



Theale Church of England Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

“Collective Worship [...] is the unique heartbeat of the school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together.”

Inclusive Invitational Inspiring, Collective Worship in Church of England Schools

“Worship can be an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the common humanity of us all. The spiritual quest is not confined to those of a religious faith, but should be available to any who choose to explore that path. It is an inheritance and a birthright.”

Jill Fuller - Travelling Together

Published on Website	Yes
Author	Collective Worship Lead
Approved by	Headteacher
Date Approved	Spring 2026
Date of Next Review	Spring 2029
Responsibility for Next Review	Collective Worship Lead

At Theale CE Primary School, the children come first. This is underpinned by our Christian vision: "I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10

The children are central to every decision made in school. We will ensure that our children are happy and successful. They will grow to be ambitious and resilient, and their talents will be nurtured so they become highly skilled. Our children will be courageous and always behave with integrity. Our school curriculum and community will provide extensive opportunities for children and adults to have life more abundantly, including the opportunity to explore and develop a deep relationship with God. Collective Worship is fundamental in supporting the personal journeys of faith and spirituality of all members of our school community; it is driven by our vision and it expresses our vision, rooted in the words of Christ in John 10:10. Collective Worship is impactful, encouraging empathy, acceptance, love and kindness and strengthening relationships within our school community and local context. The children's conduct reflects the values that are explored and developed in Collective Worship: faith, love, joy, peace, respect, hope, integrity and trust. Children appreciate the guidance and reflection opportunities provided by Collective Worship.

Legal Context

As a Church of England school, we are committed to our legal requirement to provide Collective Worship each day for our pupils. It is central to life at our school and is a highly valued and valuable experience for all members of our school community, whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory. We make every effort to provide worship experiences that pupils, families and staff feel comfortable and safe being part of and that bring them joy and fulfillment. However, parents do have the right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship on religious grounds. In the first instance, parents who may wish to exercise this right should make an appointment to speak with the headteacher.

The Nature of Collective Worship: Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring

Each daily act of Collective Worship should be inclusive, invitational and inspiring, ensuring that it contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils and adults whilst respecting the dignity of all participants. A range of experiences and opportunities for learning, celebration and reflection make Collective Worship engaging, inspiring and enjoyable.

Through Collective Worship, we explore and celebrate Christianity as an inclusive faith, mirroring the example and lessons of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. Our inclusive approach ensures that children and adults of all faiths and worldviews are welcome, involved and valued. We also take opportunities to recognise and celebrate both similarities and diversity within and across cultures, lifestyles, faiths and worldviews.

During acts of worship, a sense of occasion is created. Through the range of worship opportunities provided, children and adults experience different styles and approaches to worship, giving them the chance to develop their own preferences. Opportunities for Christian celebration are identified, referencing the liturgical calendar and its cyclical nature, as well as relevant elements of other faiths and worldviews. The Christian vision is considered regularly, allowing the children to develop their understanding over time, recognise its impact and to build a sense of ownership of the school vision and values. Biblical and liturgical content fosters understanding of Anglican beliefs and practices, as well as helping children and adults to discover and appreciate the scope of variety with the Christian faith. Stories and teachings from the Old and New Testaments frame this understanding, including the example set by Jesus Christ through his actions and parables and Christian concepts such as incarnation, salvation and trinity.

Collective Worship provides plentiful opportunity to encourage children and adults to continue their personal journey of spiritual development through our 'mirrors, windows and doors' model:

- look inward (mirrors): reflect on who they are, their beliefs, values, and relationship with God
- look outward (windows): develop curiosity and empathy as they learn about others
- step forward (doors): live out their beliefs and values through action, service, creativity, and responsible choices that bring hope and fullness of life to others

These opportunities are planned explicitly and are often signposted to participants verbally and through use of familiar symbols. Children and adults partake in moments of stillness, reflection and prayer. A range of music, images and text are used. Children are encouraged to consider their rights, responsibilities and the needs of others and are framed as upstanders and change makers, with social justice and courageous advocacy being promoted within the context of the school and beyond. Collective Worship also provides an opportunity for regular celebration of the personal and academic achievements of individuals, groups and the school as a whole community.

The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is an educational entitlement for all. It can occur at various times of day and with a variety of groupings. Settings include the school hall, classrooms and the outside environment. The typical weekly pattern of Collective Worship is as follows:

- Monday – Good News, led fortnightly by teaching staff
 - Worship through Music, led fortnightly by the Headteacher
- Tuesday – worship led weekly by the Rector at Holy Trinity Church and supported by the Collective Worship Lead
- Wednesday – God's Storyteller, led weekly by the Collective Worship Lead
- Thursday – class worship focussing on reflection themes, led weekly by class teachers
- Friday – class worship focussing on social justice and courageous advocacy, led weekly by class teachers

Once a term, an act of worship is dedicated to our No Outsiders programme and to ensure that British Values continue to be imbedded in the children's understanding and their actions.

At times, the weekly pattern is adapted to include significant dates in the liturgical calendar and events related to other world views. Services are held at Holy Trinity Church and, on occasion, other religious buildings to celebrate Harvest, Easter and Christmas. Other significant dates in the calendar, such as Epiphany, Candlemas, Ash Wednesday and Pentecost are celebrated in whole-school worship in the school hall. Each year, an act of Collective Worship is also dedicated to Remembrance and the Year 6 Leavers' Service.

Planning Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. The themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values.

When planning Collective Worship, the following elements are expected to be included:

- use of colour to reflect the liturgical season (slides and stole)

- worship opened by a child, using the established phrases from which the child can choose
- lighting of a candle and discussion of the symbolism
- a story or reading
- sharing of knowledge about Christian beliefs and concepts
- Biblical references
- reflection points, with moments of silence for private reflection and opportunities to participate by sharing reflections
- images that reflect Christianity as a global, living faith
- a hymn, song or piece of music
- invitational prayer
- worship closed by a child, using the established phrases from which the child can choose

These elements create the desired sense of occasion, setting Collective Worship apart from the rest of the school day. They also help children to recognise that ritual acts often enable worship, contributing to a sense of familiarity and purpose.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship, as well as being valued at other times during the school day. Some prayers are learnt off by heart, some are planned and some are organic. Prayer is introduced with a form of words that invites pupils to participate. Children, staff, visitors and parents are given the same expectations for prayer. Everyone shows that they are ready for prayer by being still, silent and respectful. Individuals are able to choose whether they join in with prayer in a variety of ways:

- closing of eyes
- putting hands together
- bowing of heads
- joining in with reciting words (when using a learnt prayer)
- saying 'Amen' to show agreement

Children are given opportunities to lead prayer and have the option to recite a learnt prayer or to compose a prayer in the moment, using their own thoughts and reflections.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection. Our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

The role of the Governing Body

- Governors should be aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to Collective Worship, and take account of the policy and guidelines of the Diocese.
- Governors must take account of the legal requirements, the Trust Deed and guidelines issued by the Diocese.
- Governors must be actively involved and familiar with all documentation regarding Collective Worship issued on their behalf and be actively involved in the process of Collective Worship development within the school.
- Governors should ensure that Collective Worship is appropriately reviewed as part of the school improvement plan and be actively involved in the review process.
- Governors should be aware of the requirement under SIAMS for the inspection of Collective Worship.
- Governors should ensure that details of Collective Worship are provided by the school to prospective parents, through a prospectus or on the school website. This information should inform parents of the parental right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship.