

# Collective Worship Policy



<b>Approved by:</b>	Local School Committee	<b>Date:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
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<b>Review Schedule:</b>	Annual		

## “Let your light shine”

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

### Policy Statement

At Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary School worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school’s vision. Worship is not an isolated event but a daily rhythm that shapes the spiritual, moral, and emotional life of our school community. It is carefully planned to be inspirational, invitational, and inclusive, offering all pupils and adults the opportunity to reflect, respond, and grow in their understanding of themselves, others, and God.

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.

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 calendar and of other faiths. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

*“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)*

### **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 Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

Governors 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 Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary School there may be 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
- 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

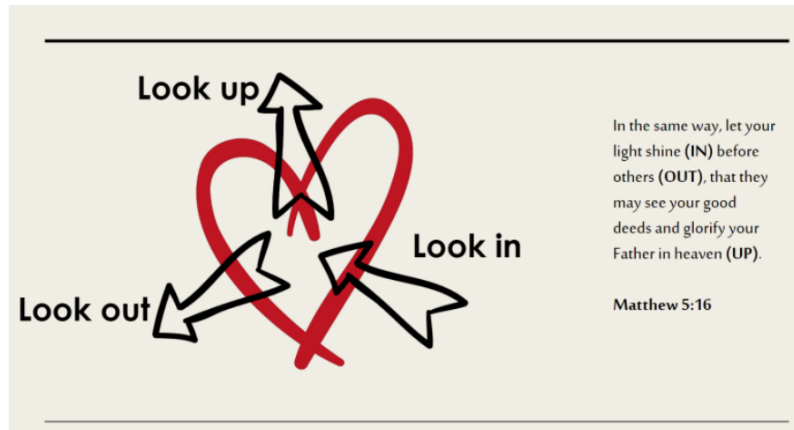
If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

### Guiding Principles of Collective Worship

Collective worship 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.

### The pattern of Collective Worship



Our worships are structured using an in, out, up model to support children to contextualise the learning and themes thus supporting them to apply the values to their lives. In: look into ourselves; how do I feel/show the value to myself? Out: look out to others; how do my actions impact others? Up: look up to God or our world; how do my actions impact the world? How am I following what God wanted? This model also perfectly chimes with our school vision.

Our worships also allow us to focus upon our core values across the year.



These values are not abstract ideals; they are lived out daily through our relationships, our learning, and our service. Each value is rooted in scripture and broken down into age-appropriate learning experiences that grow with the child. They guide how we teach, how we worship, and how we support one another.

### How Collective worship is organised

#### Leadership

- Collective worship is led by the head teacher, teachers or faith leaders or church groups such as Open the Book

#### Planning

- Worship is planned around the school values, the Christian calendar and world faith events.
- On occasions, collective worship is designed to respond to local, national or global events.
- Each half term there is theme for collective worship based on one of our school values.
- Themes are broad enough to allow those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective.
- Our collective worship rota ensures different members of the school community, including children, are equipped to plan and lead acts of worship

Typically, our collective worship is planned using the model promoted by the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

## Main Ingredients of Collective Worship

- 1) Gathering together
- 2) Engaging together
- 3) Responding together
- 4) Leaving together

### Gathering together (1) [focussing on the theme]

- Appropriate music linked to the half-termly value as children arrive
- A visual focus – reflective station
- A clear beginning and a brain break – one note on the chime. A time for peace.
- An opening statement (with response): ‘May God’s peace be with you’ / ‘May God’s peace be with all of us’

### Engaging together (2) [exploring the theme]

- Refer to visual focus
- Through story
  - Bible / personal stories to yourself or about other people
  - Story/poem from literature
  - Plays/drama/quiz/video clip

### Responding together (3) [thinking about the theme]

- Silent response – visualisation / listening / watching
- Spoken response – Christian song / agreement (amen) / prayer (school prayer/traditional/made up prayer)
- Action response – receiving something / giving something / writing / drawing
- Reflection/thinking time/to be mindful of – before the prayer – what might this mean for me? (link to the ‘treasured thought’)

### Leaving together (4) [living out the theme]

- Prayer of blessing – statement with response
- A clear ending: Grace - ‘The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore’. Amen.
- Appropriate music – listened to/singing to
- Practical application - something to think about / do / say

## Organisation

- Collective Worship is usually done as a whole school. On occasions, it might be as a class or a key stage. It is held in our hall or largest classroom

- We also use settings and places for worship beyond the school such as local churches and the war memorial.
- Collective worship is usually held at 10.25am each morning.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Children, staff and governors are involved in monitoring collective worship. This is done within our Learning Review Week cycles.

The nominated person with specific responsibility for collective worship is the Headteacher.