



St. Catherine's School

Collective Worship Policy

Based on St. Alban's Diocese Model Policy

Date of Approval: December 2022

Date of Review: December 2024

**Reviewed bi-annually by the School Improvement
Committee**

Policy Statement

As a Church school, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos where children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty.

We believe that at its heart, Collective Worship enables pupils and staff to gather together to respond to the presence, power and peace of God through prayer, reflection, singing, sharing and communicating feelings.

Worship should enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The 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, 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 Board in consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility because they are appointed to promote and uphold the ethos and values of the Church. The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that all arrangements for Collective Worship are secured. They act as the Collective Worship coordinator.

Anglican Faith and Practice

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 use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and provide opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

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

We foster links with St Catherine's and St Paul's Parish Church, involving the Reverend Rachel Pennant in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At St Catherine's, 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 Catherine's, 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.

Aims and Purpose

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

Planning

Planning for Collective Worship is led by the Headteacher. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year and are underpinned by our half-termly Christian Values or the Fruits of the Spirit. In addition, information about sacred or holy days or festivals of other religions may be shared. The Headteacher ensures that leaders and visiting speakers receive copies of the overview. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the overview as a basis for developing their own short-term plan for individual acts of worship.

Organisation

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups. Where collective worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering. The Headteacher and other members of staff together with groups of children take turns to conduct Collective Worship. The local vicar usually leads Collective Worship on a Thursday.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point. We use Friday morning assemblies as an opportunity for children to celebrate their successes, particularly relating to learning behaviours. These culminate in an act of Collective Worship and play an important role in promoting the ethos of the school. Governors are also welcome to attend acts of worship at any time.

Resources

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 have resources to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing.

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

We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. We intend to make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead it before asking them to submit short term plans. The coordinator and others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria.

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. As when teachers prepare lessons, worship leaders take account of different learning styles and aim to present materials using multi-sensory approaches.

Implementation of Policy

The 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. Links to Other Policies:

- Religious Education Policy