



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Policy Reference No	CUR001
Review Frequency	Annual
Reviewed	Summer 2026
Next Review Date	Summer 2027
Approved by	TLT

FLOURISHING FUTURES
Empower, Excel, Together

Change Log

Date	Changes to Policy
Summer 2026	Changed link to National Society for Education Church of England & Church in Wales Removed reference to RE curriculum Provision under Visits and Visitors Changed word from religious to collective
Summer 2025	Accessibility and Language Support added. Throughout updated in line with new Model Policy for Collective Worship for Church of England schools.
Summer 2024	Section 1 addition of: Our Trust approach is that acts of collective worship embody the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10. Space for individual schools' to put in their own vision and values in line with best practice Section 1: addition of: Our academies aim to provide daily collective worship that is inclusive, invitational and inspiring, as per diocesan guidance. As a Trust, we ensure that our acts of collective worship are grounded in the historical past and enshrined in educational law to be <i>'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'</i>. Section 2: to include: • Explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. • Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world • Opportunities to be still, mindful and reflective Section 3: addition of 1. Reflection areas in the classroom 2. Set prayers eg. lunchtime, end of day Section 7: addition of: 'annual Christian festivals' Section 9: addition of: Collective Worship is the unique heartbeat of our Trust academies and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and as a school community.
Spring 2023	Section 4: Exeter Diocese withdrawal guidance covers both Exeter and Truro Diocese

Accessibility and Language Support

If you require this policy in an alternative format or language, please contact the Trust People Team or your Line Manager. We are committed to ensuring that all colleagues have access to our policies and can fully understand and engage with them and will work with you to provide the necessary support and resources

'I have come that they might have life and have it to the full.' - *John 10:10*

Within the Learning Academy Partnership, we believe that Collective Worship is a fundamental part of the life of all our academies. It offers our children the opportunity to reflect, consider their own beliefs and values and to come together to share a collective sense of community rooted in Christian Values. It provides an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, supporting the ethos that underpins the rest of the curriculum and to providing an opportunity for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day for our pupils. Our Trust approach is that acts of collective worship embody the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10. They should permeate through all aspects of school life.

St Marks school vision:

Flourishing futures through respect, love and hope.

'Let us spur one another to acts of love and good deeds.' Hebrews 10:24

1. The Legal Position

In accordance with the Learning Academy Partnership (Southwest) Master Funding Agreement, each of our academies shall make provision for a daily act of worship.

The overall responsibility for the leading and monitoring of Collective Worship in each individual academy rests with the Head Teacher. The responsibility of planning for Collective Worship rests with the Headteacher.

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that Collective Worship must be for all registered pupils on a daily basis. Furthermore, acts of worship *"must be wholly (C of E Academies) or mainly of a broadly Christian character, i.e. reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief (community schools)."*

Within each of our academy schools, we have a distinctive vision and set of values which informs and underpins Collective Worship. We recognise that in our schools we have children with a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews. Great care is taken in our Collective Worship to ensure that all children and adults flourish spiritually and that worship is inclusive, invitational and inspirational.

In Church of England schools, Collective Worship will be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In community schools, acts of worship *"must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, i.e. reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief."* -1988 Education Reform Act

Our academies provide daily collective worship that is in line with diocesan guidance. As a Trust, we ensure that our acts of collective worship engage pupils on a journey of discovery and spiritual development, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Collective Worship strengthens and supports our school's identity and reaffirms our Christian vision.'

The Ethos and Advisory Committees of the school are tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship in enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, in consultation with the headteacher. They also have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework, school policy, local and national guidance.

They have a responsibility to ensure that:

- Collective worship reflects the schools Anglican/Methodist foundation and enables the spiritual flourishing of those in the school community

- The school has a regular and meaningful relationship with the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) accessing expertise and support for collective worship, as well as effective regular partnership with the parish/local church.

Additionally, the Advisory Committee of the school consider the SIAMS sub-questions from IQ3:

- a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
- b) How do partnerships with the DBE, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?
- c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?
- d) In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?
- e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

2. Aims

Within the Trust, Collective Worship is of a broadly Christian nature with an Anglican foundational approach in our community schools and in accordance with the tenants and practices of the Church of England in our Church Schools; distinctly Christian and reflecting Anglican traditions. We aim to give pupils and school staff alike the opportunity to experience: Collective Worship which is central to the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school. It is well planned so that the whole school family gathers and is engaged on a journey of discovery and spiritual development, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Collective worship strengthens and supports our school's identity and reaffirms our Christian vision and associated values.

For Christians, worship in church 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.

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 and adults 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 Christian practices (for example, prayer). 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 compassion. 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*) calendar. Pupils and adults will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. We have, as a Trust, therefore considered what spirituality and spiritual development means to us as a school and have our own agreed definition and language of spirituality. This enhances and enriches collective worship and individuals' spiritual development.

<https://www.nse.org.uk/curriculum-and-inclusion/collective-worship>

Guiding Principles for Collective worship in (insert name of school) aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school community.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth and development through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.

- Be central in the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school.
- Provide opportunities for pupils and adults to be inspired by the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world.
- 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 non-religious beliefs 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 appreciating that Christians worship in different ways.
- Help pupils to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church's 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 pupils the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well-known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all pupils 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 if it supports their own spiritual development.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the diverse work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

3. Church of England Academies

A further aspect of our Collective Worship is that the school provides a variety of opportunities to allow the children to engage in prayer and reflection in a number of different ways. This is relevant to each school's individual context and could include worship in different locations and led by both staff, children and selected members of the community. Each academy will have and maintain links with their local church.

4. Rights of Withdrawal

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools and academies 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 academies should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The right of withdrawal

In our academy schools we recognise that some children and families are not Christians and are members of another faith or hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that we are invitational and inclusive to all in the community we serve. Collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of all church schools, and the Christian foundation and vision of the school shapes worship and the spirituality in the school. All are warmly welcomed to be part of daily Collective Worship as part of the school community.

The 1944, 1988 and 1998 Education Acts state that parents/carers have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

Where parents/carers have withdrawn their children from Collective Worship and request religious worship according to their 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/carer asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any collective worship at the school, then the school must comply.

5. Planning, Recording and Evaluation

The committee members of our academy schools (Ethos and Advisory Committees) are tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship in enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, in consultation with the Headteacher. The Headteacher has the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework, school policy, local and national guidance.

They also have a responsibility to ensure that the school has a regular and meaningful relationship with the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) accessing expertise and support for Collective Worship, as well as effective regular partnership with the parish/local church.

Pupil voice will also form an important part of the planning, monitoring and evaluation process.

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. Support and training should also be made available to partners from the local church who lead worship.

The Headteacher accesses updates and training through the optional annual training offered by the diocesan education team and through the termly diocesan update meetings. In addition, the Trust Core Offer for Spiritual development is implemented. Training and support is provided for Headteachers through the Trust Community of Practice forum.

Monitoring and evaluation

As above: the Ethos and Advisory Committee monitor and evaluate and receive training from the Diocese on this and from the Trust. Pupil voice is also key to evaluating the impact of worship. Regular ethos and Christian Distinctiveness walks take place within the annual QA cycle.

6. Visits and Visitors

There will be risk assessments conducted before speakers are invited to come into school and all safeguarding policies adhered to; academies will ensure that any visitors uphold British Values and that anyone that leads Collective Worship in a school meets with the headteacher and the expectation for Collective Worship and Collective Worship policy are shared in advance. External leaders of Collective Worship will also be invited to attend a Collective Worship lead by the headteacher before leading their own Collective Worship. External leaders of worship will also welcome feedback from leaders as part of the monitoring and evaluation cycle and the impact of worship.

Visitors to the academy are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge.

All visitors to the school and visits to places of worship are in line with the academy safeguarding and health

and safety policies.

Children also attend, where possible, whole school worship in church to celebrate annual Christian festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Services.

7. Resources

Resources for Collective Worship will be kept current and funded as necessary.

8. Links to other policies

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

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

9. Conclusion

Collective Worship plays a very important role in our schools as we seek to develop our children in the skills of reflection and empathy, to encourage and celebrate their talents and to promote their spiritual and moral development. Collective Worship is the unique heartbeat of our Trust and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and as a school community.