

**Church of England and Methodist Schools**  
**Diocese of Blackburn and North Lancashire Methodist District**

**Collective Worship Policy – Policy Guidance**  
(A Suggested Structure for Church Schools)

*“ Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” Psalm 150v6*

**Collective Worship in a Church School should be of the highest quality, strongly reflect the school’s distinctive Christian character and permeate throughout the whole life of the school.**

**Collective Worship in a Church school should ‘Be Bold’ and WOW!**

**Your Policy Should:**

**Include the**

Mission Statement of the School, **followed by a** ‘Mission’ Statement for Collective Worship.

Create a Statement that clearly emphasises the distinctive nature of Collective Worship in your Church School and the contribution it makes to the ethos and spiritual dimension of school life.

**Emphasise that**

In Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools the management of Collective Worship is a distinctive role of the governors and head teacher. Collective Worship has to be in accordance with the Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England and/or Methodist Church. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Collective Worship provided in its school.

You may wish to state that forms of worship within our denomination(s) differ and these differences enable you to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to your Trust Deeds and as well as drawing on our denominational heritage, you also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian Church.

### **Make it clear that**

Although Collective Worship and RE naturally compliment and enrich one another they should be managed separately and Collective Worship does not form part of the time allocation for Religious Education. However, it is appropriate to state that "Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfES regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of Religious Education and the National Curriculum and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussion and question and answer. Pupils may be read to or instructed or they may be asked to listen to readings or to think about and respond to a stimulus such as a work of art.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt. Frequently pupils are involved in leading worship or performing through dance, drama or music.

When any such activities occur, they may be counted as teaching time even though they take place within worship. It is appropriate that, in a Church school, worship and learning is seen as a seamless whole even though, for the purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two."

### **And whoever is reading your policy should be in no doubt that**

Collective Worship is at the heart of daily life in your school and that the staff and Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils' **spiritual education.**

### **Your policy should include an outline of the distinctively Christian foundation and content of your Collective Worship, for example.....**

Whatever the approaches, it is expected that pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them. These would include:

- the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- the nature of human beings as children of God, part of his creation and, though sinful, destined for eternal life;
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God;
- the central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity;
- the central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance;
- the importance of prayer;
- the central symbols of Christianity;
- the cycle of the Church year.

**It is recommended that your policy states clearly the difference between Collective Worship and assembly.**

Such as, 'The school meets together for Collective Worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, e.g. important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from Collective Worship and parents' rights to withdraw their children do not apply.

**Your Collective Worship policy is an opportunity to make a statement about your links with the local Churches.**

Mention the close links with, and use of, the local Church and relationship with the clergy and congregation.

**Statement of broad aims**

Create your aims for the Collective Worship in your school using these 3 E's.

**EXPLORE those questions which are important to everyone.**

This would include aims that reflect :- Developing a relationship with God, exploring the teachings of the Bible, prayer, the values of truth, love, goodness, forgiveness, hope etc.

What worship is and what people do when they worship, what it means to have faith, the faith of others, moral issues and concerns, personal values, commitments and beliefs.

What it means to put God at the heart of school life.

**ENCOUNTER a faith which is alive.**

This would include aims that reflect :- Christianity in action! The threshold of worship, the nature of God as revealed in Jesus, creative silence, the awe and wonder of God and creation, a relationship with God.

**EXPERIENCE the joy of celebrating God's love!**

This would include aims that reflect:-Enjoying worship, Church life and Christian practice, God's concern for all people in all areas of life, stillness and reflection. Participating in and leading worship. Being a part of the school family. Sharing the achievements, joys and difficulties of all members of the school community.

## Organisation and Delivery

Daily Collective Worship has to be provided for every pupil. This worship may take place in various groupings such as the whole school, separate Key Stage groups, year groups or house groups or in classes or tutor groups, but not in faith groups. Worship may take place at any time in the school day.

### In your policy indicate briefly

- The agreed pattern of weekly (and termly) worship, indicating times, locations, composition, e.g. whole school, year or class groupings.
- Who will lead collective worship, e.g. staff, pupils, incumbent/minister, other clergy, visitors, governors etc.
- The approximate length of collective worship.
- The opportunities for parents, family and governors to attend.
- The ways in which a worshipful atmosphere is to be created and sustained, *e.g. how a sense of worship will be built up through the use of music, silence, appropriate movement into and out of worship and through the setting (including display) and the use of Christian symbols.*
- The ways in which worship will be distinguished from notices and other 'assembly' activities, *e.g. notices will be given by a different person from the worship leader, they will be given after closing music etc.*
- The occasions when worship is to take place in Church.
- If Holy Communion / The Eucharist is to be part of the provision for collective worship, particular reference might be made to it.
- In a multi-faith school, it is important also to make some comment about how the worship is to be open and accessible to all pupils.

### Content and Approaches

- Indicate something of the range of content to be used, termly, annually, or over a Key Stage.
- Indicate the way in which content is to be organised. *Perhaps in most schools there will be a fourfold approach consisting of: the observance of the Church Year, the celebration of curriculum work, weekly (or longer) themes, and acts of worship which stand alone.*
- Indicate something of the range of approaches to be used, *e.g. adult and pupil led, story telling, music and movement, drama (rehearsed and improvised), visual aids, role play etc.*
- Indicate that because of the importance placed on the worshipping life of the school, children will not be withdrawn for extra tuition, music lessons etc.

### **Consultation, Management, Recording and Review**

- Indicate the role of the Collective Worship co-ordinator in managing Collective Worship.
- Indicate the steps to be taken to plan and co-ordinate worship: e.g. the contribution of clergy, senior staff, staff and pupils.
- State policy and provision for staff development for the co-ordinator and for other staff, and any governor training for Collective Worship. These should be included in School Development Plan.
- Indicate that Records of Acts of Worship will be kept.
- Indicate the provision for:
  - monitoring and evaluating the quality and content of Collective Worship,
  - reporting to the governing body,
  - reviewing the policy. (This should be included in the School Development Plan)

### **Resources**

You may wish to state the purchasing policy for resources for worship.

### **It is essential that your policy includes parental rights of withdrawal**

Parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship and this provision and its limitations are indicated in the school Brochure. (The form of words given in the Diocesan / District Syllabus is repeated here.)

*The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England / Methodist Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England / Methodist ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school*

“ You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven.” Matthew 5v14-16