



St. Andrew's C of E (VA) Primary School

# Collective Worship Policy

March 2025

**Approved by:** St Andrew's Governing Body

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**Last reviewed on:** November 2018

**Next review due by:** June 2027

At St Andrew's, our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our Christian vision is rooted in John 10:10;

**'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'.**

Collective worship at St Andrew's school enables every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. It helps educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and develops community and an understanding of living well together.

### **Policy Statement**

At St Andrew's, school worship is central to the life of school. It is shaped by the Anglican foundation of our school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned so that the whole school community gathers daily and is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Collective worship strengthens and supports our school's identity and reaffirms our Christian vision and associated values of respect, friendship, truthfulness, compassion, courage and perseverance.

For Christians, worship in church 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. As such, collective worship needs to take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils. At St Andrew's School, collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive, leading pupils to a point where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

Through collective worship pupils will be offered 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 musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities will be given to reflect in awe and wonder of the beauty of creation, alongside the fragility and brokenness of our world. 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 community members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (*and other faiths*<sup>1</sup>) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.<sup>2</sup> We have considered what spirituality and spiritual development means to us as a school and have our own agreed definition and language of spirituality; *'Through having an open heart and mind, we develop an appreciation of the wonders of life, the world and our relationship with God.'*

This enhances and enriches collective worship and individuals' spiritual development (refer to our St Andrew's Spirituality Policy for further information).

### **Church of England Guidance**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> "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)

Our St Andrew's School Collective Worship Policy draws on guidance from the Church of England<sup>3</sup>. Leaders and governance should ensure that 'collective worship is the unique heartbeat of a Church school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations with God, both as individuals and together.' We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and the experience of musical and other riches of Christianity.

### **Legal Requirements**

There must be a daily act of collective worship, at any time or place, in all maintained schools, (other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school). Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. Our daily acts of worship at St Andrew's school, thus distinctly reflect Christian and Anglican traditions.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework, school policy, local and national guidance. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship in enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, in consultation with the headteacher (**See Appendix 1 for monitoring forms**). The Ethos group, made up of serving staff, governors and a Christian parent, meet termly to discuss and monitor the Christian distinctiveness of the school, offering support and encouragement to staff and parents. The Ethos group reports yearly to the board, who have a responsibility to ensure that:

- Collective worship reflects the schools Anglican/Methodist foundation and enables the spiritual flourishing of those in the school community
- The school has a regular and meaningful relationship with the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) accessing expertise and support for collective worship, as well as effective regular partnership with the parish/local church

Additionally, the governing body of the school consider the SIAMS sub-questions from IQ3:

- a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
- b) How do partnerships with the DBE, and partnerships with our local church/parish enhance this?
- c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?
- d) In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?

### **The right of withdrawal**

At St Andrew's school, there are a number of 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 be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>

such a central place in the life of our school, this will be made clear at induction, thus ensuring that parents are able to make informed choices, 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 will be made to accommodate these children. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal, would meet with the head to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent/carer 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/carer will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents/carers have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher 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/carer 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/carer 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 at St Andrew's School plans to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision (John 10:10) is unpacked and explored, so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible; exploring and relating how these link to the school's core Christian values.
- Contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, providing all learners with opportunities for wonder.
- 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 non-religious beliefs to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief.

- Help pupils to understand Anglican and other Christian traditions found in the UK and worldwide. We endeavour to celebrate the diversity of the worldwide Christian faith through our choice of resources.
- Support pupils and adults, of all backgrounds, in their spiritual growth and development through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for diverse liturgical traditions, for prayer, reflection and stillness; an understanding of where all can develop their own spirituality, within the communal journey.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving pupils 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, to develop skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of collective worship, along with the shared engagement of our worship partner; The Minster Church of St Andrew, Plymouth.
- Provide an opportunity to celebrate achievements within the school, as well as in the local, national and international community, as well as marking festivals and occasions of global significance.
- 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.

**Through participation in Collective Worship, St Andrews aims to:**

Provide collective worship that is Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring; is underpinned by the following objectives and will be monitored and quality assured through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

- Include opportunities for the whole community to celebrate sharing and experiencing differences, with a consistently invitational freedom to contribute and engage with integrity and authenticity.
- Develop a culture of learning as a lifelong pursuit and building a sense of group identity where all belong and are valued members of our community.
- Encouraging a sense of personal and social responsibility.
- Develop a Christian moral framework, demonstrating what this looks like in practice.
- Encourage a sense of being part of the wider Christian community within the city of Plymouth and the wider world.
- Create a pause from the busyness of life (for stillness and quiet).
- Share in the language and forms of religious stories, doctrines, music, prayer and worship as an educational experience.
- Help pupils learn how to behave in a large social group.
- Encourage exploring feelings and emotions, to think deeply, ask questions and develop a response to issues of faith and beliefs.
- Encourage performance in front of an audience, leading others in worship and prayer, respectfully listening, engaging and contributing appropriately.
- Develop an inner awareness of individual spirituality.
- Learn about God, His relationship with us, and the impact He can have on our lives.
- Learn to worship and respond to God in a lively, inspirational and transformational way

**How Collective Worship is organised**

The rhythm of daily worship allows pupils and adults to step away from the busyness of the day, creating space for an encounter with faith in God. Specific time is set aside for planning collective worship and each collective worship opportunity stands apart from the rest of the day's lessons and activities.

### **Leadership**

- Planning is led by the Head teacher, who is responsible for collective worship; but involves as many teachers and staff as possible, as well as pupils, members of the clergy from St Andrew's Minster church, and individual visitors including parents; to ensure that worship is collective across the whole school community.
- Support and guidance is given to visitors leading worship. (*See Appendix 2*)

### **Planning**

As an outworking of our trust deed, our approach to collective worship sits well with the new "Growing Faith" adventure (<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/growing-faith-foundation>) which promotes a partnership between the three connected local communities of church, school and household, imaginatively searching for a "new way of being church", partnering with both the local church and families who may wish to join in. All members of the school community, especially pupils, are encouraged and supported to plan and lead acts of worship.

- The worship planner reflects the cycle of the Church year and key festivals are celebrated and discussed e.g. Easter, Pentecost and Christmas, as well as St Andrew's Day. During the term time, special arrangements are made for Christian Festivals. These often involve a visit to The Minster Church of St Andrews.
- The Christian values of the school are identified, expressed and celebrated through collective worship, especially through 'Values in Action' worship. This may be through explicit teaching or exploration of Bible stories and verses, celebration, prayer and real life examples of Christian values in action.
- Our core Christian Values are: Perseverance, Truthfulness, Compassion, Friendship, Courage and Respect. These sit under our overarching value of Love. Explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school, e.g. Joseph, Moses, David, Esther, Daniel, and Paul in the Bible teach us that perseverance through faith is so important.
- Our pattern for worship reflects Anglican tradition in the range and variety of materials used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips and focal points e.g. a picture or candle. We follow the colours of the Christian calendar.
- Planning
  - considers opportunities for children and adults to explore faith in today's world
  - explores the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God
  - allows for spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection, song and music.

### **Organisation**

- At St Andrew's, collective worship is usually whole school, however, it occasionally includes alternative groupings such as separate key stages or class worship.
- There are many different settings and places for worship e.g. the school hall, the classroom, The Minster Church of St Andrew, the grass quad.

- The worship space is made special and the atmosphere for worship is created using: The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year, Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point, ritual and liturgical responses, seating arrangements, an outdoor area e.g. spiritual garden, The Minster church.
- Worship takes place daily at 09.25am and lasts for at least 20 minutes. (Class led worship on Wednesday begins at 9.05a.m to include parents and carers).
- Daily venues, groupings and leadership are as follows:

MONDAY	Whole school act of worship. The Head teacher generally leads the worship. There is always a hymn, a prayer and a message. The school/church plan the theme beforehand
TUESDAY	Whole school act of worship Led by a representative from Minster Church of St Andrew's team. The School/Church plan the theme beforehand. There is always a hymn, a prayer and a message. Children are encouraged to ask questions. Several times a year, pupils will work with the church team to plan and lead this worship.
WEDNESDAY	Whole school worship led by each class on a rotation basis. There is always a prayer and a short message. The class teacher and pupils are responsible for the worship. Parents of the class are invited.
THURSDAY	Whole school Worship Through Praise. There is always a prayer and a short message. The Head teacher and KS1 teacher lead this act of worship.
FRIDAY	Weekly whole school celebration of achievement, courtesy and our Christian Values in action. Termly whole school Wow Worship with parents.

### Reviewing and Evaluation

SLT meet at least once a term to evaluate our provision. This also includes evaluations from children, other staff, governors and the Ethos Group. These meetings are an opportunity to review and evaluate the last term's Acts of Collective Worship and to plan themes for the next term. The views of pupils about collective worship are sought through the School Council and pupil chats. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in the planning leading and monitoring of Collective worship. The impact of worship is monitored and evaluated using our school collective worship forms (**Appendix 1**) which is completed on a rotation basis across the terms. Evidence is collated to show how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of each member of the school community to uphold the principles and actions of this policy are:

- The Board of Governors – to evaluate the impact of collective worship.
- The Ethos group – help plan Collective Worship and take an active part & interest in its delivery.
- Clergy and church partners - help plan Collective Worship and take an active part & interest in its delivery.

- The Head teacher and the senior leadership team – to deliver engaging and thought provoking acts of collective worship.
- Teaching and support staff – to support all pupils to engage with acts of collective worship
- Pupils – to engage with acts of collective worship.
- Parents and carers – to support acts of whole school collective worship e.g. Easter & Christmas.
- Visitors – to deliver when invited, engaging and thought provoking acts of collective worship.

### **Staff development and training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff and member of the church team, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. We encourage attendance at RE HUB meetings, Diocesan forums and provide training on whole staff non pupil days.

Staff training is analysed annually by the governing body.

### **Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation**

This policy was developed by the head teacher and the Ethos group, in conjunction with the latest Church of England guidelines through the Diocese of Exeter. 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
- Child Protection and safeguarding
- Behaviour
- RE
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians and the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school admissions process and on the school website.

### **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.

**Other Useful Documents:** (can be found on the diocesan website<sup>4</sup>)

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<sup>4</sup> <https://exeter.anglican.org/schools/christian-ethos-siams/collective-worship/>

**Appendix 1a – Communal worship monitoring form (Adult)**

**St Andrew’s Primary Collective Worship Monitoring Record**

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

In what ways and to what extent is Collective Worship inclusive, invitational and inspiring?

In what ways and to what extent is Collective Worship an expression of the schools’ Christian vision?

Date/time	Leader  Joined by:	Theme/Bible link
<p><b>How was it inclusive?</b> For pupils, staff, those of other or no faith, SEN, EAL</p>	<p><b>How was it inspiring?</b> Variety of creative experiences used to encounter God (liturgy, music, drama, deep wondering questions, stillness, prayer, reflection.</p>	<p><b>How was it invitational?</b> Opportunities for pupils to take part without compulsion</p>

<p><b>GATHERING</b> Is the room and the leader ready to welcome pupils and staff? Did the greeting make everyone feel welcome? Was use made of Anglican liturgy?</p>
<p><b>ENGAGING</b> How was the theme shared? What strategies were used to make it inspiring, inclusive, and invitational? Were there opportunities to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and its relevance to today’s world? Were there opportunities to become aware of different traditions and styles within the worldwide Anglican Church?</p>
<p><b>RESPONDING</b> How was singing, prayer, reflection and stillness used? what strategies were used to help pupils respond? How did worship inspire action?</p>
<p><b>SENDING</b> How were pupils prepared to leave? Was the key message understood by all?</p>

Reflect upon any action to be taken following the Collective Worship Observation.

**Appendix 1b – Collective worship monitoring form (Pupil)**

**St Andrew’s Primary Collective Worship Pupil Monitoring Record**

**Children Evaluating the Impact of Collective Worship**

Children’s names:

Date:

Theme:

**Our School Vision:**

Have you seen or heard anything in this collective worship that has made a difference to your understanding of our school vision?

Was the collective worship inspirational and how?

Was the collective worship invitational and how?

Was the collective worship inclusive and how?

Do you think this collective worship helped children or adults to flourish (feel really good about themselves and life)?

How do you know?

Are there any other ways you know about where this collective worship has made a difference to yourself or someone else?

## Appendix 2 – Support and guidance for visitors leading worship

<https://www.exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Collective-Worship-Guidance-Diocese-of-Exeter.doc>

### **Guidelines to be given to Visitors to lead Collective Worship**

#### **A few things to think about for those asked to lead collective worship**

##### **Do find out**

- who will attend the collective worship - the whole school, or just part of it
- how long you are allowed to speak for (10-12 minutes)
- about the school's aims, ethos and policies, and plan your involvement accordingly
- which theme the school is presently following in collective worship, what they have done already and will do in the rest of the term
- whether pupils and staff are used to being involved in activities, should you wish them to be so

**Be willing** to share your own experiences, beliefs and insights without imposing them on the children

**Do prepare thoroughly** - a ten-minute presentation which addresses the needs and variety of backgrounds of pupils has to be carefully thought out and should always begin by making a real connection with the children's world.

**Do help pupils** by making clear to the children who you are, who you represent and what you are offering

**Be willing** to respect and value the faith and beliefs of the children and young people when it is different to your own

**Do help pupils** by allowing them time for silence in which they may think, reflect and respond at their own level, and from their own point

**Do remember** the difference between collective and corporate worship. A school assembly is not the appropriate venue for strong evangelism.

**Do adopt** a variety of approaches in each act of worship or within each series of acts. Introduce them on a variety of occasions to the breadth of Christian experiences and practices.

- **Do try to use** a variety of learning styles
- **Do treat** the children with respect

- **Do enable** the children to worship
- **Do make sure** your material and presentation is age appropriate
- **Do visit** the school before leading an act of worship. Arrange to meet the Head for a discussion of the school's policy and procedures, and if possible, be present at an act of worship in the school.

**Avoid assuming** that pupils' presence at worship signifies their personal commitment or involvement. You should not impose on pupil's words or attitudes which they cannot honestly express. Your task is not to compel worship, but to enable it.