



# St John's C of E Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

School Policy based on <b>Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Education's</b> guidelines	<b>Prepared by Deputy Headteacher</b>
School Staff were consulted on this document	<b>Autumn 2024</b>
It was reviewed by the Full Governing Body	<b>Autumn 2024</b>
To be reviewed	<b>Autumn 2026</b>

## St John's C of E Primary School

### Collective Worship Policy

#### Our Vision

Learn Together • Achieve Together • Celebrate Together  
*"and let your light shine" Matthew 5:16*

#### Our Mission Statement

To enable all children to achieve their true potential in a caring Christian community.

#### Our Values

Respect • Responsibility • Kindness • Truthfulness • Perseverance

### Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision 'Learn Together Achieve Together Celebrate Together' and "And let your light shine." (Matthew 5:16) and the associated values we derive from them: Respect, Kindness, Truthfulness, Perseverance and Responsibility. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship at St. John's 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, tutor 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, but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) 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 (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).<sup>1</sup> Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes 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 observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

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

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>  
Collective Worship Policy 2024

We foster links with St. John's Church, Danbury, involving Reverend Cannon Jacqui Jones in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit St. John's Church, Danbury at least four times per year as part of the Christian calendar.

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. John's 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. John's 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.

### **Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice**

#### **Leadership**

- Our Collective Worship is led by the Deputy Headteacher. He oversees the provision, planning and monitoring of what we do.
- Several different members of our community are involved in leading acts of worship, including staff, pupils and members of the local clergy or local church.

#### **Planning**

- Worship is planned by different members of staff who will deliver collective worship in line with the principles for Collective Worship and our School Vision and values.
- Our Worship reflects the Church of England Liturgical calendar. We mirror key festivals, such as various Saint's Days and Harvest, and talk about the importance of seasons, such as advent and lent, and what they mean for us as a school community.
- Children have the opportunity to explore 'Big Questions' and our worship always reflects what is going on in the world. Previously this has included global events (war and conflict), celebrations (such as the Olympics and other sports) and key items of news (such as loss and bereavement).

- Christian values of the school are identified, expressed, and celebrated through collective worship.
- Explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school.
- A pattern for worship is used which reflects Anglican tradition.
- A range and variety of materials used, including websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g., a picture or candle.
- Opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today's world through stories and questions.
- Spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured

## **Organisation**

Our Collective Worship is organised to take account of:

- Giving children the opportunity to worship in different settings, including their class, their year group and the wider school community.
- The different settings and places for worship, including worship spaces are made special; and how the atmosphere for worship is created using:
  - the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year will be displayed as part of the setting up of our worship spaces, with these explained to the children.
  - Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, as a focal point.
  - Ritual and liturgical responses, including repeated songs and responses used to shape our worship.
  - How the children are seated,
  - Areas beyond our classrooms and hall e.g. our prayer garden, the local church
- Collective Worship takes place at the end of the school day.

## **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 and artefacts 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 which are provided on arrival. The welcoming member of staff/headteacher/Collective Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with 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 cultures of others.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

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

### **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 Deputy Headteacher, as Collective Worship Coordinator, 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**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.