UNITED SCHOOLS FEDERATION

St Michaels C. of E. Nursery & Primary | St Catherine's C. of E. VA Primary | Marldon C. of E. VA Primary | Brixton St Mary's C. of E. VA Primary | Ipplepen Primary | Stokeinteignhead Primary | Doddiscombsleigh Primary School | The Topsham School

Collective Worship Policy

St. Michael's School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School.
St. Catherine's, St. Mary's and Marldon Schools are C. of E. Voluntary Aided Schools.

Last Updated: October 2023

In our schools our Christian vision shapes all we do.

'Within the love of God, working together, growing together for all to flourish'

'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 schools, 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. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

In our schools, 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 other faiths*[1]) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.[2]

Church of England Guidance

This Collective worship policy draws on guidance from the Church of England [3]. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

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 our Church of England Schools should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The governing body 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

In our schools there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non- religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive 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 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 have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship.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

[1] 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 other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

[2] "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)

[3] https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship

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

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher 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 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 may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)*

Guiding Principles

Collective worship in our schools 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 other 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 was developed in consultation with staff, school leaders and governors from across the United Schools Federation. We have considered advice and resources from the Diocese of Exeter and Devon SACRE.

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
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

Inclusive, Invitational and Inspirational Collective Worship

We firmly believe that worship plays a fundamental role in the life of all our school community. Worship is an enjoyable time which offers peace, reverence, reflection, and stillness, with opportunities to experience joy, awe and wonder in God's presence. Worship is a time when members of the school community can come together and reflect on 'big' questions and topical issues including social injustice and a fairer, more sustainable world. It is a time of celebration and a time off support and cohesion in difficult and sad times.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and 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. Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive, and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality.

• **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 are 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.

How Collective worship is organised

Leadership, Planning and Evaluation of Collective Worship/Assemblies

There is a Collective Worship coordinator who plans collective worship on a half termly basis. The coordinator plans, monitors, and evaluates Collective Worship. The calendar for Collective Worship draws on the Church year and the school values.

Collective Worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing, and evaluation. All those leading collective worships are asked to plan their act of worship in as much detail as they would any other learning activity. Staff are given appropriate training and mentoring to equip them in their roles as worship/assembly leaders.

All pupils attend an Act of Collective Worship/Assembly each day. These are organised on a rota and include whole school, phase-based and class-based worship.

A record is kept of Collective Worship. The Worship Coordinator is responsible for keeping this record.

Special services

We join together as a wider school community at special times such as harvest, Christmas, and Easter.

Music and art as part of our act of worship

Music is played before and after our worship to highlight that this is a special time for us to be together. We use music as part of our act of worship where appropriate to the theme.

The music, instrumental or vocal, may be selected to enhance the atmosphere for worship, stillness, and reflection or to inspire thought and talking points in the areas of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

This listening time is also used to introduce children to.

1. Music of a variety of styles, cultures, and traditions
2. A range of composers and famous works
3. Recognition and appraisal of a range of musical elements

<u>Structure to Worship, which is Invitational, Inclusive, Inspiring</u>

Gather: We welcome the school community with music, liturgy, and the lighting of a candle.

Engage: This is the content of the worship which may be represented in a variety of ways to engage: Video, Artefact, Question, Discussion, Task. It will on most occasions include a Biblical reading or Christian message.

Respond: Pupils will discuss and share.

Reflect: Reflection on the Christian value and what it means and prayers

Send Out: So how shall we then live?
A summary of the Christian value/ message in action

We close music and the blowing out of our special candle.

● The Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God is explored. This is reinforced with a liturgy chosen by the school or person leading the worship at the start of each collective worship.

● The school's Christian Vision and core value rooted deeply in theological biblical reference is reinforced by ending each collective worship with a prayer.

Visitors to school

Visitors leading collective worship must be given clear instructions concerning age and ability of the pupils, purpose of occasion and appropriate delivery (content and material used).

The school will ensure that checks are made about connections with the school e.g. parent, charity representative, clergy from another denomination, adviser, colleague before the day

There will be a sharing of the aims and objectives of the visits and links made to the overall scheme for Collective worship.

The visitor's method will be reviewed before another invitation is extended.

A follow up session will be linked where considered appropriate to the developing theme.

Organisation

St Michael's

Worship is daily and the agreed pattern of weekly worship is as follows:

- Monday - Key Stage (20 mins) KS1 am KS2pm
- Tuesday – Year group worship (20 mins)
- Wednesday – Class based worship (20 mins)
- Thursday – Year group worship or singing worship (20 mins)
- Friday - Full School Celebration 2.40 – 3.00 pm

St. Catherine's

Worship is daily and the agreed pattern of weekly worship is as follows:

- Monday – Open the Book, Community Church 3pm
- Tuesday – Key Stage worship 3pm
- Wednesday – Class based worship 3pm
- Thursday – Whole School worship led by St. John's 3pm
- Friday - Full School Celebration Worship 2.45pm

Marldon

Worship is daily and the agreed pattern of weekly worship is as follows:

- Monday – Whole School Values Worship 3pm
- Tuesday – Open the Book 3pm (Child participation alternating KS2 classes)
- Wednesday – Alternate Whole school Worship led by Totnes Church Term and Value led class worship 3pm
- Thursday – Alternate Whole School Singing Worship and joint Class Wellbeing Worship 3pm
- Friday - Full School Celebration Worship 1.15pm

St Mary's

Worship is daily and the agreed pattern of weekly worship is as follows:

- Monday – Whole school worship including timetabled church visitors
- Tuesday – Whole school / singing worship
- Wednesday – Class based worship
- Thursday – Whole school worship and mindfulness/well-being
- Friday - Whole school celebration

The atmosphere for worship is created using:

- A candle
- Music to enter and leave Worship

 Liturgical responses

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring that the foundation of the school is honoured and that the Collective Worship Policy is firmly based upon the intentions set down in the Trust Deed.
- ensuring that the Collective Worship Policy is put into practice and monitored by the appropriate Governor.
- ensuring that governors are aware of the requirement under Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) for the inspection of Collective Worship.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- the legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship.
- ensuring that governors and staff are well informed and receive training in order to implement the policy on Collective Worship.
- writing and reviewing the worship policy and disseminating to staff.
- assisting the Governors to carry out their legal responsibilities with regards to collective worship.

The Worship Leader is responsible for:

- co ordinating the planning of collective worship and monitoring its impact through evaluations.
- ensuring collective worship maintains a high profile.
- involving colleagues, pupils and visitors in worship.
- monitoring and evaluating collective worship in all its forms.
- keeping up to date with recent publications, Diocesan courses and disseminate information.

The teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for:

- acting as good role models for pupils.
- supporting the Christian ethos of the school and its acts of worship

Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluating Worship

The Governors Ethos group meet regularly with the School Leaders to review and evaluate acts of collective worship. The evaluation of larger acts or worship, festivals and ethos days also takes place with the Ethos Group.

We seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on collective worship with the school ethos group seeking the views of their peers. Other Governors also have the opportunity to evaluate experience days, Church Services and acts of worship in school through their attendance.

The children will have the opportunity to:

Record a logbook detailing what the school had learnt about in Collective Worship.
Ask the visitor or the person leading worship to sign the logbook to say that it is a true representation of what they have learnt.

Use the Imaginor Evaluation grid. Work together to look at evaluations and plan the next steps for Collective Worship. Share evaluation findings with Governors and school SLT.

In addition, parents also have the opportunity to evaluate and comment upon the larger acts of worship.

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.

Other Useful Documents: (can be found on the diocesan website[4])

Date of last review:

Headteacher signed: Date:

Chair of Governors signed: Date:

[4] https://exeter.anglican.org/schools/christian-ethos-siams/collective-worship/