



Diocese of Salisbury  
Academy Trust  
*'Beyond expectations for all of God's children'*

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



Archbishop Wake  
CE Primary School

**“Those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and will not faint.”**

**Isaiah 40:31**

**Aim high, believe; Fly high, achieve.**

Policy date: September 2021

Review date: September 2022

## Archbishop Wake CE Church of England Primary School

Last Updated - September 2021

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all that we do. *Aim high, believe; Fly high, achieve* is the school vision. *Isaiah 40:31* then underpins our vision further by stating:

***“...but those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint.”***

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

In our 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. We recognise that family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

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 world faiths*<sup>1</sup>) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.<sup>2</sup>

### Inclusive - Invitational - Inspiring

The school is guided by the The Church of England document, “Inclusive, Invitational, Inspiring” (May 2021) which outlines the aims and objectives of worship and underpins this policy:

- Explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, it will reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 different faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

<sup>2</sup> “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)

- 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.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- 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, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

## **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 any time 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 in Archbishop Wake CE Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The governing body of this school 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**

We recognise that there are children whose families are members of an alternative world faith, or who hold a non-religious worldview. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and invitational to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents / carers will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents / carers have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

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

- The elements of worship in which the parent / carer 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 / carer will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

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

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

*(This means that a parent / carer may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)*

## **Inclusion**

Whilst the principles of inclusivity are guided by the Church of England aims and objectives, it is also recognised by the school that special consideration should be given to pupils with additional needs. Pupils who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) for example, may find the environmental conditions of worship difficult. Each individual must be considered in their own context. However, as an inclusive school, there may be occasion where worship provision should be adaptive and cater for pupils who require appropriate and reasonable adjustment. This may include:

- The use of ear-defenders;
- Appropriate, physical breaks;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to suggest ways that will help at times of worship.

## **Guiding Principles**

Collective worship in Archbishop Wake CE Primary School 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 the freedom for those of alternative world 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.

## **Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation**

This policy has been written in conjunction with the Blandford Forum Parish Church, the Diocese of Salisbury, the Academy Standards and Ethos Committee (ASEC, or Governing Body) of the school and other stakeholders.

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;
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC) and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE);
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development;
- Care, guidance and support;
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- Working in partnership with parents and carers;
- Working with the wider community.

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included on the school website.

## **How Collective worship is organised**

There is a half termly Collective Worship plan (see appendix) which organises and develops themes in relation to the school's Vision and Values, as well as other key events that take place during the year, celebrating Christian and world faith festivals.

## **Leadership**

- Depending on the theme of collective worship, the lead will often vary. As a general rule, the headteacher will be the main lead in collective worship. The headteacher is supported by the local clergy, voluntary Christian worship providers (Mr Ian Carr for example), Open the Book, local organisations and charities (RNLI for example), or visitors that can provide expertise and insight (such as representatives from the local garrison (Blandford Camp) at times of Remembrance).
- It is not an expectation that volunteers will be left to lead collective worship and there will always be support from the senior leadership team, either the headteacher, or deputy headteacher.
- The general timetable for collective worship is:
  - Monday - Values focus / linked to the Bible
  - Tuesday - Open the Book
  - Wednesday - iSingPop / Ian Carr (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in every calendar month)
  - Thursday - Singing / iSingPop / Class or year group worship opportunity
  - Friday - Special achievers
- There is a cycle of focus for the school values across the school year. Each half term, a different value is discussed and studied through collective worship: Autumn 1 - Perseverance; Autumn 2 - Co-operation; Spring 1 - Kindness; Spring 2 - Courage; Summer 1 - Honesty and Summer 2 - Respect. The value of 'Happiness' is one that is explored across the year and it is the hope that through actively living all the values, this will result in bringing happiness.
- On the half term plan, there will be clear indication of the 'Word' will be provided. This will either be in the form of a biblical text, or a significant quote - for example, words of Remembrance in November.

## Planning

- Worship is planned in advance on a half termly basis. This is primarily completed by the collective worship lead (headteacher) and will include feedback and response from the pupils in the school.
- Where possible, collective worship will involve and include representatives from a wide range of member of the school and local community, including Blandford Forum Parish Church (BFPC), local charities such as the foodbank and the children in the school.
- The collective worship will reflect and focus on the church calendar and will include opportunities to celebrate and worship in the BFPC for events such as Christmas and Easter.
- The Christian Vision and Values are a key focus through all collective worship opportunities - especially the value that is the focus for that half term (see above)
- Each of the values are linked to a specific biblical text - see the website for further details.
- Collective Worship is an opportunity to explore the themes of the Bible through different media, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle.
- All collective worship should link to how the theme can be related to, and impact upon, the lives of all participants in today's, modern world. It should be relevant and impactful.
- At the beginning of all collective worship, there will be the lighting of candles (the Trinity candles to remind the children of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit), as well as the 'Welcome words' which are, "We come together to worship God." Response: "We worship God together."
- Children will be asked to use the time in collective worship to reflect and be still. To think and in turn, to develop their spiritual self - through thinking about themselves, about others, about the world and universe and to think about what is beyond.

## Organisation

- Collective worship at Archbishop Wake is a whole school experience where all member of the community can come together.
- Generally, collective worship will take place in the main school hall.
  - The altar will reflect the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year;
  - There is a children's Bible available for story-telling;
  - Each collective worship will begin with the 'welcome words';
  - Children are seated on the floor, with the exception of Year Six who have access to benches;
  - There is a story-telling / spiritual garden located on the grounds of the school which can be used by small groups or classes to engage with reflection and worship;
- There will be opportunity to celebrate collective worship at BFPC throughout the year. Namely, Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the end of the year.
- All collective worship takes place at the end of the school day: Monday - Thursday 2.50pm - 3.10pm and Friday 2.45pm - 3.10pm.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- The governing body: To ensure that the collective worship reflects the
- The headteacher and the senior leadership team
- Clergy and church partners
- Teaching and support staff
- Pupils
- Parents and carers
- Visitors

## 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. This training is bespoke and through the programme of development through the Salisbury Diocese Board of Education PSA commitment.

#### **Monitoring and evaluation**

- Collective worship is monitored on an on-going basis
- Who is involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship e.g. children, staff, link/foundation governors, clergy
- Evidence to show how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time

#### **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.

Date of last review:

Headteacher signed: 

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Chair of Governors signed:

Date: