



Part of the Minster Trust for Education



# Collective Worship Policy

November 2023



**Together we can grow to be the best that God has created us to be.**

At Holy Trinity C of E School, the daily act of Collective Worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life. It reflects and explores our school's distinctive Christian character and contributes to the academic achievement, personal development, and well-being of all learners.

Collective Worship is a time to learn more about God, and to promoting our school's vision, values and virtues, that permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly.

Our school values (which incorporate our British Values) of respect, honesty, kindness, forgiveness and responsibility are based on the Bible verse:

*'Jesus said "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples" John 13:34-5*

and the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23:

*Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection.

At Holy Trinity C of E Infant School we consider Collective Worship to be a significant educational activity. Therefore, Collective Worship at Holy Trinity C of E Infant School is planned to:

- Be inspirational and inclusive. It should engage all learners and they should be able to talk about the impact it makes on their relationships and on life in our school.
- Regularly include Biblical material and Christian teaching and this should explore and relate to our school's core Christian values.
- Have a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit enabling all learners to embark on an understanding of the Trinity.

- Help all learners to understand Anglican and other Christian traditions found in the UK and worldwide.
- Challenge all learners of all backgrounds to understand and embark on their own spiritual journey. They should understand the value of prayer, reflection and stillness.
- Contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; by providing all learners with something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to.
- Be an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals. Collective worship should be an experience that does not offend the integrity of the non-religious or those of different faith.

If we are to be inclusive in our worship in this school, taking the family backgrounds of the children into consideration, then, when according a special status to Jesus Christ, all pupils, whatever their beliefs, need to be respected. It is therefore appropriate in this school to tell stories of the life of Jesus, but inappropriate for all children to be required to address Him in prayer. Pupils are asked only to say 'Amen' if they would like to.

Many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all the faiths. It is important to concentrate on these as well as those specific to Christianity.

### **Legal Requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group which is in line with the schools Trust Deed and foundation.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Headteacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship. It is intended that consultation will take place before formal requests are made to withdraw from acts of worship. In the case of parents or teachers, contact needs to be made with the Headteacher. Guidance for new parents on non-participation in acts of Collective Worship is given in the school prospectus.

### **Organisation**

We previously reviewed our planning format for Collective Worship to provide more consistency in the gathering, engaging, responding, and sending parts of our worship, and we have found this to work very well. We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. Our current schedule is as follows:

**Monday:** Theme/Bible story of week

The themes for Monday's collective worships reflect our values focus for that half term, the Church calendar, our school ethos and current events.

**Tuesday:** Singing Worship

We take time to carefully consider the words of one of the songs and make this into a worshipful experience by reflecting on and responding to that song.

**Wednesday:** 'Open the Book' led by clergy and congregation members of local churches.

**Thursday:** Picture News – asking big questions and opportunity to look at events around the globe. Holy Trinity uses the version for church schools with links to Christianity.

**Friday:** Recap and review of the theme of the week.

**Friday afternoon:** Celebration Collective Worship in which achievements of pupils at the school are celebrated.

Collective Worship takes place as a whole school at 11.40am daily and lasts for 20 minutes. It is usually but not exclusively held in the End Room. Once a term, we join the 'Connections' group in Holy Trinity Church and sometimes lead Collective Worship for them. We also encourage each class to lead a Collective Worship once a term.

We recognise the importance of marking out the act of Collective Worship from other assembly activities. We attempt to mark out this special time by playing music as the children enter and leave, beginning with our school's Collective Worship prayer (written by the children), lighting a candle and using the liturgy 'God is here ... His Spirit is with us' and ending with our 'Messy Grace'. Any notices are given before the school Collective Worship prayer or after our 'Messy Grace'.

**Our pattern of Collective Worship**

The acts of worship generally follow themes that are aligned to the school's values but include a recognition of the church's year and make space for other national events. We follow a 3-year cycle:

Year 1: Our Values

Year 2: 'The Big Picture' of the whole Bible (Understanding Christianity)

Year 3: The Fruit of the Spirit

We primarily use the Jesus Story Book Bible resources and 'Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing' by Sally Lloyd Jones but make use of other resources as appropriate as well as readings from the original text of the Bible.

The programme of acts of Collective Worship is coordinated by Marie Thompson. The Link Governor is [Ian Baird-Smith](#).

**Prayer and Reflection**

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including singing worship. The use of regular moments of silence and reflection provides opportunities for

some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish. A range of prayers may be used including the Lord's Prayer, prayers said by the children and others. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. Our prayers are addressed to Jesus and God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England.

Words introducing any prayer-like activity are given as an invitation rather than an instruction and there is an expectation that everyone will be still and listen to the words a prayer, without expectation of participation. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

At the beginning of the school day, our school morning prayer is said in each class. At the beginning of lunch, grace is sung. The 'Special Helper' in each class is asked if they would like to give thanks at the end of the day and if not, our end of day prayer is said.

Every classroom has a Reflective Area. Children can use these spaces if they need a moment to reflect during the school day. In the Hive, there is a Prayer Post Box and a Prayer Book. Children are encouraged to write short prayers and post them in the box. These are then included in the Prayer Book.

For each service led by the school in church (Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Leaver's Service) the children write a prayer either as a class or individually with the ideas being collated into a prayer.

### **Community Involvement in Collective Worship**

The following people are involved on a regular basis with our worship programme:

Ann Clark, Susanne Dent, Shelagh Baird-Smith (Holy Trinity Church)

Roger (Riverside Church)

Peter Hibbard (Methodist Church)

### **Other Faiths**

Our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, and we are also committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance, and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs.

### **Visits and visitors**

As part of the curriculum, Holy Trinity C of E Infant School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge – their role is to educate, not to evangelise.

Visitors should understand the educational aims of Collective Worship at the school. Attempts to persuade pupils to adopt a particular religious or non-religious belief are not appropriate.

Holy Trinity Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the whole school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and Leavers' Services.

In general, the Headteacher is consulted before a visiting speaker is confirmed. Visitors should not speak about raising money for any cause(s) without the prior permission of the Headteacher.

### **Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs**

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, age, gender, and ethnic origin will have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of religion. At each key stage, the teacher will draw from other religions as appropriate to acknowledge and celebrate the religious beliefs of the children within the class.

### **Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring**

A planning file is kept for acts of worship. At the beginning of the academic year, A3 folders for Collective Worship are set up, where different staff record the content of each Collective Worship and the reflections of the pupils. Training is encouraged and available for those who wish to lead acts of worship.

Reviewed: November 2023

Next review due in November 2025