



First Federation Trust Collective Worship Policy

Name of school: Mrs Ethelston's Primary Academy

In our Trust, our vision shapes all we do in both our Church and Non-Church schools. Every individual will **aspire, flourish** and **achieve** within the heart of their community.

Our school values are: Friendship, Peace, Perseverance, Good Choices, Love and Celebrating Life.

Collective Worship is one of the most important parts of the school day, in the life of our schools and academies; it is a highly valued time set apart in the school day where the whole school community can gather together. Worship is a 'time to breathe'; a time when all can come together to find a space, silence and quietness to reflect on our own spirituality, values and place in the world. Just as breathing is vitally important to life, worship is a significant and sacred time in the life of our schools; ensuring the time is valued to allow all to 'breathe'.

It offers our children the opportunity to reflect, to consider their own beliefs and values and to come together to share a collective sense of community rooted in values (distinctively Christian in our church schools). It also provides opportunities for the school community to arrive in worship with the right attitude, engage with their own spirituality and Biblical teachings and leave feeling refreshed and inspired.

Organisation

Collective Worship at our schools will fulfil the legal requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act, pertaining to Voluntary Controlled Schools. The Directors hold overall responsibility for ensuring that these requirements are met.

In Church of England schools, collective worship will be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England.

In community schools, acts of worship, according to The Education Reform Act, 1996 as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 says "each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship" which is broadly Christian.

We promote a Christian Ethos in our schools, where the values of our Christian faith of mutual respect, care and love are embedded in every area of our school life. We aim to contribute to the faith of every individual in the school. We plan opportunities for reflection and encourage children's sense of awe and wonder throughout the curriculum.

Our vision statement and list of aims outline the importance of recognising the place of God on our world and our lives. We believe that Collective worship is important because it provides opportunities for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and we aim for collective worship to be **invitational, inspiring and inclusive**. It is an opportunity to promote the Christian foundation of our Church schools, to celebrate and support all aspects of school life and to provide time for stillness and reflection as well as to enjoy the experience of being part of a wider family in what is often a very busy, active day for our children.

We recognise that in our schools there may be children from a variety of faith traditions, including those who have no faith background at all. Great care and sensitivity will be taken to ensure that all our children feel valued and special.

Aims

We want our children, through our Collective worship to come to experience:

"Life in all its fullness"

Every individual will **aspire, flourish** and **achieve** within a caring Christian community.

Our School Vision is "**Deep Christian roots, Nurturing strong growth, Flourishing children**". This is shown through everything that we do in school, and is a foundation for all of our worships.

We aim to give pupils and staff alike the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community.
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God.
- Be still and reflect.
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events.
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness.
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ.
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes.
- Share each other's joys and challenges.
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar.

The aspiration to provide collective worship that is Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring. Collective worship in a Church of England school will do the following:

- Explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, it will reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.

- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

Guidelines

There should be an act of collective worship every day, to which every child within the school must be invited to attend (whole school, Key Stage, or in the classroom)

The leader should try to create a welcoming and inviting atmosphere conducive to worship by, for example:

- Playing worship or quiet reflective music on arrival
- Or displaying an image, quote or question to engage the children in the theme - Setting the hall up with a table as a focus for worship including a cross and candle

There should be a welcome, for example, by lighting a candle.

Children always have a role within the worship. This could be planned or spontaneous, individually, in groups or as a whole community. They should be provided with the freedom and opportunities to be creative within the worship experiences.

Children should be given a chance to discuss, in talk partners, share their ideas/answers to a posed wondering question (I wonder what respect means? What does it look like in our school?)

Singing or sung worship should be included to invite pupils to respond in this way.

There should be a time for children to be still and silent to reflect and think about the key thoughts and/or the Bible message

Children should be invited to pray/reflect, which might be personally (silently) or out loud as a group or on behalf of the other children or in other ways

It is important to send the children out with a reflection, thought, verse, prayer or question to enable them to continue their thinking and spur them into action (when appropriate) following the worship session

The end of worship/ the gathering provides a good opportunity to close with a

blessing prayer/reflection and to extinguish the candle to show that worship has ended.

The first Act of Worship of the week will set the scene for the week and reflect the Church calendar, our school ethos, key Christian values or current events

Throughout the rest of the week daily Acts of Worship will take place and each school/academy will determine their own timetable to provide provision for this.

Additional acts of worship throughout the week may include class collective worship, hymn practice, worship led by a member of the local church and worship as part of the celebration of children's achievements that week.

Monday – Church worship lead by Head, Katy Allington. This will be rooted in our core value and sets the tone and expectations for the week.

Tuesday – Church worship led by Open the Book or Reverend Nicky, based on our half termly core value.

Wednesday – School worship in house groups. The children split into their houses and are able to engage in worship that involves discussions as well as more practical activities. Our House Captains support the younger children with this.

Thursday – School singing worships, where staff and children sing a variety of seasonal hymns, as well as offering the children a chance to choose hymns and Christian songs of their choice.

Friday – Class-led worship in church based on a Social, Moral, Spiritual or Cultural theme, such as Black History Month, Christmas Jumper Day, Children in Need, Pride Month, or other events.

Special services are often held at the local church to celebrate a range of Christian festivals. These may include Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Parents are often invited to share these occasions, either in church or in school.

The following identifies a range of elements which our children may experience. These can be used to help to encourage the religious development of the children, and understand the meaning of worship.

- Songs and music from a variety of cultures.
- Prayer (traditional and contemporary)
- Reflection and contemplation.
- Individual and group activity.
- Bible readings and material adapted from it
- Special clothing, artefacts.
- Discussion, speech and silence.

- Procession and ritual action.
- Food and drink.
- Dance and drama.
- Use of the senses.
- Opportunities for pupil led worship by the school ethos team

A further aspect of our Collective Worship is that the school provides a variety of opportunities to invite children to engage in prayer and reflection in a number of different ways. There will be a place within each Church of England School/ Academy for a Worship/Prayer Corner which is kept fresh, up to date and relevant. In addition to whole School/ Academy Acts of Worship, set prayers in classrooms throughout the day may include the following: 'The Morning Prayer', 'Lunch time prayer' and 'The Lord's Prayer.'

Other opportunities where individuals are invited to pray or reflect may include:

1. Prayer Corners/ Reflection areas
2. Set prayers
3. Prayer Spaces in Schools
4. Visits to the local church in the parish

In addition to this, we also aim to provide opportunities to explore the beliefs and practices of other Christian denominations and, where appropriate, people of other faiths and world views. These may include opportunities to:

- Develop respect and sensitivity for the beliefs and practices of people of other faiths and worldviews
- Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others
- To encourage global citizenship and social responsibility
- To encourage positive contribution to the wider community through courageous advocacy
- To develop a sense of increasing respect and understanding in order to live cohesively in pluralistic societies

The overall responsibility for the leading and monitoring of Collective Worship in each individual academy/ school rests with the Head of School. The responsibility of planning for Collective Worship rests with the Head of School and the Ethos Lead within each school/ academy.

Rights of Withdrawal

At each Academy/ School we seek to be an inclusive community. However, we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. Parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss withdrawal and to explore how their concern may be met. Parents are not obliged to attend such a meeting in which case withdrawal shall be put into effect immediately and the school will notify the parent. Withdrawal from Collective Worship may be in whole or part.

The Academy/School will provide a system of suitable supervision for children withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship in line with safeguarding procedures. However, no additional work will be set or followed in this time as this is time for reflection. Also, alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts (see, for example, Part 6 of the Education Act 2002, and Circular 1/94). Parents may also be asked to provide materials for reflection suitable for the child's age and ability.

Planning, recording and evaluation

Collective Worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation. The content of Collective Worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning.

This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

The quality of worship is evaluated by the Ethos Lead and Head of School. Children will form part of the monitoring and evaluation of worship and can inform themes for the next term.

Our Foundation Trustees, through the work of the Hub Advisory Committees will have a role in monitoring Collective Worship at the Academy/ School. We also seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on Collective Worship and to be a part of the evaluation process.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, each School/ Academy ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship.

Before inviting speakers into school, teachers will complete the proforma in the Trips and Visits Guidance which is then authorised by the Head of School who is responsible for ensuring that the Prevent guidance is adhered to.

Visitors to the School/ Academy are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge.

All visitors to the school and visits to places of worship are in line with the academy safeguarding and health and safety policies. We ensure that all visitors are in line with the Prevent and British Values curriculum and that they have met with a member of staff pre-visit.