



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY FOR ST. MARGARET'S CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL



At St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School we seek to develop wisdom, encourage aspiration and promote dignity and acceptance enabling our respectful children to live a life giving back to the community.

John 10:10: 'Live life in all its fullness.'

**A**spiration

**W**isdom

**E**ndurance

Approved by the governing body on:	Spring 2026
Shared with stakeholders on:	Spring 2026
Next review:	Spring 2028

## **Introduction**

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision and the associated values we derive from them. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God.
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues.
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs.
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

## **Legal Requirements**

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises, but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

## **Principles of collective worship**

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the

principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).<sup>1</sup> Collective worship therefore will be:

- **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 and sing 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.

## Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, Psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship,

- Using Prayer and reflection
- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Using Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning

We also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using prayers from Common Worship
- Using Anglican liturgy at the beginning and end of worship

We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

In our school, we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>

We foster links with St Margaret's of Antioch Church, involving the Rector of The Heddingsams and Upper Colne Church in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit the Church times per year as part of the Christian calendar.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

### **Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths**

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At St Margaret's CofE, Toppesfield, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavor to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to St Margaret's CofE Primary, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

### **Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice**

- Collective worship is planned by the headteacher and can be led by any member of staff or visiting clergy. We use a range of timings and groupings for our collective worship. Some worship is whole school, some is key stage, some is house groups and some is class based. We welcome visitors to join in our acts of worship.
  
- Our Collective Worship generally has some core elements.
  - At our 'Gathering', we play soft music as the community enter the worship space. We then welcome the school community with the worship leader saying, "Jesus, Light of the world is here" and the community responding with "Lord Jesus, shine on us" as a candle is lit.
  - At our 'Engaging' we have the leader's main input into the act of Worship. We engage the pupils by sharing a core message. This may be through a Bible reading, video or pupil activity. This is followed with a 'Responding' opportunity. These are opportunities for pupils and staff to reflect upon this message and the impact that it has on their lives today. This may be through prayer, quiet reflection, activity, song or discussion.
  - We conclude our Collective Worship by 'Sending' out. We close our worship through one or more of the following elements – a final message, Bible verse, a challenge, song, prayer, music, liturgy, blowing out of the candle.
  - The messages in our Collective Worship may be followed up on in classes or in further acts of Collective Worship.

- On Fridays we give thanks to God for the achievements of our pupils in across every aspect of our school's life These are acts of worship celebrating God's diverse gifts to every member of our pupil community.

### **Resourcing, Staff development and training**

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship**

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship. A member of the Parish worship team aims to lead worship fortnightly. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies: [Child Protection Policy](#). The welcoming member of staff/headteacher/Collective Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices Collective Worship. The purpose is 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.

### **Pupil Led Worship**

Since we believe worship to be the activity of the whole school community, we actively promote appropriate pupil leadership as well as full participation.

### **Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development**

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed and evaluated by staff, governors and the pupils. This is done through observation, discussion and surveys as appropriate. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship and our school development and CPD plans as appropriate.

**Inclusion**

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

**Implementation of Policy**

The head teacher as Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.