

St Katherine's C of E Primary School



Collective Worship Policy July 2024

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'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Gospel of Mark Chapter 12 verse 31)

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision of 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12:31). Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, 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.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, classes, or other combinations
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds

- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises and occasionally at the local Parish Church of St Nicholas or at Chelmsford Cathedral on special occasions
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher

Principles of Collective Worship

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 home 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

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord’s Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship. We ‘gather’, ‘engage’, ‘respond’ and ‘send’. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

At St Katherine’s CE Primary School, we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster links with St Nicholas Church, involving the Reverend Marion Walford in leading Collective Worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit at least four times per year as part of the Christian calendar, either as a whole school or as individual classes.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At St Katherine's CE Primary School, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many 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 the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to St Katherine's CE Primary School, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act

Planning of Collective Worship

The Collective Worship leader (Headteacher) plans the themes for the term and then creates a detailed half termly plan taking account of school activities, festivals and important events.

The person leading the collective worship is expected to plan their worship as carefully as they would a lesson.

Pupils are involved in planning and leading Collective Worship by working with the Collective Worship leader to discuss their ideas and how they can either be involved or lead particular worship sessions.

Class worship focuses on Picture News and gives children to discuss key themes in smaller groups, enabling greater discussion which also supports to deepen thinking.

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books which we regularly update and improve. We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. The welcoming member of staff will discuss with the visitor prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices of Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with the children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural 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 forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the culture of others. Children are also provided with spiritual experiences within the local environment to give time for reflection and discussion in other environments.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed through discussions with pupils and staff through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship.

Collective Worship is monitored by the Headteacher, R.E Subject Leader and Chair of Governors.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make

Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The Headteacher as Collective Worship Leader is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

The policy will be reviewed every two years.

Date: July 2024

Review date: July 2026

Responsible Person: Headteacher, RE Subject Leader and Chair of Governors