Christian values and other Christian values are explored in a variety of ways, through story, song, prayer and reflection.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community, for example, with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle
- **Engage** – we share, for example, a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message
- **Respond** – pupils and adults, for example, discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- **Send** – we share, for example, the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our candle

Our act of worship are organised across the week differently but an act of Collective Worship is always held daily which may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups meeting together.

Day	Type	Who attends
Monday 10.30am	Whole School or Class Worship	RH/SLT to lead; Whole School Worship in hall
Tuesday 10.30am	Class Worship	Class Worship
Wednesday 10.30am	Play Worship (Week A) Praise & Reflection Worship (Week B)	JL to lead; Whole School Worship in hall KB with JC support to lead; Whole School Worship in hall
Thursday 10.30am	Clergy Worship	Clergy/Visitor to lead; Whole School Worship in hall
Friday 2.05pm	Celebration Worship	SLT/ Worship Leaders to lead; Whole school in hall

Where Collective Worship forms part of an assembly, we will ensure there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include: music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT.

7. EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS

In The John Wesley CEM Primary School, there is an expectation that all pupils will be involved within worship on a regular basis. This may be opportunities planned ahead of time or unplanned through questioning, asking for volunteers or simply responding to moments of spontaneity.

Pupils are invited to evaluate and reflect on the impact of acts of worship they have joined with. Their voice is integral to improving the structure, content and in shaping future plans for worship.

Pupil worship leaders are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the collective worship leader during meetings throughout the term to develop their own understanding of worship and to design an act of worship to support the spiritual development of their peers.

8. INCLUSION

In line with the Equalities Act 2010, we are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability, religion, physical or sensory disability or any other protected characteristic.

We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs as appropriate e.g. taking account of different learning styles and using multi-sensory approaches.

9. DEVELOPING WORSHIP

Parents, pupils and adults in The John Wesley CEM Primary School are entitled to be led in worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a Church School context.

Therefore, all those leading worship, including staff and clergy, have access to regular Diocesan-led and Methodist-led training.

The Collective Worship Leader will:

- Ensure that all pupils have access to a daily act of collective worship, therefore meeting statutory requirements.
- Ensure that collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.
- Attend regular training and network meetings with Canterbury Diocese
- Produce and regularly review the collective worship policy to ensure that it remains reflects current practice and thinking.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of collective worship across the school.
- Ensure all stakeholders know what the expectations of worship are when leading, planning and joining worship.

- Join those who are leading worship to provide supportive feedback on how worship could be developed.
- Evaluate the impact of collective worship on the whole school community by gathering pupil and adult voice.
- Signpost staff to a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and resources, to help develop their confidence in leading acts of worship.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited to lead collective worship.
- Meet with and encourage pupil leaders of worship to enable them to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.

10. VISITORS LEADING WORSHIP

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. Before they led our worship, they are expected to discuss the content of any worship with a member of the Headteacher or Collective Worship Leader in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

It is the responsibility of the Collective Worship Leader and senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and our school's vision. They will be supported and monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation process of worship.

11. SELF-ASSESSMENT AND INSPECTION

Our school regularly evaluates all acts of collective worship and the impact they have on the school and our wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop.

We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. Questionnaires provided for staff and pupils are useful indicators and are used to help monitor this impact of Collective Worship. These are shared with our staff meetings and Full Governing Body meetings and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school.

The impact of collective worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS). SIAMS inspectors explore the ways in which Collective Worship is an expression of the school's Christian vision and to what extent it is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.

12. PARENTAL WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE

Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

As established by the 1944 Education Act and reinforced in this policy, we respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship, so would welcome the opportunity to discuss this decision with them.

Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act. This includes the school continuing to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from Collective Worship.

13. CONTRIBUTION TO SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL (SMSC) DEVELOPMENT

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for love and forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

APPENDIX

What is Collective Worship?

Legislation requires schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools, to conduct daily acts of Collective Worship. However, the legislation does not define what is meant by the term 'Collective Worship'.

"... Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'collective worship' rather than 'corporate worship'. (DfE Circular 1/94 para 57)

Corporate worship assumes a shared set of beliefs and values, i.e. a worshipping congregation meeting on a Sunday, where the worship is confessional and evangelistic (to spread the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness).

Collective worship, in recognising the collectivity of all participants, can make no such assumption that all have the same beliefs and values.

Collective Worship should be:

*"Appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes."
(DfE Circular 1/94 p.22)*

Therefore, collective worship in Church of England and Methodist schools must be inclusive and invitational of all, to ensure all can be present with integrity.