

Collective Worship policy

Sedley's Church of England Primary School



Approved/Ratified by:	Full Governing Body	Date: 08.07.24
Document Reference	Collective Worship Policy	
Version	02	
Publication Date	July 2024	
Related Policies		
Last reviewed on:	June 2025	
Next review due by:	June 2026	
Distribution:	Sedley's C of E Primary School Teaching Staff & Support Staff	

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'Love to Learn, Learn to love'

Our Christian Values are:

Love, Hope & Respect

1. Introduction

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of Love, Hope and Respect. It celebrates the central role that each child has to play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is 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.

2. Aims and purpose

Collective Worship gives the whole school community the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar
- Experience and respond to Anglican traditions and practices
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Be still and reflect
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- To provide an ongoing link between St. Nicholas Church and the school.

In line with the requirements of the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.
- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

3. Implementation

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class. Our school plans systematically and cohesively using Rochester Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity.

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This should include 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.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including (eg: music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT).

Our worship consists of 4 elements:

- Gather – we welcome the community, for example, (with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle)
- 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 / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle)

At Sedley's C of E Primary School collective worship follows a model of good practice:

- There is an act of collective worship every day, to which every child within the school is invited to attend (whole school, Key Stage, tutor group or in the classroom). All staff members are expected to attend.
- All teaching and ideas are Christian and follow the teachings of the Bible, these are explored and made relevant to life today. All acts of worship have a Bible story or Bible passage as the focus.
- The leader creates a welcoming and inviting atmosphere conducive to worship by, for example, :- Playing worship or quiet reflective music on arrival - Or displaying an image, quote or question to engage the children in the theme - Setting the hall up with 'altar table' as a focus for worship: table cloth, cross and candle
- There is a welcome, for example, lighting the candle and saying an Anglican liturgical greeting/prayer (The Lord be with you...)
- We try to ensure that children always have a role within the worship. This could be planned or spontaneous, individually, in groups or as a whole community. We aim to be creative and allow the children freedom and opportunities to be creative within the worship experiences.
- Children are given a chance to discuss, in talk partners, share their ideas/answers to a posed wondering question (I wonder what respect means? What does it look like in our school?)
- Sung worship is included to enable pupils to respond in this way.
- There is a time for children to be still and silent to reflect and think about the key thoughts and or the Bible message
- Children are given the opportunity to pray, which might be personally (silently) or out loud as a group or on behalf of the other children or in other ways
- The children are sent out with a thought, verse, prayer or question to enable them to continue their thinking and spur them into action (when appropriate) following the worship session
- The end of worship closes with an Anglican liturgical sending or blessing prayer and to extinguish the candle to show that worship has ended.

4. Right of withdrawal

Parental Withdrawal Worship is regarded as special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none. We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship. However, as collective worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents.

5. Parent Withdrawal

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6. Monitoring arrangements

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils through our suggestion boxes and questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in consultation with the Diocese of Rochester (SIAMS).

Daily structure to worship:

Plans follow the diocese scheme for worship.

- School is set up by Leading Lights. This included chairs on both sides for staff and benches at the back for year 6 pupils
- Music is played whilst the pupils enter the hall for worship
- Once all classes are seated begin the following format:
 - Staff leading worship says “the lord be with you”
 - Pupils respond with **“and also with you”**
 - Light the candle
 - Hymn (choose a song which suites the theme of the worship) – Pupils stand
 - Pupils sit after hymn
 - Bible reading and discussion about the learning/themes within the reading. This may be supported by a short clip, music, images, drama to help install the reading/messages being explored.
 - As much as possible encourage pupils to reflect on how the messages/themes can affect their own lives and how they can *‘love and learn through the footsteps of Jesus’*
 - Close with a prayer – which concludes the messages/theme explores. It is good practice to ask for 1 – 2 pupils to say a prayer too.
 - Snuff the candle.
 - AOB – ask is there are any messages to be shared with the school – staff to share key items happening in the school, reminders etc
 - Music to exit pupils.

The Lord's Prayer

(U.S. Book of Common Prayer, 1928 edition)

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
[For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.]

Amen.

(See Matthew 6:9-13)

