



BATH & WELLS  
**Multi Academy Trust**

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10

## Collective Worship Policy



**Approved by:** Local Governing Committee

**Date:** November 2022

**Last reviewed:** November 2022

**Next review due by:** November 2023

## **Wembdon St George's Church School**

Our Christian vision shapes all we do and aim to achieve:

***'Shining together to be the best we can be for God and for each other'***

*'You are the light that gives light to the world.  
A city that is built on a hill cannot be hidden.  
And people don't hide a light under a bowl,  
they put the light on a lampstand.  
Then the light shines for all the people in the house.'*  
*Matthew 5 vs 14-16*

Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

### **Policy Statement**

In Wembdon St George's Church School worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship 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. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At Wembdon St George's Church School collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive.

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a 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 of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. 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 school 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>

### **Legal Requirements**

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, “that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, is not relevant. Worship in Wembdon St George’s Church School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The Local Governing Committee have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

### **The right of withdrawal**

In Wembdon St George’s Church School there are significant numbers 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 should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school 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 should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent 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

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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)

- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents 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 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 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 in Wembdon St George's Church School aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- 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 none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where everyone can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement

of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.

- 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.

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

This policy was developed in collaboration with stakeholders.

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
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

### **How Collective worship is organised**

#### **Leadership**

- Monday – SLT Values Worship
- Tuesday – SLT Roots and Fruits worship
- Wednesday – Class worship
- Thursday – St George's Church led worship
- Friday – SLT British Values and links to wider world worship

#### **Planning**

- We have adopted the 'Fruits from Roots' programme which makes explicit links to our Christian values and teachings from the Bible.
- The Church plan their worship around the Church calendar and focus on teaching the Lord's Prayer in Term One each year.
- Class teachers use the resources from Jigsaw to deliver worship to their class.
- Church, seasonal and school celebrations are all planned for in Friday worship. Explicit links are made to our Christian values, vision statement and expectations.
- Worship is currently planned by staff.

- Key events in the Church year are planned into our worship overview. We also plan events at the Church to celebrate Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the Year 6 children moving to secondary school.
- We have adopted the Christian values of Trust, Compassion, Wisdom, Forgiveness, Koinonia and Service. Each term one value is explored in depth, links are made to Bible stories, our school and local community, and the wider world.
- Worship begins with 'Welcome words' and the lighting of a candle. Each worship links to a Christian value, there is an opportunity for reflection, prayer and the children all sing.
- We use a wide range of materials to support worship including:
  - Quotes and questions to encourage deeper thinking about each value
  - Photographs and posters to root the teaching in the everyday experience of children
  - Stories, poems and art, much of which has been especially commissioned for this book
  - Prayers and guided reflections from traditional and contemporary authors
  - websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips and always have a candle as a focal point.
- We encourage the children to explore faith in today's world by including world events such as Black History Month in our worship.
- Spiritual growth is nurtured through welcome, prayer, stillness and reflection.

### **Organisation**

- Worship is organised in two sessions to ensure there is enough space for all children to attend.
- At school worship happens in the main hall 4 times a week. Symbols of Christianity including a candle and a cross are used to show our Christian distinctiveness. Liturgical cloths are used to cover the reflection table.
- Class worship happens once a week, each class has a designated reflection area which contains Christian symbols.
- Daily worship happens in the morning, each session lasts 25 minutes. All worship follows the pattern of *Welcome, Learning, Reflecting* and *Responding*.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Local Governing Committee:

Monitoring of Collective worship and our Christian distinctiveness including listening to the children's voice.

- The headteacher and the senior leadership team:

Responsible for planning, monitoring and implementing the worship themes across the year incorporating key dates in the Christian calendar and considering celebrations from other faiths.

- Clergy and church partners:

We work closely with our local Church, they provide weekly worship in school and invite us to Church to celebrate Harvest, Christmas and Easter. The Church offers advice and support where required.

- Teaching and support staff:

Teachers and staff uphold the values we have adopted as a school. They support the children in living by these values.

- Children:

Children are expected to participate in worship and respect the values we have adopted as a school.

- Parents and carers:

Parents choose Wembdon St George's for our Christian distinctiveness and understand the importance placed on collective worship and living by Christian values. Parents work with us to support their children in respecting the values we have adopted.

- Visitors:

Visitors contribute to our ethos and Christian distinctiveness through their work to support and/or challenge the school.

### **Staff development and training**

Staff, governors and Clergy are all signposted to termly CPD provided by the Bath and Wells Diocese.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

- Foundation Governor observations of collective worship.
- Pupil Voice, children are invited to share their thoughts on the importance of collective worship.
- Worship annual overview is shared with the Church for support and guidance.
- Annual review of worship plans.

### **Disseminating the policy**

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all children. This policy is available on our school website.

### **Other Useful Documents:** (can be found on the diocesan website)

- Guidance for visitors leading Collective Worship, including a code of conduct
- Example Visitors Leaflet about Collective Worship
- Collective Worship Planning Proformas
- Evaluation and Monitoring – Ideas and Systems

- Suggested Resources for Collective Worship
- Spirituality – What is it?