

# St Augustine's Federated CofE Schools: Primary



## Collective Worship Policy

We want all of our community to have equal opportunities to experience life in all its fullness (John 10:10). We encourage all community members to “be the best we can be” in every aspect of their lives as we grow in, and reflect on, the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love (1 Corinthians 13)

<b>Approved by the Governing Body</b>	
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### 1. How is the policy a reflection of our theologically rooted Christian vision?

The education that we provide at St Augustine’s Primary School is delivered within the ethos of our Christian vision and is consistent with, and respectful of, the belief systems of the other faiths and of children with no faith represented at our school. We want all of our community to have equal opportunities to experience life in all its fullness (John 10:10). We encourage all community members to “be the best we can be” in every aspect of their lives as we grow in, and reflect on, the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love (1 Corinthians 13). We live this through our shared Christian values: Friendship, Respect, Wisdom, Inclusion, Honesty and Courage. As a school, we want all of our community to experience life in all its fullness by providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for children and adults, where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute and flourish. We want every child to make the best possible progress as a result of high aspirations.

Our school vision and values, based on Christian principles, are embedded and reflected in all that we do, including collective worship. Collective worship is structured to ensure pupils and staff can understand, reflect upon and identify how we can apply our Christian vision to our daily lives in order to flourish. Our vision is grounded in the bible and is representative of what we aspire to achieve for all stakeholders linked to St Augustine’s school. Collective worship is a vehicle to share this message and discuss how we too can live out the vision through our everyday lives, regardless of faith, gender, background, ethnicity and individual needs, ensuring that all members of our school community can “be the best we can be” as we “experience life in all its fullness”.

### 2. Introduction

In Church of England schools, collective worship is seen as more than a daily ‘awe and wonder’ moment. It is the unique heartbeat of the school and will be offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together.

*We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives...Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.<sup>1</sup>*

1 The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office 2016) page 10

Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a whole school family. Collective worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school and reaffirms our Christian vision and associated values of Friendship, Respect, Wisdom, Inclusion, Honesty and Courage.

### **3. Aims of Collective Worship**

We believe that collective worship reflects the ethos of the school and encompasses all aspects of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of all members of our school community - spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually - is reflected in our worship. Collective worship nurtures the feeling of belonging to a community, which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth. We value this special time in the school day for the space it provides for children and adults to develop a reflective approach to life.

Through collective worship, we aim to:

- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- To reflect the parish tradition of worship, while giving experience over time for pupils to experience the breadth of Anglicanism.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship and festivals, including the Eucharist.
- Explore the school's Christian vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues.
- Enable pupils the opportunity to make a positive contribution to worship through involvement with aspects of the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship.

### **4. Legal requirements**

Collective worship:

- Should be conducted in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and Instrument of Government and be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- Unless the right of withdrawal has been exercised, all pupils must take part each day in an act of collective worship (DfE circular 1/94 para. 51) and the Governing Body should ensure that all pupils each day engage in a distinctively Christian act of worship.
- Arrangements for collective worship in foundation schools of a religious character (i.e. church schools) are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consultation with the headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52&53).

## 5. Planning Collective Worship

Collective worship is a time when we come together to share Christian values and the experiences of our everyday lives, in order to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of our pupils and staff. Worship is organised on a whole school basis and is led by members of staff, visiting church ministers, outside speakers and pupils in school. This enables us to provide a varied approach towards our Collective Worship and enhances the school's Christian character. The whole school attends St. Augustine's Church at least once each term to worship and to reinforce our foundation as a Church of England school.

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, the incumbent of our linked church and external visitors, in consultation with the collective worship leader and governors.

The daily Christian act of worship is central to our Christian ethos. It makes an important contribution to the spiritual flourishing of the whole school community. We are committed to providing a daily act of Christian worship which is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality.

Collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school or key stage. Our school plans systematically, using both long-term and short-term plans which enables continuity and cohesion. We use the LDBS Collective Worship Planning resources to support our worship.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and our planning incorporates a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include music, silence, symbolism, drama and the use of IT.

When planning acts of worship, we follow the Church of England guidance to ensure that worship is:

- **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 will only be 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.

## 6. Pattern of Worship

Children take part in at least one act of collective worship every day. Themes for the year are based on the Anglican church calendar and our Christian values.

The weekly Collective Worship timetable is organised as follows:

Day	Main Focus of Worship	Led By
Monday	Headteacher collective worship	Head of Primary

Tuesday	Christian Value/Year group Mass in church	RE Lead
Wednesday	Singing in Worship	SLT member
Thursday	Weekly school theme or teacher led worship in class	SLT member
Friday	Celebrations Collective Worship	Head of Primary and AHT

- Monday Headteacher Collective Worship is led by the Head of Primary or an Assistant Head Teacher (AHT) and is our Gospel assembly - following up on the gospel teaching in church from the previous Sunday. It is based on the LDBS Collective Worship Planning. It may include feast days and significant events of celebration or remembrance. In order for us to think about and understand how Jesus lived his life, we underpin our teaching and learning with the stories and parables from the Bible. Our Collective Worship leader pupils take part in delivering readings or leading prayers during this collective worship.
- Tuesday worship is led by the RE lead and focuses on the school value for the current half term. This is explored through stories and parables from the Bible.
- Wednesday worship is
- Thursday worship is either a class collective worship in class – children prepare and lead an act of worship for the rest of the school and parents/carers, supported by the class teacher – or SLT led collective worship which may follow up on the gospel teaching from Monday's Headteacher collective worship or a theme linked to a significant event.
- Friday worship is where we celebrate achievement in the school from the past week. We celebrate children demonstrating our core Christian values through the Headteacher award; recognise children's work through Wonderful Work certificates; and celebrate children who demonstrate our school values through Shining Stars certificates. All achievements are recognised and celebrated through reference to our school vision and values.

We also celebrate the major Christian festivals throughout the year. Parents/carers are invited to join us, either at school, or at our Parish Church. These include Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance Day services. On days when we attend worship in our Parish Church this worship is deemed to fulfil our collective worship requirement for the day. In addition to this, Year group Mass is held in our Parish Church on a termly basis and is linked to the school values for each half term.

Our worship consists of 4 parts:

- Gather – we welcome the community with music, a welcome address and the lighting of a candle
- Engage – we share and stimulate interest in the content of the collective worship through an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message and a Bible reading
- Respond – pupils are provided with the time and opportunity to discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- Send – we share and summarise the message of the worship and ask pupils to think about how this will affect their day/learning/ behaviour. We close with a final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle.

The school community has developed a whole school prayer which reflects our vision and which is regularly used within Collective Worship:

Father in heaven,  
Fill our school with happiness, discovery, adventure and creativity.  
Make this a place where we learn to love and love to learn.  
Help us to shine like stars forever,  
Doing only what makes You proud.  
Help us to be brave, honest and kind,  
Knowing that you are our God, for ever and ever.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ.  
Amen

## **7. Collective worship leader**

The leader for collective worship is responsible for the long-term planning of worship, leading acts of worship and supporting staff and pupils who are planning and leading aspects of worship. The leader also monitors the quality of worship and evaluates its impact across the school community.

Tools used for monitoring the quality of Collective Worship and evaluating its impact include:

- Observation of children's reaction and participation during worship
- Feedback from children - written or verbal
- Pupil comment in the Collective Worship book on our Prayer Table in the Hall
- Observation and monitoring by Senior Leaders
- Observation and monitoring by Foundation Governors

## **8. Visitors leading worship**

Mindful of being a Parish School, visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This should 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 senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading worship in school will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its context and our school's vision. Please refer to LDBS guidance for visitors leading worship.

## **9. CPD and training**

Parents, pupils and adults in school are entitled to be led in Christian worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a church school context. Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular diocesan led training.

## **10. Monitoring and evaluation**

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact they have on pupils and adults within the school community.

This involves monitoring by school leaders, the collective worship leader and governors and takes place both informally and formally. Everyone who leads worship is asked to evaluate, reflecting on how they can improve and develop their practice. We welcome the views of all those who participate in our worship, including pupils, parents, and visitors. This feedback plays an essential part in developing the spiritual growth of our school community.

Acts of worship are informally evaluated on a day-to-day basis through dialogue between members of staff and the senior leadership team. The clergy governor attends worship each week and. Foundation and/or Clergy Governors take part in worship at least once per term and provide feedback on this to the Head of Primary. They also report back to the governing body. Parents are encouraged to attend collective worship at least once a term and their feedback is welcomed by SLT.

Foundation governors and the worship leader observe and evaluate worship once every term and report back to the whole governing body.

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

## **11. Parents and Carers**

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help pupils flourish. Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship, However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all pupils will participate in collective worship, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child will discuss this with the headteacher before making their decision. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw pupils from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

## **12. Evaluation / Review**

This policy is reviewed regularly by the collective worship leader in consultation with the Headteacher and ratified every three years by the Governing Body.

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