

# Collective Worship Policy



## Context

The 1998 School Standards and Framework Act<sup>1</sup> states that, 'each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship. (Broadly of a Christian character).

Collective Worship will encompass our school vision and aims of our curriculum to produce wise, compassionate citizens with the power to make a difference. **The school's aim will be to** recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, lifestyles and faiths which exist in our school and local community and for the integrity of the faith of each person in the community to be respected and valued equally

The term 'Collective Worship' acknowledges that school communities comprise a collection of different individuals and beliefs and is different to 'Corporate Worship' where everyone is committed to a particular faith.

Collective Worship provides our school community to gather together, to take time out of our busy, modern world and to reflect on what is important and how we can make the world a better place.

In accordance with the law and our Trust Deed<sup>2</sup>, our acts of Collective Worship will be primarily Christian in nature, but we want all Collective Worship to be Inclusive, Invitational and Inspirational so that all members of our diverse community feel able to attend and to learn and reflect together.

Our understanding of Christianity is that it is an **inclusive** faith which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels and encourages pupils to consider the needs of others through charitable service and courageous advocacy. Thus, we welcome children and staff of all faiths and none to worship. Worship at St. Ebbe's is **invitational** – all members of our community are invited, not expected, to participate in acts of worship such as prayer. We aim for our collective worship to be **inspiring** so that, in line with our school vision, participation assists learners to have increased awareness and to reflect on fundamental issues about life, to nurture spiritual growth and to build on children's innate curiosity.

We hope that all members of the school community will enjoy and benefit from the school's act of collective worship and that the whole community will want to be included.

## Policy

- The expectation is that there will be an atmosphere in which everyone feels affirmed, valued and safe
- Leaders will focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils
- In preparation, participation and leadership, we will foster active roles of pupils, staff, church leaders, leaders from other faiths and members of the local community
- We will provide opportunities for participants to experience stillness through prayer or reflection and clearly signal the time to do so with an invitation to join in

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<sup>1</sup> 1998 School Standards and Framework Act

<sup>2</sup> Section 69 (4) of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (schools of a religious character in line with the Trust Deed)

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- Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.
- Children will be provided with opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives and enhance, complement and extend their learning through music, dance, drama, film, images and words
- In line with our Trust Deed, we will develop learners' understanding of the Christian faith and Church and encounter and explore the teachings of Jesus
- One assembly per week will be led alternately by St. Ebbe's and St. Matthew's Church
- The headteacher will oversee the content of collective worship through collaborative planning with our church leaders, staff and children
- Themes of worship will be chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values
- As a Church school, we will follow the seasons of the Church year and within these observe significant festivals and other special days such as Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost.
- Harvest, Christmas and Easter will be observed at St. Matthew's Church
- We will also observe 'International' or 'National Days' which reflect our school values (e.g. International Day for Human Rights, International Women's Day, Earth Day)
- The focus of each assembly will be published on our school website
- To reflect our rich and diverse community, we will develop learners' understanding of the faiths that are represented in our school as well as secular worldviews.
- We will include opportunities to celebrate the academic, social, personal and wider achievements of pupils.
- We will plan and provide opportunities for children of all faiths to share stories, readings, music and other forms of expression for others to respond to according to their beliefs
- We will seek opportunities for staff and children to contribute to the planning and delivery of collective worship
- Parents and carers have the right to withdraw children from Collective Worship by requesting a meeting with the Headteacher.

## How will we know it's working?

- All children will feel included and able to participate regardless of their beliefs
- Parents will be confident in the invitational nature of our worship
- Children will speak positively about their collective worship experiences
- Staff will reflect positively on their experiences of collective worship

Approved by Governors	February 2021
Review date	February 2024

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