

Cavendish Church of England Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	
Signed: Headteacher	
Date:	Summer 2021
Date to be Reviewed:	Summer 2022

Our Vision

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Challenge, Creativity, Compassion: Create a pure heart in me – Psalm 51:10

Our School Vision Statement reflects this commitment as children and staff are taught to challenge inequality, prejudice, bullying and harm; to respond with compassion and sensitivity to individual need and to respect the rights of all individuals to be safe and nurtured within God's world. Our School Vision informs all that we do in school and runs as a golden thread throughout the school. The three Christian values have been identified by children, staff, governors and families as key values. They are underpinned by an extract of the Psalm 51 which, although rooted in the Old Testament, foreshadows the values and teachings of Jesus Christ. Our aim is for God to support each one of us in creating a pure heart within us, so we may live our lives as a creation in God's image and to develop our own values and codes which reflect the teachings and example of Jesus.

Challenge:

- Thinking to formulate our values and sense of duty
- Wider questions which are not easily answered
- That faith and following the teachings of Jesus is in itself a personal challenge – to be the best person God created us to be
- To value all God's children, whether currently a child or an adult

Creativity:

- To worship creatively
- To use creativity as a reflection and expression of faith in itself
- To have the opportunity to participate in the shared creation of items, which collectively contribute to worship, for example, Faith Table seasonal cloths, St Nicholas' portrait, commemorative stole, Lord's Prayer wall hanging.

Compassion

- To understand that compassion has its roots in God's love for us through the gift of Jesus Christ
- To foster forgiveness, love and empathy through explaining key values and their application
- To use worship as an opportunity to reflect and ask for guidance in supporting the needs of others.
- To develop our role in caring for humanity and the planet itself as a response to God's creation.

1. Intent

As a Church school, part of the Christian community, we want to worship. We want our children to have the opportunity to learn to worship and to grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. Christians believe that each human is made in the image of God and that worship is a vital factor in this image becoming more real and meaningful.

We believe that, at its heart, Collective Worship should provide opportunity for pupils and staff to come together, to sing and pray, to share and communicate their feelings with one another and to God. It should take them beyond themselves towards an encounter with the living God and should prove to be inspirational, stimulating, thought-provoking and reflective.

2. The legal requirements

We 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'.

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- The daily act of Collective Worship in a Church school 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.
- For Collective Worship, pupils can be grouped in various ways: whole school, according to age, or in groups (or a combination of groups) the schools uses at other times. Pupils cannot be put into special groups just for Collective Worship.
- 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 Church 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 both VA and VC schools rests with the Governors in consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility because they are appointed for 'the purpose of securing, as far as it practicable, that the character of the school as a voluntary school' is preserved and developed, and, in particular, that the worship is conducted in accordance with the provisions of any trust deed. The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that all arrangements for Collective Worship are secured.

3. Rights and responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and explained in the School Prospectus, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having sent their children to a Church school, 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.

Teachers have the right to withdraw from Collective Worship but are expected to participate in whole school acts of worship.

The Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility to ensure the character and foundation of the school are reflected in Collective Worship but the actual arrangements are made by the co-ordinator in consultation with the Headteacher.

4. 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;
- to promote inclusion, diversity and acceptance for the viewpoints of others;
- to be inspired by the action and lives of others built on faith.

In our school we aim to 'enable our school community to engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship every day'. (The Way Ahead, 4.6)

IMPLEMENTATION

5. Anglican faith and practice

As required therefore in C of E schools, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England which traditionally has the following traits. It is:

- **Biblical** – so we use the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce

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them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

- **Liturgical** - so we use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship – gathering, engaging, responding and sending – and use responses and other traditional aspects of liturgy such as the Lord's Prayer on occasion.
- **Eucharistic** – we do not have a school Eucharist, although this has been under discussion. We are, however, 'Eucharistic' in the sense of thanksgiving. We fill our worship with thank you prayers, we readily thank pupils and staff for all they do in school. We encourage intercessory prayer for individuals, those in positions of authority, the needs of the local community and the wider world.
- **Seasonal** - so we observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.
- **Symbolic**- so we provide opportunities to use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and to enable pupils to discover the value of meditation and silence.
- **Trinitarian** – we develop an understanding of the Trinity and Incarnation.
- **Ecumenical** – so we invite not only members of the local Parish Church to lead and join in worship but members of other Christian denominations (see 4 below).
- **Diverse** - so we try to use a variety of music and song from different Christian traditions and cultures and to encourage different Anglican and other Christian visitors to reflect both the unity of Christianity but also its diversity as a global, inclusive living faith.

As a C of E school we foster strong links with our Parish Church regularly involving its clergy in leading Collective Worship and providing coherence between the worship in Church and school. We have regular links with worship provided by Clare Baptist Church. We make students aware of wider links with St Edmundsbury Diocese and beyond that to the worldwide Anglican Communion, including our link diocese of Kagera. We take worship into the wider community with services in the village Church, worship at Devonshire House and services at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral.

6. Connections with other local Churches

The Anglican Church sees itself as part of a much wider Church and promotes ecumenism. Accordingly, we promote close links with other local Churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as regular contributors to acts of Collective Worship. We recognise that, while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican Churches, some worship regularly at Churches of other Christian denominations, whilst others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and accepted in worship without any pressure to participate or to believe.

7. Worship throughout the day

We recognise that worship as well as being a collective act can also be individual and therefore is not simply linked to a specific time of day. In addition to the daily act of worship, the school comes together for lunchtime prayer, and opportunities are provided throughout the day for children's own acts of worship, prayer or reflection. A dedicated display to promote reflection is placed outside the hall as well as Christian art and displays throughout the school. Children have access to reflection space in the summer house site on the school grounds at break and play.

8. The School Prayer

The school prayer was written in 2010 by a child at the school. It reflects our vision and values, and provides a shared point of reference to join together in worship which is distinctive to our school.

Dear God,
We thank you for our school and everything in it;
The equipment, the grounds and the friendly faces.
We give thanks to all the people who help us to learn.
Help us to live our lives as you have taught us;
To respect our friends and family,
And to care for God's world.
Amen

9. Planning

Long and medium-term planning for Collective Worship is led by the Co-ordinator and is undertaken in consultation with the Headteacher, Vicar and staff. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year and are arranged around half-termly themes centred on 'Values for Life' organised in a three-yearly cycle. Each week tackles a sub-theme. The co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring leaders and visiting speakers receive copies of these plans. Individuals and groups are then responsible for using them as a basis for developing their own short term plans for individual acts of worship.

Some additional longer and imaginative acts of worship are planned to increase the amount of Christianity taught in the RE curriculum and develop stronger links between RE and Collective Worship. These acts of Collective Worship will take place as the culmination of whole school RE days e.g. Pentecost Day, Shrove Tuesday, Harvest, Remembrance.

10. Organisation

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school in the hall or smaller class or key stage groups e.g. in individual classrooms or the KS1 area. Where Collective Worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the elements of gathering and sending. When Collective Worship takes place in the hall, children are responsible for preparing the environment and always contribute to the gathering and sending aspects of worship. 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.

The Headteacher and other members of staff together with groups of children take turns to lead Collective Worship. We welcome visitors to lead Collective Worship. The Faith Council comprises children from each year group who have been elected democratically and serve for a period of one year. The Faith Council has responsibility for lunchtime prayer, hymn choice, focus for Church services. They lead worship on a weekly basis and contribute daily to worship.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music and candles, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point. We ask children to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully and to participate in singing and prayers and respect the right of others to do so.

We use Friday afternoon assemblies as an opportunity to share children's work and to celebrate their successes. These culminate in an act of Collective Worship and play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school.

We invite parents to special Collective Worship services in the Church as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and school work together to support the achievements of our children. Governors are welcome to attend acts of worship at any time. Church services are child led, and are planned by the Faith Council and Headteacher.

Each month / half term we take child-led worship into Devonshire House Residential Home. Residents and staff join in this act of child-led worship in the local community.

11. Resources

The annual budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. We have a good collection of assembly books and artefacts which we aim to regularly update and improve. We also access support for short term plans from the internet. We have an extensive collection of CDs which are used to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing.

Within the hall, resources are conveniently stored in a suitable trolley which keeps them safe and makes them readily accessible.

12. Impact

We recognise that although SMSC development is fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship are pivotal to fulfilling our school Vision Statement. The impact of worship is gathered through children's feedback and reflection. Children complete a reflective review on the completion of each half term's value. Children's views are gathered through surveys analysed by the Faith Council and oral discussion with members of the Faith Council. Children's termly self-evaluation includes questions to stimulate response about the application of worship to their wider lives.

Previous feedback has led to children being given more opportunities to write their own progress, to increase the range of visitors for formal worship in school, and to further develop our outside space for reflection and private worship.

We gather feedback from families and the community through surveys as well as oral discussion.

13. Enrichment

The children's Collective Worship experience is enhanced by the many enrichment opportunities offered at Cavendish CofE Primary School and the local Church is seen as an extension of the school, with permanent displays of children's learning and our 6 to 7 services each year. In addition, the Church supports learning in the wider curriculum, eg, history and Christianity in RE. Year 3 / 4 visit Bury St Edmunds Cathedral. Year 5 / 6 play a leading role in the Faith Council and in the half termly Church services. We have visits from leaders of the Christian faiths and other Christian denominations during 'Open the Book' Collective worships. We are supported by the Vicar of St Mary's Church during Church services and in school. Our child-led Church services are an enriching part of worship and allow the whole community to come together.

Sharing worship and hymns in the wider community enriches children's experiences. We worship together with other Church schools and at the annual Bury St Edmunds Cathedral service. We share the celebration of Christmas by signing carols at Devonshire House and at village events. Children leader worship at Devonshire House for staff and residents to which the whole school attends.

Our weekly Newsletter starts with a worship moment, with a prayer written by a child, and children have written prayers for the start of Governing Body meetings and staff meetings.

Home worship, reflection and discussion is supported by our half termly activity and reflection sheet, linked to our value of focus, which is sent to every home. Where appropriate we share links to the Diocesan and Church of England websites for further family support.

14. Cultural Capital

Many of the above mentioned enrichment visit activities support Collective Worship at our school, together with visits to the places of worship of the other six main faiths in modern day Britain. Planning across all key stages and all curriculum subjects helps to foster opportunities to develop the cultural capital of pupils.

Children are invited to compare Christian worship and religious festivals with those of other faiths, for example, a comparison between Sukkot and Christian Harvest; Jesus as the light of the world through Christmas, comparing to the use of light in Diwali. By learning about Christianity and the other main faiths of the whole of Britain, together with the opportunities provided in a well-planned PSHE curriculum, where there is an emphasis on British Values, children receive a strong sense of their British culture. Children look at a variety of cultural and religious developments in the past and their impact today. Children look at artefacts of beauty and study the art and music of History, Geography and religions to consider the impact of worship and faith in their composition.

Our one page value planning sheets provide links to SMSC British Values, and how each value reflects our Vision Statement.

15. 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 multisensory resources.

16. Cross Curricular Links

As with other National Curriculum subjects, an integrated cross-curricular approach enables children to make connections in their learning and to develop and apply key skills.

English

Collective Worship contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, speaking and listening. We encourage reflection thorough oral and written communication.

Computing

In line with National Curriculum expectations, computing is used to enhance teaching and learning. Use of multi-media enables children to experience visual and audio arts, rituals, ceremonies and place of worship. Computing is also used by children as a tool through which they can communicate their learning during Collective Worship.

Personal, social and health education (PSH) and citizenship

Through Collective Worship programme, 'Values of Life' we teach children about the values and moral beliefs that underpin individual choices of behaviour. We also promote the values and attitudes required for citizenship in a democracy by teaching respect for others and the need for personal responsibility. By promoting tolerance and understanding of other people, we enable children to appreciate which it means to be positive members of our multicultural society.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through our Collective Worship programme in our school, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help children to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance social development by helping children to build a sense of identity in a multicultural society. Children explore our 'Values of Life' Collective Worship themes, the morals and values are deeply intrinsic to Christianity and the main faiths in modern day. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their own lives.

Arts and Music

Children are given opportunities to experience the awe and wonder of religious belief that can be inspired by art and music. Singing and music are an integral part of our Collective Worship programme from the hymns we sing to the calm music to enhance spiritual reflection.

Every child contributes to an annual art display reflecting faith which is exhibited in either St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds or in our village church. Within school the arts are taught as a means of achieving reflection and celebration is celebrated.

Forest School and Eco-School Status

Worship within our Forest School and Eco-School framework enables children to experience awe and wonder through an appreciation of the world around us. Worship takes place outside through formal services, weekly Forest School sessions or informally, such as prayers on the way back from swimming.

RE

Children are encouraged to reflect on their experiences of worship through services, special events and reflection of the value being explored to make connections with the formal teaching of Christianity and how shared values and experiences compare and contrast to the values held by other faiths.

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17. Monitoring and Review

The Collective Worship Co-ordinator 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. S/he is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching and supporting of Collective Worship, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The Collective Worship subject leader and Headteacher have an annual strategic meeting where the evidence collected by the subject leader is reviewed and used to inform further development. S/he has specially allocated time for carrying out the vital task of staff CPD, children's spirituality and higher order thinking.

Covid-19 Addendum

Worship continues to be a key part of our school's offer and Google Classroom is used to share worship opportunities at home when children are not able to attend school on site. The school signposts children to online resources and support, as well as children writing their own worship notes. Children are encouraged to use the same format for greeting and sending as we do in school and to use our school prayer.

In school each class has made its own altar cloths to support Bubble based worship and this time is used for reflection and wellbeing as well as active worship.

Through careful planning we have been able to offer special outdoor services to celebrate key events including visitors to share in our Covid-19 safe worship together.