



# St Michael with St Thomas C of E Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

**Author:** Headteacher

**Owner:** School Committee/CEO

**Date adopted:** March 2023

**Review:** March 2026

*We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:*

*Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children Article 12: All children have a right to be able to give their opinion when adults are making a decision that will affect them, and adults should take it seriously.*

*Article 13: Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.*

*Article 14: Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.*

*Article 15: Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.*

*Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.*

*Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.*

*Article 30: Every child has the right to learn and use language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.*

*Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>.

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **Aims and objectives**

As a Church of England school all collective worship is set in the context of the school's mission statement and aims. The aim is that worship is central to the life of the school and of the highest quality enabling pupils to appreciate their own worth and value in the eyes of God and to celebrate and pray as a community. All worship is inclusive and supports those of the Christian faith, those of other faiths and those of no faith.

The objectives of worship are to offer children opportunity to:

- to explore and reflect the Christian values of the school;
- to learn the vocabulary of worship and prayer and to experience a variety of forms of worship appropriate to their age and aptitude;
- to celebrate and give thanks for their own gifts, talents and achievements;
- to reflect and to explore the nature and being of God as expressed in the Christian religion;
- to celebrate Christian festivals and holy days and to appreciate the common concerns of all people by sharing some festivals of the other world faiths;
- to develop an awareness and appreciation of the inner self and the spiritual dimension of life;
- to participate and lead worship in different contexts, including church services and the school Eucharist.

### **The legal position of Collective Worship**

A daily act of collective worship takes place for all registered pupils. The act of collective worship has a sense of occasion and is separate and distinctive from an assembly.

Parents/ carers have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship on grounds of conscience, but need to recognise that in a church school worship is not confined to one particular time of the day or place. Those wishing to exercise this legal right should make their request in writing to the head teacher.

Teaching staff are expected to attend collective worship as required and may be asked to support pupils in presenting worship as part of their duties. Staff are expected to take an active part, modelling prayer etiquette and joining in with hymns.

Children need not necessarily meet together as a whole school, but can worship in any size group, in any place and at any time of the day.

The School Committee, particularly those appointed by the Diocese are responsible for arrangements concerning collective worship in consultation with the head teacher. The head teacher is required to implement the governors' policy.

### **Organisation of worship**

Daily collective worship normally takes place in the morning, and follows this pattern:

<b>Monday</b>	Whole school worship led by the head teacher
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<b>Tuesday</b>	Whole school worship led by staff (Musical/ Roots & Fruits)
<b>Wednesday</b>	Class worship led by class worship teams.
<b>Thursday</b>	Whole school worship led by a member of the clergy
<b>Friday</b>	Whole school celebration worship led by the Headteacher

Visiting speakers are invited to lead collective worship throughout the year. They may come to share their Christian Faith or to speak on a particular topic that reflects Christian Values and Social awareness.

### **Act of worship**

The children are expected to enter the hall silently whilst a piece of music is played. A candle is lit and the Liturgical greeting e.g. 'May the Lord bless us and keep us,' or 'The Lord be with You' is used to demonstrate that the act of worship has commenced. This is also reference to the Trinity as the candle is lit. Following this there is usually a story/ media clip, a period of reflection, a prayer and a hymn. The worship ends with the school Christian vision saying. The candle is extinguished and the pupils leave the hall silently whilst music is playing. The Worship Council lead Collective Worship or parts of Collective Worship wherever possible.

### **Pattern of whole school worship for major festivals in church**

The Christian festivals celebrated in our local church (St Michael with St Thomas), and which year group leads these, can be seen below.

Harvest	Year 5
Christingle	Year 6
Nativity	Year 1 & 2
Ashing of the Cross	Led by Clergy and worship teams
Easter	Year 4
Pentecost	Year 3

### **Worship themes**

Worship themes are based on the Christian Values the school focuses upon. These are displayed in each classroom, and in the school hall.

Weekly themes also follow the Christian year and, and where appropriate festivals from other world faiths.

The pattern of worship is sufficiently flexible to allow the school to react to unforeseen events.

Material is given to staff to support them when they lead worship.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of worship**

Monitoring and evaluation is ongoing, three or four times each half term, two children are invited to evaluate the act of worship that day. These are analysed by the worship co-ordinator and shared with the school committee annually. If some observations or ideas are appropriate for immediate adoption they will be implemented.

The pupil Worship Teams are also asked for their observations about the collective worship that takes place. They are encouraged to make improvement suggestions.

Staff are encouraged to feedback their responses to worship opportunities, via a questionnaire. Staff overseeing major religious celebrations in church are encouraged to try new material and then analyse impact for consideration for future use.

The collective worship lead and link governor meet on a regular basis to discuss worship, evaluate materials, and identify successes and areas for development. This monitoring and evaluation feeds into the school improvement plan.

### **Parent/ carer and staff rights**

Parents/ carers have a right to request that their child / children are partially or wholly withdrawn from any act of collective worship and / or corporate worship. If they do withdraw their child/ children they are responsible for providing an alternative activity during the act of worship.

All staff are asked, before the offer of a post is made, if they are prepared to attend collective worship. They have a right to decline to lead worship.

### **Appendix A**

Procedures to be followed if parents/ carers wish to withdraw children from collective worship.

- Parents/ carers should inform the school in writing that they wish their child/ children to be withdrawn from worship, either wholly or in part.
- A pro-forma will be available to help the parents/ carers formulate their ideas, and also to allow staff to know when the children should be withdrawn from worship.
- Children who are withdrawn from worship are brought together and supervised by a learning assistant in a classroom.
- In the event of the children only being withdrawn for prayers during collective worship, then they will be asked to go to the Reception area, with a learning assistant, and then return after the prayers.
- Parents withdrawing their children from collective worship in church are asked to bring their child to school late, once the other children have returned from church. The children will not receive a late mark.

## **Appendix B**

Name of child / children	
Date of notification:	
<b>I / we would like our children to be withdrawn from:</b>	
<i>Acts of Daily acts of worship led by staff in school</i>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<i>Acts of worship led by members of the Christian Clergy</i>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<i>Celebration Assemblies (where we celebrate the achievement of the children in school)</i>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<i>Assemblies led by outside agencies, e.g. The National Children's Homes (NCH) for the purposes of fund raising for charities.</i>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<i>Class Assemblies (led by the children of different classes)</i>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<b>In the event of an Assembly only having prayers as its act of worship, I/ we would like our children withdrawn only during these prayers.</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
I/ we accept that in the interests of safety and public Information, our child will have to attend some informational assemblies which do not have any element of worship.	<b>Yes/ No</b>

Signed: .....  
(Parent/ Carer)

