

Spaxton CofE Primary School

‘Together we flourish and achieve’



Collective Worship Policy

LINKS: Religious Education Policy, Behaviour Policy

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POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: Rachel Rood

MONITORED BY: Local Governance Committee

DATE RATIFIED BY GOVERNORS: November 2025

AUDIENCE: Staff, parents, students

REVIEW DATE: November 2027

Approved on behalf of School:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Rood'.

(Headteacher)

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Collective Worship Policy

'Together we flourish and achieve'

Inspired by: I Corinthians Ch 13 Vs 4-8

Those who belong to our school: protect, trust, have hope, persevere, show courage and respect.

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

'Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Statement

In Spaxton CofE Primary School, worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision and core values. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

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.

At Spaxton, 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 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 (*and other faiths*¹) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.²

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all schools, including maintained and Academies 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. This means collective worship at Spaxton should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. Worship in Spaxton CofE Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The trustees and local governing committee 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 Spaxton CofE Primary School there are 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.

¹ Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

² "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)

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 Headteacher 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.

(This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)

Guiding Principles

Collective worship in Spaxton CofE Primary School 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 known 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

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

This policy was developed in collaboration with the school ethos committee.

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

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included on the school website.

How Collective worship is organised

Leadership

- Daily worship is led by a variety of different people, including the Headteacher, Senior teacher, teachers, a small group of pupils, a whole class, a member of the clergy or individual visitors or teams e.g. Open the Book.

- If a visitor is leading Collective Worship, an information leaflet for visitors has been produced by the Diocese and should be shared with the visitor prior to them leading Collective Worship. Please see Appendix A.

Planning

- The content of all acts of Collective Worship will be considered carefully, to ensure relevance and suitability for all children. It should follow the structure of gathering, engaging, reflecting and leaving. See Appendix B for planning grid following this structure.
- The whole school Collective Worship on a Tuesday is planned using the Roots and Fruits programme.
- It is the responsibility of the adult leading the Collective Worship to research and plan the content that is suitable for all year groups attending.
- Collective Worship should focus on developing understanding and celebrating one of the Christian values. There is a different focus value each half term.
- If pupils are asked to plan and lead a Collective Worship, they should do so under the supervision of an adult from their class.
- If there is a significant event within the Church year, this will become the focus of Collective Worship.
- Those planning and leading Collective Worship may use a range and variety of materials and resources, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle.

Organisation

Collective Worship will begin with a child lighting the candle and saying the Anglican greeting “Peace be with you” and children’s response “And also with you”. At the end of worship, the same child will come up, blow out the candle and say “Together we flourish and achieve, go in peace”

Collective Worship takes about 15 minutes.

Generally, this weekly pattern for Acts of Collective Worship is followed:

Day	Time	Lead
Monday	9.00am	Celebration praise led by Headteacher/Senior Teacher
Tuesday	9.00am	Whole school collective worship led by Headteacher/Senior Teacher
Wednesday	9.00am	Whole school collective worship led by member of the clergy or Open the Book
Thursday		Class collective worship led by class teacher
Friday	9.00am	Whole school singing and praise workshop led by Headteacher/Senior Teacher

Collective Worship is celebrated in church once a month and at appropriate Christian festivals. We also visit the church when there are appropriate links within our RE curriculum.

The planning and leading of Collective Worship in church is a joint effort between members of the clergy, staff, children and outside visitors.

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.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Monitoring and evaluating of Collective Worship can take place by different stakeholders including staff, pupils, governors and clergy.
- Monitoring allows for strengths and areas for development to be identified and feedback can lead to future developments in Collective Worship.
- Monitoring and evaluation may take the form of pupil interviews, staff surveys, formal observations.
- Monitoring is also discussed through our termly ethos committee meetings. These allow us to discuss the focus of forthcoming collective worship.

Disseminating the policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

Appendix A



Guests Leading Collective Worship in schools

General Points

- Collective worship is the entitlement of all pupils
- It should take place daily for every pupil
- Schools may gather as the whole school, in key stages, in year groups, houses or in class/tutor groups
- Collective worship can be led by the headteacher, staff, pupils/students, clergy and other volunteers, invited guests
- All visitors, including clergy, are present by invitation of the school; they may not lead collective worship as of right

To consider

- Don't assume that pupils' presence at worship signifies their personal commitment or involvement.
- You should not impose on pupils, words or attitudes which they cannot honestly express. Your task is not to compel worship, but to enable it.
- Pupils should not feel compelled to respond to collective worship in a particular way.
Eg:
 - Invite pupils to join in with a prayer and to respond by saying 'Amen' if they agree with the prayer. This can be done by saying, 'I am going to say a prayer to God. Please close your eyes and feel free to respond at the end with the word 'Amen' if you wish.'
 - It is good practice to use the words, 'This is what many Christians believe.'
- Think before you speak in general terms! Eg '...the Jews wanted to kill Jesus' – a Jewish child present, might be upset by this.
- Have something for children to see, listen to and do.

As a guest of the school to lead Collective Worship always remember that:

- Leading Collective Worship is about giving pupils the opportunity to worship.
- It is not about demanding that they worship.
- You are not there to indoctrinate a captive audience.

- You have many gifts and talents – use them.
- It is a privilege to share the love of God with the school community.
- You need to be sensitive to the usual ‘style’ of worship experienced by the school.
- Ask if you can observe the school’s collective worship before you lead.
- Offer to assist in class worship if this takes place.
- It is good practice to ask for feedback from the headteacher and staff – what was successful; what didn’t work so well; suggestions for the future etc. It might be helpful to suggest a review date.
- You are following the example of Jesus when he said, ‘I came to serve, not to be served.’
- Prayer works! Pray for God’s blessing on the collective worship and that all present will have a sense of God’s peace and love.
- Collective worship provides an opportunity for those present to explore and respond to the possibility of God.

Appendix B

Gathering, Engaging, Reflecting. Leaving – adapted from ‘Flippin Praise’

Gathering together	Engaging together	Reflecting together	Leaving together
Say your own greeting... ‘Good morning everybody, this is our special time to think about God’	Use your own idea to help people think about the theme	Sing a worship song which fits in with the theme	Use a prayer or blessing – write your own or choose one from a book
Say or sign and say L: The Lord be with you R: And also with you	Read or tell a bible story. Children could use costumes and props to help	Pray the Lord’s prayer together. You could say it, sing it or sign it.	Sing a leaving song – repeat the chorus Try starting loud and getting quieter with each repeat
Sing a welcome chorus from a well-known song... ‘Thank you Lord for this fine day’	Show and talk about a picture or several pictures to introduce your theme or story	Pray your school prayer together	L: Go in peace and serve the Lord R: In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen
Look at pictures of nature L: I will give thanks to you Lord with all my heart! R: I will tell of your marvellous works	Listen to a song or piece of music to introduce your theme	Ask several people to say a short prayer and sing a reflective chant (e.g. Taize style)	Sing a blessing together: ‘May God bless our school and homes’
Say or sign and say L: Peace be with you R: And also with you	Learn a new song of worship and explore its meaning together	Listen to a piece of music while thinking about the theme/message/story etc.	Say together: Let us go out into the world as messengers of hope and ... (choose your own value)
Look at pictures of nature L: I will give thanks to you Lord with all my heart! R: We are amazed at the beauty we see	Use questions and answers to explore the theme together	Invite some pupils to present work they have prepared on the theme	Say together: Let us go out into the world as... (use ideas from your schools mission/vision statement)
Greet using mime actions:	Explore a topical issue (local or national) and think about an	Gather everyone’s responses to the message of the worship and bring them together in a prayer	L: May the light of Jesus Christ shine in all our hearts R: Amen

L: We are gathering together as part of God's family	appropriate Christian response		
Light a large candle and say: L: Jesus the light of the world is here R: Lord Jesus shine on us	Explore the story behind a Christian festival	Listen to a prayer chosen or written by a pupil	L: May God give to the world justice, truth and peace R: and make our school a place of happiness and peace
Listen to quiet music and say L: The Lord is here R: His Spirit is with us	Explore the story behind a Christian saint	Discuss a practical response to the message of the worship	Say: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore, Amen.
Light a large candle and say: L: We light this candle at the start of our special time together R: Help us shine our lights for all to see	Explore the story behind a Christian organisation e.g. Tear Fund	Spend time in quiet reflection, maybe using a candle as a focus	L: May God bless us and the work of our hands R: Amen
Sing a joyful action song and say: L: This is the day that the Lord has made R: we will rejoice and be glad in it	Explore the story behind a Christian piece of art	Strike a 'singing bowl' and ask the children to think of 1, 2, 3 or more ideas in the time it takes for the sound to finish	Say together: We go into the world (our school) to walk in God's light, to rejoice in God's love and to reflect God's glory. Amen
Hold up a bible and say: L: Help us to know your ways, O Lord R: and teach us your paths	Talk about a relevant personal experience or tell a story that fits the theme	Have a small group of children perform a dance/movement to a piece of music for others to watch	Ask the children to do something practically, related to the theme, at some point of time within the day

L = Leader

R = Response