



# Collective Worship Policy 2023

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# St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School

## Collective Worship Policy

Policy History	Date
First draft	
Presented to staff	
Second draft	
Presented to Governors	25/04/06
Review	21/03/07
Review	16/03/09
Review	02/12/2014
Review KL	12/05/15
Reviewed HA	February 2019
Reviewed RM	September 2023

This policy is reviewed every three years

### THE AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

1. Ensure that our school is a happy, secure and supportive place, where everyone is valued.
2. Provide a rich, varied and stimulating curriculum, which is accessible to all.
3. Encourage a love of learning and the desire to expand their knowledge and skills throughout life.
4. Foster spiritual awareness and a sense of awe and wonder.
5. Develop the understanding and skills needed to become responsible and effective members of the school and as part of the wider community.

This policy will set out how these aims will be practically realised by staff and governors around the school and in the classroom with reference to Collective Worship



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# **St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **Rationale**

The daily act of worship is a very important part of the life of the school and the policy practice reflects and reinforces many of the school's aims. Based on the belief that each child is unique and made by God, our mission statement places the development of the individual and their uniqueness at the heart of our work. Other common strands are:

- Care and support
- Respect and responsibility
- Reflective growth in self development and self esteem
- Relationships
- Spiritual, Cultural, Social and Moral development

Whilst Acts of Collective Worship are planned to be inclusive, in line with the School's Trust Deed and our Church of England Foundation, Collective Acts of Worship will be distinctively Christian in character and incorporate some elements of the Anglican faith.

### **Aims**

**Through Collective Worship at St Cuthbert's CofE Junior School we aim to:**

- Provide opportunities for worshipping God, reverence, thanksgiving celebration and reflection;
- Help convey the sense of value and worth Jesus gave to everyone and to reflect that in the ethos of the school;
- Enable pupils to reflect on Christian and other worthwhile values and beliefs, encouraging:
  - A positive and responsible attitude to the environment
  - A quest for honesty, integrity, truth and justice
  - Love and respect for self and the other person
  - Service to others and to the community
- Introduce, make use of and teach reverence and respect for some of the elements, symbols and traditions of the Christian and in particular Church of England Faith e.g. the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, Candles, The Vicar, The Church and its many parts;
- Contribute to pupils' spiritual development by providing opportunities to:
  - Reflect upon the value, purpose and meaning of things.



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- Experience times of quiet inactivity to counterbalance the activity, which generally marks the rest of the day.
- Hear stories and words from religious and other literature, which suggests that there is more to life than meets the eye.
- Experience awe and wonder at the beauty, mystery and power of the world.
- Contribute to the pupils' moral development by providing opportunities to:
  - Reflect on matters concerning right and wrong.
  - Hear about incidents in which, and people in whom goodness or right are exemplified.
  - Learn about religion and other teaching concerning right and wrong.
- Contribute to pupil's social development by providing opportunities to
  - Gather with others for a common purpose and to celebrate shared values of the school community.
  - Enable staff, pupils and members of the wider community to contribute to the life of the school.
  - Reflect upon human feelings and experiences, both positive and negative such as love, joy, hope, friendship, acceptance, fear, and forgiveness.
  - Learn how to behave appropriately within a specific social setting.
  - Develop self-confidence in public speaking/performance.
- Contribute to pupils' cultural development by providing opportunities to
  - Hear music from a range of times, places and cultures.
  - Reflect upon ideas concerning beauty and that which is pleasing to the eye and ear.
  - Appreciate the range of talents and gifts found in the school community and beyond.
- Contribute to pupils' intellectual development by providing opportunities for:
  - Open ended questioning.
  - Learning to engage with their minds.
  - Thinking about something more than the obvious.
- Provide a worthwhile educational experience, which takes account of pupils' age, aptitude and family background.
- Provide a worship experience that does not offend the integrity of the non-religious and those of different faiths who may be participating.
- Fulfil statutory requirements.



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## **Legal requirements – Our response**

In line with the 1996 Education Act there will be a short daily act of worship, which will include all children (except those withdrawn by Parental request).

As a Church of England School the Collective Worship provided will reflect our Foundation and be distinctively Christian with particular reference to the Anglican Faith. The traditions of Christian belief and the Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ will form the major focus of our worship.

Through staff meetings and guidelines for visitors the requirements concerning traditions and practice will be explained to everyone involved in the planning and delivery of acts of worship.

A specific time each day is set-aside for Collective Worship. Although known as "Assembly" care is taken to separate this worship from other school assemblies used to impart information. This is done either by arranging a separate meeting time for notices or by ending the act of worship and after a brief pause and time for reflection giving any information.

All staff will be invited to contribute regularly to acts of worship, but will not be compromised by being asked to lead an assembly if they find the content contrary to their own belief. Care will be taken when recruiting staff to emphasise the school's Church of England status.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from acts of worship. Teachers have the same rights. If a parent/teacher so wishes he/she must inform the Headteacher. If, after consultation the parent/teacher still wishes to exercise this right, alternative arrangements will be made for the child and adequate supervision will be provided. Guidance for new parents on non-participation in acts of collective worship is given in the school prospectus.

## **Organisation of Collective Worship**

The programme of acts of collective worship is co-ordinated by the Headteacher. In planning the programme four main aspects of collective worship are considered:

- Content
- Atmosphere
- Reflection
- Participation

Themes reflecting the schools' Christian Foundation are chosen for a fortnightly/monthly or half termly period as appropriate. Content may be selected from a faith base; shared human experience of special issues e.g. an occurrence in school. The main Christian festivals are celebrated every year. All teaching staff may take a turn in leading the assemblies, following the agreed programme.



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There are daily whole school collective workshops 4 days a week and one class collective worship each week. On alternate Mondays the children take part in 'Open the book' which is a bible based collective worship with a particular focus and planned by a church group who come in and read and share a bible story whilst a class act it out. On Friday the achievements of pupils of the school are celebrated and time is given to reflect on our skills and talents and to think about other people.

## **Church and Family Collective Worship**

Acts of Worship celebrating Harvest, Christmas (Christingle service) and Easter are held in St. Cuthbert's Church and at the school and led by the vicar. Over the year, each class will deliver a collective worship to celebrate or share aspects of their class life or a theme chosen by the class that they wish to share with the school.

Acts of Worship are also held in the Church at the end of the year (Leavers' Service) and to coincide with Special Church or School events e.g. flower festivals, a study of the Church, nativity themed festival. Families are invited to join in with the acts of Worship held in the Church.

## **Delivering the Programme through the GERS model.**

Worship will usually consist of

- Opening music to signify gathering as a preparation for worship.
- Short talk for engagement: may include a reading from the Bible, a story or poem, drama (spontaneous or rehearsed), music or video recording, or time for thinking and time for sharing.
- Prayer to respond: A time for stillness and quiet reflection: which may include closing eyes, using objects or art as a focus, a guided story, a focused silence, a piece of music or lighting a candle. It will be with word or silent, accessible to all, with appropriate rituals e.g. not always hands together eyes closed.
- Leaving Together: a clear ending such as a blessing, extinguishing a candle or a chime.

In delivering the programme care will be taken to ensure there is the opportunity for personal engagement and response with maximum participation by all those present, allowing for a range of responses and feedback. Children's own thoughts, experiences, stories and prayers will be used regularly to enhance worship.

A range of responses to worship will be encouraged, including:

- Awareness of
- Appreciation of
- Respect for
- Preference for
- Commitment to
- Devotion to
- Adoration of



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This will ensure that children are not compelled to respond in a particular way but are offered opportunities to:

- Reflect on the meaning and purpose of life.
- Ponder ultimate questions.
- Develop a sense of transcendence.
- Respond to challenge.
- Experience exploration of a religious idea.
- Celebrate learning about religion.
- Learn from the experience of others.

There should be no attempt at eliciting acts of assent or a corporate public response. Children's responses are private, conditional and may well be reflective in nature and certainly open to subsequent review. Therefore it is important not to put pressure on children. Language should be used carefully, for example, rather than "we believe ..." to use the phrase "Christians believe...", "I would like you to listen to some words which are very special to Christians". Occasionally materials or examples from other faiths are used to illustrate a theme in assembly. When this happens care should be taken to put them into context for example "This is a prayer that Hindus use to ...."

There are many values and beliefs, which are part of the broad traditions of Christian beliefs, which are also held by society at large, e.g. a sense of awe and wonder at the natural world, the merits of sacrificial love, such values should be explored and celebrated in school worship in a manner which complements the way they are taught in the classroom and communicated through the ethos of the school.

## **Visitors**

Visitors should understand the educational aims of collective worship at the school and the need to avoid any proselytising. Guidelines will be given to visitors before they lead an act of collective worship, and members of the community involved on a regular basis with the assembly programme will be asked to read this policy.

## **Community Involvement in Collective Worship**

The Headteacher, class teachers, the vicar of St Cuthbert's Church and Governors are involved on a regular basis with the collective worship programme.

## **Resources and training**

Resources for carrying out assemblies are held in the Headteacher's office and resource cupboard. Requests to purchase small items for Collective Acts of Worship may be made to the Headteacher. Consumable items such as candles will be replaced through petty cash. The school is willing to support staff in understanding and leading acts of Collective Worship. Training is available through the Diocese. Major resources and training needs will be reviewed in line with the school





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development plan and consideration to the requirements will be made annually when the budget is set.

## Monitoring and evaluation

Records are kept of planned themes, assemblies delivered and staff involved. Staff and pupil feedback and the Governors' monitoring sheet are used to monitor Collective Worship. The success and value of the programme is discussed at termly staff meeting and future programmes are planned. *(Overview next page)*

## St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School Collective Worship Themes

Term	Christian Calendar	School Values	Seal	Other festivals and celebrations
<b>Autumn 1</b>	All Saints day St Francis St Cuthbert	Endurance	New Beginnings	Yom Kippur (Jewish) Diwali (Sikh / Hindu)
<b>Autumn 2</b>	Advent Christmas Church Service	Peace	Say no to bullying	Hajj and Eid (Muslim) Hanukah (Jewish)
<b>Spring 1</b>	Epiphany Valentine's day Candelmas St Paul Mothering Sunday	Hope	Getting on & falling out	Chinese New Year World Religion Day (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Jan)
<b>Spring 2</b>	Shrove Tuesday Ash Wednesday Lent Holy week Good Friday Easter St David's 1 <sup>st</sup> March St Patrick 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Forgiveness	Good to be me	Magha Puja (Buddist) Holi (Hindu) Passover (Jewish) Mothering Sunday
<b>Summer 1</b>	Resurrection Ascension Pentecost St George 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Compassion	Going for goals	Ramadan (Muslim) Dharma Day (Buddist)
<b>Summer 2</b>	St Christopher	Humility	Changes	Father's Day

Throughout the year, all teaching staff will lead assemblies linked to our school/ Christian Values of: Endurance, peace, hope, forgiveness, compassion & humility.