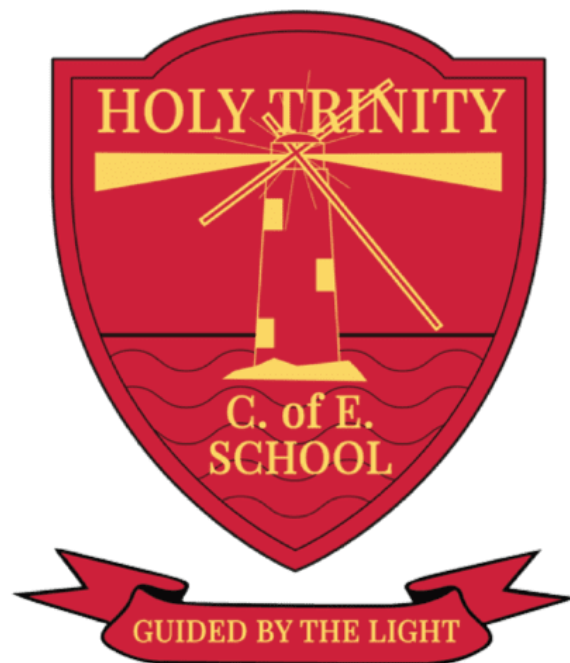

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Collective Worship Policy



Last Updated: May 2024

To be reviewed: May 2025

In Holy Trinity CE Primary School, our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our vision:

**Guided by the light of Christ in all we do, we enable all to flourish and live life in all its fullness.
We celebrate our diversity, find strength in our differences, empower and encourage all to have a voice.
We shine as beacons of light and hope in our community.**

**Our vision is theologically rooted in the psalm:
'Lord Your Word is a Lamp to Guide me and a Light for my Path,' 119:105**

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 Holy Trinity CE Primary 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. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At Holy Trinity CE Primary School, 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

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)

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at Holy Trinity CE Primary School draws on guidance from the Church of England³. 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 anytime 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 Holy Trinity CE Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The trustees and governing body of our 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 Holy Trinity CE Primary School, 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:

- 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

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

- 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 Holy Trinity 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 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.
- The School Song, ***My Lighthouse***, and the School Prayer are used throughout the year to remind children of their special association with Holy Trinity Church of England School.
- 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

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.

How Collective worship is organised:

Leadership

- Collective worship is led by a range of staff across the week. We use the Diocese of Rochester's Collective Worship schedule.
- At the start of each new term the Headteacher leads the worships on Monday and Friday.
- Other members of SLT lead and close collective worship on the remaining Mondays and Fridays. around the big question, provided by the Diocese of Rochester's Collective Worship schedule.
- Class worship takes place twice per week and allows children to develop and discuss from their viewpoint the themes of the week.
- Every term, a member of the clergy leads a Family Service and in addition are sometimes able to offer a Eucharistic service. Clergy from Christchurch and St. Peter and St Paul's deliver Easter services and Christingle either on site at school or lead the worship in the parish churches.
- Our youngest pupils enjoy participating in termly Messy Church too, led by Emma Weaver from St. George's parish.
- Friday is when Celebration Worship takes place, along with class lead worships throughout the year. There will always be a link back to the key question which has been asked that week and an opportunity to reflect on the key themes from the week too.

Visitors leading worship

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies: (see our school website). This must 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. It is the responsibility of the Collective Worship leader and Headteacher to ensure that all visitors, who

are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and our school's vision. They will be supported and monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation process of worship.

Planning

The rota for Collective Worship is scheduled by the RE subject lead and shared with staff in advance of each new term so staff are aware of the approaching key themes. 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.

The act of worship can take place at any time of the school day, but for whole school worship and phase workshops, we plan to hold these during the morning and close to the start of the day.

- 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.
- We meet in the hall, but sometimes we meet outside – weather permitting.
- We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and allow individual worship leaders to plan to provide a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include: music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT.
- Our plan for our worship to consist of 4 stages: Gather, Engage, Respond and Send.
- We are developing opportunities for our pupil Leading Lights to have a greater stake in the planning of worship.
- The plans for worship reflects the cycle of the Church year, as scheduled by the Diocese of Rochester.
- We plan for the Christian values of the school to be identified, expressed and celebrated through collective worship and make explicit links between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school
- We plan to use a range and variety of materials during Collective Worship which include: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
- The Headteacher plans and prepares the prayer for the weekly staff briefings. These centre on specific aspects of school life which are relevant to that week, as well as wider world issues e.g. refugees (pertinent to Kent). All staff are invited to contribute prayers to be said / heard during this spiritual moment in our weekly briefing.
- In planning worship, we try to create and *anticipate* opportunities for spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection so leaving worship carries the spirit throughout the remainder of the day.

Organisation

Collective Worship is organised with the following framework:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community, with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle
- **Engage** – we share, for example, a Bible reading, followed by an activity (often from the range of Kagan pedagogies) 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The governing body – oversee and monitor the effectiveness and impact of collective worship across the school.
- The headteacher and the senior leadership team – plan and organise worship to reflect current themes and provide opportunity within the week for reflective and discussion.
- Teaching and support staff – are active participants in worship and have a voice in discussion and ideas, they encourage and engage others to discuss and share ideas and develop improvements.
- Pupils - are keen to share and engage with worship and develop their thinking and reflections to be positive and use each other and kagan structures to confidently talk about their worship experiences.
- Parents and carers – are encouraged to attend Family worships. Children write invitations and hand to their parents and carers.

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. The subject lead for RE attends the Rochester and Canterbury Diocese InspiREd training course and the Headteacher attends other Diocese training opportunities too.

Self-assessment, Monitoring, and Inspection

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to write the SEF for SIAMS inspection. In producing the document, it is a requirement that robust consideration is given to all aspects of RE, Collective Worship, Vision and Values, Spirituality throughout the school.

Our school regularly evaluates all acts of collective worship and the impact they have on the school and our 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, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared with our Leading Lights, and governors during full governing body meetings, and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school.

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

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 Rochester Diocesan website)

<https://www.rdbe.org.uk/page/?title=Collective+Worship+%26amp%3B+RE&pid=10>