St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Our vision

We prepare every pupil for their best future by ensuring they reach their full potential and attain the knowledge, skills and understanding required for success as we believe that 'With God, all things are possible'. Matthew 19:26

Date reviewed:	February 2026
Reviewed by:	C Taylor
Approved by Headteacher:	February 2026
Date of next review:	January 2027

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

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Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to 'live life in all its fullness.' (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Statement

At St. Nicholas Church of England Primary School, worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At our school, collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (*and other faiths*[1]) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.[2]

[1] Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

[2] "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God". William Temple (1881-1894)

Church of England Guidance

Our collective worship policy draws on guidance from the Church of England [3]. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school.

This can take place at anytime in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is not relevant.

Worship at St. Nicholas should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The governing body have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this is made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- 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 their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

[3] https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Collective worship at St. Nicholas aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

HOW COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS ORGANISED

Organisation and Delivery of Collective Worship

The agreed pattern of weekly worship:

Day	Time	Composition	Location	Led by
Monday	9:10	Whole School	Hall	HT
Tuesday	9.10 10.25	KS1 KS2	Hall	KS Leaders
Wednesday	9.10	Whole school	Hall	DHT / AHT
Thursday	9:10	Whole School	Hall	HT or DHT with Clergy
Friday	9.10	Whole School	Hall	* Class led assembly (to which parents are invited) * Achievement assembly * In-class assembly

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff

The Governing Body indicate that it is a condition of appointment that teaching staff are required to be present at Acts of Collective Worship and should be involved in as many ways as possible.

The Headteacher is responsible for the oversight of worship. This role includes:

- Co-ordinating the planning of worship
- Keeping a record of all worship themes / hymns
- Attending INSET on worship
- Consulting with pupils
- Keeping up to date with resources
- Budgeting for worship resources
- Being responsible for the use of outside visitors leading worship.

Staff should evolve good practice for led worship, organise class assemblies, assist in the sharing of children's achievements and support their children in making their contribution towards Church worship and special services. This will be a focus for senior manager monitoring.

All staff are welcome to join our worship.

Children

Children enter the hall quietly, in single file and are seated in the given positions. The mood is calm and still and they sit listening to music silently, or joining in with the hymn playing (as appropriate), which helps to create an atmosphere of calm and is an opportunity for meditation, prayer and contemplation.

During the worship, strategies are used to evoke and encourage a response. Children are asked to answer questions, reflect or pray in silence and praise through singing in verse and song. On some occasions staff will encourage the children to reflect on the content and follow up discussion in class.

It is on rare occasions that children miss worship due to unavoidable support activities and interventions.

During worship staff try to ensure that necessary discipline is quiet and as unobtrusive as possible. When necessary, children are moved to the end of a line to sit nearer to an adult in order to maintain a calm and spiritual atmosphere.

Governors

Governors are very welcome to attend worship as this enhances their position in our school community. It also helps them to share in the life of the school.

Parents

Parents are invited to participate in our worship in Church – Harvest Service, Christingle Service, Easter Service and the Leavers Service at the end of the school year.

They are also invited to participate in class led worship on Fridays. We ask that they understand that this is collective worship and not a performance, so photographs are not permitted until the act of worship is finished.

Clergy, etc.

We welcome other Christian clergy and lay persons to lead our worship. We believe that the children will benefit from the rich reservoir of talent, interest and skills which these people are able to contribute to worship.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The Monitoring and Evaluation of worship can be: Large evaluation books for whole school or Key Stage worship; governor evaluation sheets; monitoring by other SLT members; evaluation by our Christian Leaders group; clergy.

DISSEMINATING THE POLICY

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.