



Collective Worship Policy St John's Primary School Friern Barnet

This is a policy document template that we advise all Church schools to adopt. Before adopting it, you will need to add information, where indicated, to ensure that it reflects your school's theologically rooted Christian vision and the collective worship practice that happens within your school.

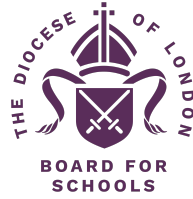
1. How is the policy a reflection of our theologically rooted Christian vision?

As a Christian school we recognise that we are all equal in the eyes of God and that we possess unique gifts. We seek to nurture these 'gifts' to create a vibrant school community where individuals are encouraged to work together for the common good. The principle 'love God, love neighbour' governs our attitudes and our actions and all these things are reflected in the school mission statement 'Faith, Excellence and Enjoyment.'

Our school motto 'Faith, Excellence and Enjoyment' puts 'Faith' at the forefront and at the heart of our identity as a church school.

As a Church of England school, Christianity provides the framework for beginning the spiritual discovery and experience of faith. The children learn to discern the teachings of Christ as the way of developing positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships needed to develop and sustain a community.

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. Collective worship structure enables children to experience and participate in the breadth of Christian worship and praise: prayer, word, song, silence, contemplation, acclamation, breaking bread, awe and wonder. Collective worship is a focus for the school community, bringing together before God need, hope, both joys and challenges, our unity as a family and our dependence on God for guidance and strength to live in our world, in our time. We encourage each other to approach collective worship prayerfully, thoughtfully and with an open view of God and his love for all humanity. Collective worship is structured carefully and reflects on,



and celebrates, significant events in both the Church and school calendar, and events in the life of our nation. Every collective worship includes four essential parts: Gather, Engage, Respond, Send.

2. Introduction

In Church of England schools, collective worship is seen as more than a daily 'awe and wonder' moment. It is the unique heartbeat of the school and will be 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.

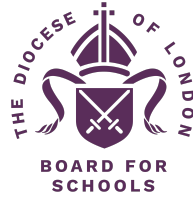
We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives...Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.¹

¹ The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office 2016) page 10

Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a whole school family. Collective worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school and reaffirms our Christian vision and associated values as found in the "Fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5: 22-23). These are at the heart of our curriculum and learning, and represent all that we are and all that we aspire to be. These values are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

3. Aims of Collective Worship

- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.



- To reflect the parish tradition of worship, while giving experience over time for pupils to experience the breadth of Anglicanism.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship and festivals. Children are invited to receive Communion at Ash Wednesday Eucharist and at the Year 6 Leavers Service.
- Explore the school's Christian vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues.
- Enable pupils the opportunity to make a positive contribution to worship through involvement with aspects of the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship.

4. Legal requirements

Collective worship:

- Should be conducted in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and Instrument of Government and be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- Unless the right of withdrawal has been exercised all pupils must take part each day in an act of collective worship (DfE circular 1/94 para. 51) and the Governing Body should ensure that all pupils **each day** engage in a distinctively Christian act of worship.
- Arrangements for collective worship in foundation schools of a religious character (i.e. church schools) are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consultation with the headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52&53).

5. Planning of worship

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, the incumbent of our linked church St John The Evangelist and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader and governors.

The daily Christian act of worship is central to our Christian ethos. It makes an important contribution to the spiritual flourishing of the whole school community. We are committed to providing a daily act of Christian worship which is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality.

Collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school or key stage. Our school plans systematically, using both long term and short term plans which enables continuity and cohesion. We use the following resources to support our worship: LDBS Collective Worship Planning, Picture News, Assemblies.org, Twinkl, Junior News and other



sites that link into our PSHE curriculum such as Anti-bullying Alliance and Black History.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and our planning incorporates a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include: music, silence, symbolism, drama, stories, use of IT – PowerPoint slides, short BBC and YouTube videos.

When planning acts of worship, we follow the Church of England guidance to ensure that worship is:

- 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 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.

6. Pattern of Worship

Our pattern of worship is as follows:

The Rector of St. John’s Church leads a whole school assembly in school at the beginning of each week. In addition, assemblies are held in church throughout the year to celebrate significant events in both the church and school calendar (including start and end of term assemblies). The house and vice captains are expected to attend several Sunday services at St. John’s Church as representatives of the wider school body (eg. Dedication day, Remembrance Day and Mothering Sunday) in the company of senior teachers. Key stage 2 children perform the nativity and sing carols at the Junior Carol Service held at St. John’s church each year. Y6 pupils, their parents and staff also attend the end of year Leavers’ service. The whole school takes part in Ash Wednesday Eucharist. Other daily whole school or key stage assemblies are led by the head teacher and deputy head teacher; class based assemblies are led by the class teacher.

Our worship consists of 4 parts:



- Gather – we welcome the community, for example, with recorded or live music played by a pupil, and we light the candles on the altar.
- Engage – we share, for example, a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message.
- Respond – pupils, for example, discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing.
- Send – we share, for example, the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day and week ahead and their behaviour, particularly in the light of our School Values and the Fruit of the Spirit. We close with a final prayer read by a pupil and we pray the Lord's Prayer together. We play music as the pupils leave the hall.

7. Collective worship leader

The leader for collective worship is responsible for long term planning of worship, leading acts of worship and supporting staff and pupils who are planning and leading aspects of worship. The leader also monitors the quality of worship and evaluates its impact across the school community.

8. Visitors leading worship

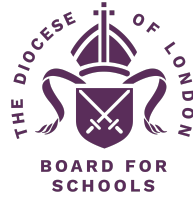
Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies <https://www.stjohnsprimaryn11.co.uk/safeguarding>. This includes discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

It is the responsibility of the collective worship leader and senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its context and our school's vision. Please refer to LDBS guidance for visitors leading worship.

9. CPD and training

Parents, pupils and adults in school are entitled to be led in Christian worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a church school context. Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular diocesan led training.

10. Monitoring and evaluation



Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact they have on pupils and adults within the school community.

This involves monitoring by school leaders, the collective worship leader and governors and takes place both informally and formally. Everyone who leads worship is asked to evaluate, reflecting on how they can improve and develop their practice. We welcome the views of all those who participate in our worship, including pupils, parents, and visitors. For example, the rector will speak to parents/carers who attend church collective worship about their impressions. Parents who attend school collective worship also have the opportunity to provide feedback, for example during Brilliant Book. This feedback plays an essential part in developing the spiritual growth of our school community.

Foundation governors and the worship leader observe and evaluate worship at least once every year; the worship leader also leads worship weekly.

The impact of collective worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

11. Parents and Carers

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help pupils flourish. Worship is regarded as a special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship, However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all pupils will participate in collective worship, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child will discuss this with the headteacher before making their decision. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw pupils from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.



12. Evaluation / Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the collective worship leader in consultation with the Headteacher and ratified every **three years** by the Governing Body.

Date of validation: 7 November 2024

Date of review: November 2027