



Walkwood
Church of England  Middle School

Collective Worship Policy

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| Approval granted: | Autumn 2024 | Review date: | Autumn 2027 |
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Our Vision:

In our inclusive community,
Each valued individual is taught self-belief
We are resilient and optimistic,
Caring for ourselves and our peers.
We are Children of God, with hope,
Awe and wonder in our hearts.

Our Bible verse:

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in
Christ forgave you. *Ephesians 4:32*

Respect - Believe – Succeed

Our values: kindness, friendship, honesty, respect

In Walkwood Church of England Middle School, our theologically rooted Christian vision shapes all we do.

‘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

At Walkwood Church of England Middle 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 Walkwood Church of England Middle School, collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

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) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at Walkwood Church of England Middle School draws on guidance from the Church of England: “Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring Guidance Document”

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. Worship in Walkwood Church of England Middle School Academy is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions.

The governing body of schools 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

At Walkwood Church of England Middle 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; this is the case at Walkwood Church of England Middle School. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of Walkwood Church of England Middle School, this is made clear on induction, and parents make 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
- 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 at Walkwood Church of England Middle 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 all present 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 by the headteacher, Mrs C Lowe, in collaboration with the Senior Leader responsible for Collective Worship, Mrs M Johnson, taking account of the document: “Inclusive, Invitational, Inspiring - Guidance Document” by The Church of England Education Office and also the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20). The Governing Body was consulted and contributed to the content also.

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 on the school website, in school prospectus and transition information to parents.

How collective worship is organised

The organisation of collective worship is detailed within this section.

Leadership

- Daily collective worship is lead on a rotating basis, taking place each morning at 9 o’clock as follows: on a Monday, a member of the senior leadership team delivers the whole

school worship service. This service routinely includes prayer, the singing of hymns, biblical stories and questions to prompt reflection.

On Tuesdays and Wednesday, collective worship is delivered to year group teams, a key stage at a time. Each member of the teaching staff is then assigned specific worships on a rota, meaning that they plan and deliver that collective worship session to their year group; the focus for this is determined by the Collective Worship Calendar. When a key stage is not in year group worship, the pupils remain class-based and access a Picture News resource, which is carefully planned and structured for staff by the headteacher and the senior leader responsible for collective worship.

On a Thursday, all pupils remain class-based for the collective worship session which is allocated to 'Picture of the Week'. This is planned by the senior leader responsible for collective worship, and involves a profound image used as a stimulus, linked to prayer, biblical references, hymns and prompting the pupils to ask deeper questions about the world around them.

On a Friday, all pupils remain class-based for the collective worship session which is allocated to 'Celebrating our School Values'. This is planned by the head teacher, and delivered by each class teacher to their form. This content involves prompts and prayer to help pupils recognise and celebrate all they have achieved in and out of school over the past week, and to link these achievements to our core value of the half term.

At various points in the year, a member of the local clergy, Fr Glenn, attends services in school, such as the year 5 Welcome Service in September, to which we invite family members, and the year 8 Leavers' Service in July, to which family members are again invited. The pupils also visit the church at various times in the year, in year group visits, such as when year 6 visit for a Harvest service.

Training is given to staff who lead worship during CPD sessions and on Inset days; literature is shared with them, such as 'Collective Worship Guidance Worcester' by the Diocese Board of Education.

For visitors leading worship, an information leaflet for visitors, produced by the Diocese, is shared with them. Also communication prior to the event is always rigorous, to ensure planning is of the highest standard.

Planning

The Collective Worship Calendar is written at the start of the academic year for the full year ahead, assigning biblical stories as themes and reflecting the Anglican tradition; the calendar is written by the senior leader responsible for collective worship.

At the start of the autumn term, Collective Worship Monitors are elected within their tutor classes. These pupils receive training from the headteacher and senior leader

responsible for Collective Worship routinely throughout the year, in order that they are equipped to carefully plan and lead acts of worship.

Our Collective Worship Calendar ensures that worship reflects the cycle of the Church year, taking account of Church events and the changing liturgical colours.

Walkwood Church of England Middle School's four values were chosen and elected through consultation with all stakeholders within the school community: pupils, parents and carers, governors and the whole staff. One value is assigned to each half term, to be celebrated throughout the half term. These values are expressed through collective worship by prompting pupils to reflect upon which values can be linked to the content of worship that day, and in particular the current value of the half term is celebrated. Our values link carefully to our behaviour pathway and staff members can award points to children when they notice a value 'in action'.

Explicit links to Bible stories are made routinely in Collective worship gathering, with each year group gathering containing a Bible story, which is then linked to the Christian values of the school.

Collective Worship is divided into four sections: Gathering, Engaging, Responding and Sending.

Within Collective Worship sessions, a variety of materials are used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, artwork, music, songs, film clips and focal points, such as a picture or candle.

Our rigorously planned and sensitively delivered collective worship sessions provide opportunities for children and adults in school to explore faith in today's world. Our vision, values and Bible verse are detailed each week in the newsletter to parents, with a copy of the Picture of the Week, to prompt reflections at home.

The school's collective worship sessions allow for exploration of belief in the Trinitarian nature of God, through the lighting of three candles and content which explores the Holy Trinity. Each form's classroom contains a Bible and three candles, with the Vision, verse and values on display, which further supports spiritual growth. The use of prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured through each and every Collective Worship session.

Organisation

The school's collective worship sessions are carefully organised to ensure opportunity for differing groupings for worship, including whole school, year group and class-based worship. Collective Worship takes place daily at 9 o'clock, lasting for fifteen minutes. Placing worship at the start of the day ensures it is given priority within the school day, and each member of the school community commences their day with a spiritual, reflective outlook.

Varying settings are used for worship, such as our school hall and canteen, The local Bridge Church, classrooms and outdoor spaces. Each worship space is made special through careful placing of a Bible and three candles, with the Vision, verse and values on display.

A spiritual atmosphere is created by including aspects such as the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year; Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point, and both ritual and liturgical responses.

During worship, children are seated either on chairs or on the floor depending on the collective worship session and how the staff member would like to organise the pupils, taking into account to where pupils' focus should be drawn, and how they can optimise levels of reflection and spirituality.

Roles and Responsibilities

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

- The governing body has responsibility to monitor the impact of worship effectively, including involving pupil voice meaningfully.
- The headteacher and the senior leadership team has responsibility to implement a program of collective worship, and to monitor the impact of worship effectively, including also involving pupil voice meaningfully. This team should also feedback to any collective worship leaders pertinent evaluative aspects.
- Members of the Clergy and church partners are responsible for working with the school to contribute towards meaningful collective worship within the school community.
- Teachers and support staff facilitating worship have the responsibility to ensure the worship they deliver is high-quality and sensitively shared. These staff members have the opportunity to receive feedback and to hear the outcome of evaluation from senior leaders. All members of staff, as well as clergy, have access to high quality and current resources.
- Pupils have the responsibility of ensuring they attend worship sessions respectfully, accepting invitation to prayer where they feel comfortable to, and leaving the session moved by the worship they have experienced.
- Parents and carers have the responsibility of ensuring they are aware of the distinctively Christian ethos of the school and respecting the vision which pervades the full school community.
- Visitors are invited into our school space, aware of our distinctively Christian ethos, which is to be respected at all times.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. This includes a session during the first Inset day of the year, prioritising Collective Worship as a key aspect of Continuing Professional Development. This training continues throughout the year, with various Continuing Professional Development sessions dedicated to collective worship, Christian Distinctiveness and spirituality.

Monitoring and evaluation

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation include:

- The headteacher and senior leader responsible for collective worship provide training and practical strategies to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship, including to pupil Collective Worship monitors and to other members of the leadership team. Governors and clergy are also invited into school to conduct monitoring and evaluation of worship, and are provided with training to undertake this.
- Evidence is collated to show how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time, including monitoring and evaluation completed by the Diocesan Board of Education.

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: Collective Worship in Church of England Schools: Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring Guidance Document ([collective-worship-guidance-18052021.pdf](#) ([churchofengland.org](#)))

Date of last review: (of previous policy: 18/3/24)

Headteacher signed: Date:

Chair of Governors signed: Date:

Appendix 1: Collective Worship Evaluation Form

Collective Worship Monitor Evaluation Form

Collective Worship date: _____

Collective Worship value/focus/theme: _____

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| <p>GATHERING How is everyone in the room a part of this Collective Worship?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
| <p>ENGAGING How do you know what the theme of the Collective Worship is? What opportunity is there to share a Bible story? Explain how the Collective Worship is inspiring and an invitation to everyone in the room to join in.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |

