



Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." **Proverbs 22:6**

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Adopted	J. Hackney
Committee	Standards
Review Date	September 2024

We are a Christian school where quality and opportunities make a difference. We value all children as unique 'Children of God' and nurture each other to show **LOVE** in our relationships and a **RESPECT** for all. We foster **HOPE** within our community and encourage children to find **PEACE** by creating times and places for stillness and reflection. We strive for excellence, inspiring dreams both now and in the future. We promote **POSITIVITY**, celebrate **COURAGE**, demonstrate **RESPONSIBILITY** and share **JOY** through...

'Learning, loving, laughing in the light of Jesus'.

Collective Worship Policy

As a Church of England school worship is central to Forsbrook Primary School.

Worship is...

*Giving honour and reverence to a supreme being.
Christian worship is concerned with bringing praise, prayer,
thanksgiving and adoration to God.*

It is an activity of response: in words, actions and thoughts.

Mission statement

Collective worship plays a central part in the life of Forsbrook Primary School. As an expression of the Christian ethos and spiritual life of the school it offers the whole school community opportunities to participate in the expression of Christian worship, valued and honoured through the school's Anglican Foundation. This is set within the context of the corporate community of our school and its historic partnership Forsbrook Church of England Primary School. We affirm every individual's unique contribution, regardless of age, gender, ability, background or religion.

Legal requirements:

Trust Deed

Our daily act of collective worship is in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school. This requires worship to be consistent with the faith, principles and practices of the Church of England.

DfES guidance

We also take into account DfES legislation. The following link will take you to the current legislation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collective-worship-in-schools>

1988 Education Act

We also take into account the 1988 Education Act that states,

*'.....all pupils in attendance at a maintained school **shall in each school day** take part in an act of collective worship',*

And, that this should be,

'.....mainly of a broadly Christian character'

Worship and/or Assemblies

Every week at Forsbrook Church of England Primary School we hold a Values Celebration assembly, where the whole school come together to celebrate when the children have demonstrated a Christian School Value along with celebrating the gifts that God has given to them, this can include out of school achievements. We also hold assemblies throughout the year where parents and carers are invited to join our celebration service. This is still regarded as an act of worship through saying prayer and thanking God for pupil's achievements and successes.

Section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

All church schools, whether they are Voluntary Aided (VA), Voluntary Controlled (VC) or Foundation (F) will be inspected on collective worship and the impact this has on the whole school community. Here at Forsbrook Church of England Primary School this inspection will evaluate the school's collective worship on the following:

- the extent to which learners and adults engage with collective worship, its relevance and the way it makes a difference to the lives of members of the whole school community
- the extent to which collective worship is distinctively Christian, setting out the values of the school in their Christian context
- how well collective worship develops personal spirituality within the school community through a range of experiences, including a focus on prayer
- how well collective worship enables participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- how effectively the school community is involved in the planning, leadership and evaluation of collective worship

The right of withdrawal – see appendix

We recognise the right of withdrawal from worship for pupils at the request of parents and for staff, but encourage discussion with the relevant individuals to ensure that there is understanding of the aims and objectives of worship, and strategies for minimising the disruption caused by any withdrawals.

Worship is Inclusive, Invitational, and Inspiring

Inclusive:

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. Pupils, their families and other adults encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all. Many pupils and staff in our school will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils are given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There is space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider.

It is an expectation that care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

Collective worship should not be 'done to' but will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship.

Inclusion requires pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship. Although part of a national legislative framework, collective worship in the Church school grows out of the local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds.

Invitational:

Parents, pupils and adults can encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship provides 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.

The metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' captures this idea. The warmth of the fire derives from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at its heart. There is no value to an encounter with a watered down, lowest common denominator version of faith. Importantly the door is open, all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable.

Pupils and adults should always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and should be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer is always accompanied by the option to reflect. Music and liturgies used in worship will reflect the best of traditional and modern Anglican worship, it should connect with the theme and explore the sacred to educate and engage. Music used reflects the diverse worship experience of the wider Christian community.

Inspiring:

Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter to be inspirational. Worship is formational and transformational: it enables pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It motivates pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result of inspirational collective worship, they are inspired to become courageous advocates of causes.

It encourages them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions. There will always be those who are uncomfortable to enter through this open door of worship in our schools and so the Church of England recognises the right of withdrawal from collective worship for those parents or pupils who wish to exercise this option.

Aims of worship

The gathering of pupils each day incorporates collective worship. Worship will:

- Be appropriate to the age, aptitude and family background of pupils.
- Provided in a variety of settings, groupings and timings, with a variety of leaders including Church worker, visiting speakers, Reverend and staff
- Give children daily opportunities to reflect and pray at the end of Collective Worship.
- Be a collaboration between the Reverend and school, in preparing and delivering worship services at St. Church.
- Be planned and reflected upon with the influence of our worship council

Worship should provide opportunities to:

- enhance the spiritual development and response of pupils
- foster reflection, meditation, prayer and silence
- create an atmosphere in which God is both normal and natural
- foster a reverential attitude to God
- foster empathy and imagination, enabling pupils to participate in a variety of ways
- actively involve pupils in the delivery of worship in creative and imaginative ways including reading, poetry, drama, dance, quiet / silent reflection, prayer, singing.
- explore and enjoy praise, prayer and the rituals of Christianity (the Anglican tradition in particular)
- affirm the Christian faith and the central Christian status of Jesus as the Son of God
- affirm the Christian belief in the Trinity and explore the meaning of each person of the Trinity
- enable pupils to reflect on the experiences of Christian adherents
- foster and value a search for a faith to live by
- explore the schools Christian values to deepen pupils understanding of them and how they relate to the school, local community and wider world
- learn about and reflect upon Christian teaching, Biblical material and Christian festivals, in a way that relates to the pupils' experience and to living together in community
- worship together rather than apart
- provide an evocative setting for worship that fosters spiritual growth and reflection
- experience a broad spectrum of Christian tradition (various expressions of worship)
- inspire pupils to explore further their own faith and tradition
- encourage pupils and staff to plan, participate and lead in worship
- develop a sense of community and shared values
- consider the needs of others and to foster charitable works
- celebrate the highest achievements of the human spirit
- celebrate achievements of members of the school in every aspect of school life
- foster a thought provoking atmosphere allowing for spiritual reflection and response
- make regular use of local church buildings for worship

Other opportunities that worship can offer are:

- celebrate the beliefs and cultures of others particularly those represented in our school
- celebrate of achievements of members of the school community
- reinforce school expectations, good behaviour and school routines
- share local school and community information.

Management of worship

Ultimately the responsibility for collective worship lies with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors. However, the role of planning, resourcing, managing and evaluating worship has been delegated to Miss Hackney. In addition all teachers in a church school are 'spiritual leaders' and have a responsibility to help pupils develop spiritual awareness. Pupils are also a part of the planning and delivery of Collective Worship.

Monitoring, evaluating & action planning worship

Worship is monitored and evaluated frequently in order to ensure that it meets the needs of all who take part. All stakeholders opinions are sought include pupils, teachers, governors & parents. A yearly action plan which feeds into the school development plan is written and revised to ensure that worship remains relevant and up to date.

Worship themes and current practice

The worship themes for each week are based around and number of resources.
Anglican Lectionary and themes based on the schools Christian values.

Appendix

Guidance for schools and academies on the right to withdrawal from Religious Education and Collective Worship March 2017

Collective Worship

The *1944 Education Act* gave the right to withdraw from RE or collective worship to parents who wished their children to receive different form of RE or worship. This right is also confirmed in section 71 of the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*. In the case of collective worship, the government guidance document is *Circular 1/94: Religious Education and Collective Worship*.

Collective worship in all Church of England schools and academies should honour the school's trust deed and Christian foundations. Worship is central to school life, offering an opportunity for the whole school community to explore the distinctive beliefs and narrative that underpins the school's Anglican foundations and distinctive Christian character. Worship is the responsibility of the governing body in conjunction with the headteacher, working in partnership with the staff and the local parish church.

Our Church of England schools should strive to ensure they are consistently excellent, distinctive, and inclusive, and that the whole curriculum is underpinned by Christian values. Religious Education is an important part of the curriculum in all Church of England schools and academies. Its nature, objectives, and content should be shared with parents each term to ensure that parents are able to recognise that RE is of educational value to all pupils, whatever their belief background. In the same way, collective worship should lie at the heart of school life, proclaiming its distinctive character and faith in a way that is relevant, inclusive and that leads each pupil a little further in their spiritual journey. In this way, the likelihood for parental requests for withdrawal should be reduced. However, when they are made they must be handled accordingly to the legal guidance, while there is scope for a little realism and adaptability in order to ensure the best for every pupil.

In many of our schools within the Diocese of Lichfield, there is a large percentage of children whose families are members of another faith. It is the purpose and duty of every church school to be distinctive as a Church of England school. In each school, it is part of the mission of the church to welcome those of other faiths and no faith. In most cases, parents will have chosen the school for their child, making a specific choice of the school because of the ethos and education it offers. In a small number of cases, parents of other faiths will have been offered a place at a church school because no other school has a place for their child within a reasonable catchment area.

The right to withdraw from collective worship should be at the instigation of the parents or pupils above the age of 16.

The right of withdrawal from collective worship

The right of withdrawal from collective worship would normally be exercised through the physical withdrawal of the pupil from the place where the act of worship is taking place. Indeed the school could insist that this is the way the right is to be implemented. If, however, both the parent and the school agree that the pupil should be allowed to remain physically present during the collective worship but not take part in it, nothing in the law prevents this.

Experience suggests that, to avoid misunderstanding, a Headteacher / Principal will find it helpful to establish with any parent wanting to exercise the right to withdrawal:

- the elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part;
- the practical implications of withdrawal; and
- whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and, if so, how much.

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to a particular faith or denomination, the governors and Headteacher / Principal will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school; and
- that the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in **Section 1 of the 1988 Education Act. (Circular 1/94)**