



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Georgeham CofE Primary School



Date Adopted:	July 2026
Reviewed on:	
Author/owner:	Trustees & LGB
Anticipated Review:	July 2027

NB. 'Trustees' means the Directors referred to in the Trust's Articles of Association

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1. HISTORY OF MOST RECENT POLICY CHANGES

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of change E.g TU request, change in legislation

2. SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

2.1 In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do.

2.2 Our Vision: Inspired by the Psalm 104:24-25, we view our school like the vast and spacious sea, teeming with wonderful life and character. Like the ocean, our school nurtures every student's unique potential and embraces diversity.

At Georgeham CofE Primary, we strive to create a safe, inclusive and dynamic learning environment where each child can explore, grow, and flourish, just as the ocean supports a multitude of life.

Together, we build a confident and ambitious community that values curiosity, kindness, and respect for all.

2.3 Our Children come together to celebrate daily Collective Worship. Our Worships reflect the traditions of the Church of England and develop learners' understanding of Anglican traditions and practice as well provide time in the busy school day to be still, listen and reflect.

Collective worship gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

Engage in an act of community.

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 our Christian vision and values.

Share each other's joys and challenges.

Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar.

- 2.4 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), living out the Church of England's Vision for Education (2016). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, developing community and understanding of living well together.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 At Georgeham CofE Primary School, collective worship is central to the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school. It is well planned so that the whole school family gathers together daily and is engaged on a journey of discovery and spiritual development, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Collective worship strengthens and supports our school's identity and reaffirms our Christian vision.
- 3.2 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. The family backgrounds may be very different, and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.
- 3.3 At Georgeham CofE Primary 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.
- 3.4 Through collective worship, pupils and adults 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 faiths¹) calendar. Pupils and adults will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.² We have therefore considered what spirituality and spiritual development means to us as a school and have our own agreed definition and language of spirituality. At Georgeham CofE Primary School, we understand spirituality as something unseen yet deeply felt — a sense of purpose, identity, and place in the world. It involves experiencing awe and wonder in the world around us, asking meaningful questions, drawing inspiration, and being aware of something greater than ourselves. We also recognise that spirituality is not the same as having a particular faith or religion; a person can be deeply spiritual without belonging to a specific religious tradition. This enhances and enriches collective worship and individuals' spiritual development.

¹ 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 should be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

² "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)

4. CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUIDANCE

- 4.1 The collective worship policy at Georgeham CofE Primary School draws on guidance from the Church of England³. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils and adults to flourish. 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.’

5. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools and academies 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 Georgeham CofE Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.
- 5.2 The Local Governing Body of the school are tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship in enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, in consultation with the headteacher. They also have the responsibility 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.
- 5.3 They have 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
- 5.4 Additionally, the trustees/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 parish/local church/es 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?
 - e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school’s worship and spiritual life?

³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>; <https://www.nse.org.uk/curriculum-and-inclusion/collective-worship>

6. THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

- 6.1 In (insert name of school) we recognise that some children and families are not Christians and are members of another faith or hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that we are invitational and inclusive to all in the community we serve. Collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of all church schools, and the Christian foundation and vision of the school shapes worship and the spirituality in the school. All are warmly welcomed to be part of daily collective worship as part of the school community.
- 6.2 The 1944, 1988 and 1998 Education Acts state that parents/carers have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.
- 6.3 On occasions, a parent/carer may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from collective worship. There is an expectation that parents/carers 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/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
- 6.4 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
- 6.5 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.)*

7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 6.1 Collective worship in Georgeham CofE Primary School aims to:
- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school community.
 - Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth and development through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
 - Be central in the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school.
 - Provide opportunities for pupils and adults to be inspired by the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world.
 - 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 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 appreciating that Christians worship in different ways.
- Help pupils to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church's 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 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 pupils 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 if it supports their own spiritual development.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the diverse work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY AND LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES & DOCUMENTATION

The principles of collective worship at Georgeham align closely with other key documents, including:

- Christian Distinctiveness & School Vision
- Behaviour & Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding and Wellbeing Policies
- RE Curriculum
- SMSC & PSHE
- Staff Development and Appraisal
- Equality & Inclusion
- Partnerships with Parents and the Wider Community
- SIAMS Self-Evaluation and the School Development Plan

8.1 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

- Spiritual development, SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents and carers
- Working with the wider community

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

9. HOW COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS ORGANISED

Our Weekly Collective Worship Timetable:

Monday - Whole school collective worship with Mr Fry

Tuesday - Whole school collective worship with Reverend Tim or Open the Book

Wednesday - Whole school worship through song with Mrs Parker

Thursday - Class worship to discuss and share reflections based on Monday's assembly

Friday - Whole school collective worship to celebrate the successes of the week

9.1 Leadership

9.1.1 Member of staff responsible for collective worship is Mr Kevin Fry, Headteacher

- Worship is led by staff, the Headteacher, the Flourishing Team (pupil worship leaders), clergy from St George's Church, and visitors including Open the Book.

Staff are supported through:

- training and guidance from the Diocese of Exeter
- shared planning and worship resources
- opportunities to co-lead worship with colleagues, clergy or the Flourishing Team
- professional development related to Christian distinctiveness and SIAMS expectations

9.2 Planning

Collective worship is carefully planned to ensure it is meaningful, inclusive and reflects the school's Christian vision and values. Long-term planning is overseen by school leaders in partnership with the clergy and foundation governors. Themes are mapped across the year, drawing on the Church calendar, Christian values, significant festivals and current events. Staff contribute to planning and evaluation, while children play an active role in suggesting themes, prayers and areas of focus that are relevant to their lives and experiences.

Children are encouraged and supported to become leaders of collective worship through worship teams, class-led worship and pupil leadership opportunities. They are provided with guidance on structuring worship, selecting readings, leading prayers and encouraging reflection. Staff model

effective worship leadership and provide opportunities for children to develop confidence, creativity and independence. Members of the wider community, including clergy, governors and families, are also invited to contribute to and participate in worship.

Collective worship follows the cycle of the Church's year, including Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost and Harvest. Special services are held in church where possible, enabling children and families to engage with Anglican traditions and celebrations. Important national and local commemorations also provide opportunities for worship and reflection.

The school's Christian vision and values are central to all acts of worship. Themes are explicitly linked to the vision and values, helping children understand how these Christian principles can guide their actions, relationships and decision-making. Worship provides opportunities to celebrate examples of these values being demonstrated within the school community and beyond.

Bible stories form the foundation of many worship themes. Children are encouraged to explore how the teachings and actions of Jesus, along with stories from the Old and New Testaments, exemplify the school's values. Clear links are made between scripture and daily life, helping children understand how Christian values such as compassion, courage, forgiveness, hope and respect can be lived out in today's world.

Collective worship follows a recognisable Anglican structure, often including:

- A gathering and welcome
- A greeting and liturgical response
- Lighting of a candle or use of a focal point
- Bible reading or story
- Reflection and response
- Prayer
- Sending out or blessing

This consistent pattern helps create a sense of reverence and familiarity while introducing children to Anglican worship traditions.

A wide range of high-quality resources are used to engage children and enrich worship, including:

- Bible stories and scripture readings
- Picture books and contemporary stories
- Prayer resources
- Artefacts and symbols from Christianity and other faiths
- Music, hymns and worship songs
- Artwork and photography
- Drama and role play
- Film clips and multimedia resources
- Visual focal points such as candles, crosses, images and displays
- Resources from organisations such as Roots, Christian Aid, CAFOD, Picture News and the Church of England

Worship enables children and adults to consider faith in relation to contemporary issues and everyday life. Themes may explore justice, diversity, environmental responsibility, conflict, compassion, wellbeing and global events. Children are encouraged to ask questions, share opinions and reflect upon how faith can inform responses to the challenges and opportunities of modern society.

Children are introduced to the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through worship, prayer, scripture and the celebration of key Christian festivals. The concept of the Trinity is explored in age-appropriate ways, helping children understand its significance within Christian belief and practice.

Collective worship provides regular opportunities for spiritual growth through:

- Prayer and prayer writing
- Stillness and quiet reflection
- Guided meditation
- Singing and music
- Creative responses through art and writing
- Drama and storytelling
- Opportunities for awe and wonder
- Reflection on big questions about meaning, purpose and belief

Children are encouraged to develop their own responses to worship and to recognise moments of spiritual significance in their daily lives.

Staff have access to a range of high-quality worship resources and professional development opportunities. Training is provided through the Diocese, local church partnerships and educational networks. Leaders regularly review and refresh worship materials to ensure they remain engaging, theologically appropriate and relevant to the needs of the school community. Continuous professional development enables staff and pupil leaders to plan and deliver worship confidently and effectively.

9.3 Organisation

Collective worship is organised to provide a variety of experiences for children throughout the week. Opportunities include:

- **Whole-school worship**, bringing the entire school community together to share key themes, celebrate achievements and explore the school's Christian vision and values.
- **Key Stage worship**, allowing content to be tailored to the age and developmental stage of pupils.
- **Class-based worship**, providing a more intimate setting where children can engage in discussion, reflection and prayer in smaller groups.
- **Church-led worship**, delivered by members of the clergy or church community, strengthening links with the local parish and deepening understanding of Anglican traditions.
- **Child-led worship**, enabling pupils to take responsibility for planning and leading aspects of worship for their peers.

This range of groupings ensures that worship is both inclusive and relevant, while providing opportunities for participation, leadership and reflection.

Collective worship takes place in a variety of settings, each providing opportunities for children to encounter spirituality in different ways.

The hall serves as the primary worship space for whole-school gatherings. The area is transformed into a special place for worship through the use of:

- A central focal point or worship table
- A cross and Bible
- Liturgical cloths reflecting the colours of the Church's seasons
- Candles or battery-operated candles
- Christian symbols and artefacts

- Thought-provoking images, artwork or objects linked to the theme
- Background music as children enter and leave

Classrooms provide a quieter and more personal setting for class worship. Reflection areas, prayer spaces, displays and worship resources help create an atmosphere that encourages contemplation and discussion.

Outdoor worship opportunities enable children to connect with creation and experience moments of awe and wonder. Areas such as a reflection garden, prayer space, school grounds or dedicated spiritual garden provide valuable opportunities for prayer, stillness and reflection.

Regular visits to the local church enhance children's understanding of Christian worship and Anglican traditions. Special services such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Services are often held within the church setting, strengthening links with the wider Christian community.

The worship space reflects the seasons of the Church year through the use of liturgical colours:

- **Purple** for Advent and Lent
- **White or Gold** for Christmas and Easter
- **Red** for Pentecost
- **Green** for Ordinary Time

These visual cues help children understand the rhythm and significance of the Christian year.

Christian symbols are used regularly to support worship and deepen understanding of faith. These may include:

- The cross
- The Bible
- Candles
- Prayer beads
- Water
- Images reflecting the worship theme

Music helps create a calm, reflective and purposeful atmosphere. Children may enter and leave worship to music, sing hymns and worship songs, or listen to instrumental pieces to support prayer and reflection.

Each act of worship includes a focal point that draws attention to the theme and encourages engagement. This might be a picture, object, artefact, Bible verse, question or symbolic display.

A consistent pattern of worship helps children become familiar with Anglican traditions. This may include:

- Gathering and welcome
- Lighting of a candle
- Opening and closing responses
- Shared prayers
- Blessings and sending-out words

These elements provide structure, familiarity and a sense of reverence.

Children are seated in ways that encourage participation and a sense of community. Depending on the context, this may include sitting together as a whole school, in Key Stage groups, or in circles during class worship to encourage discussion and reflection.

Collective worship takes place daily and is regarded as an important part of school life.

- Worship is generally held at the beginning of the school day, helping children to gather as a community and establish a positive focus for learning.
- On some occasions, worship may take place at other points in the day, particularly for church services, class reflection sessions or special events.
- Worship typically lasts between **15 and 25 minutes**, depending on the age of the children and the nature of the worship being delivered.

This regular pattern ensures that worship is meaningful, reflective and fully embedded within the life and ethos of the school.

9.4 Role & Responsibilities

- **Foundation Governors**—working with the Governing Board, Headteacher and school community—ensure worship reflects the trust deed and Anglican identity.
- **Headteacher** oversees planning, consistency and legal compliance.
- **All staff** support, model and occasionally lead worship.
- **Pupils**, through the Flourishing Team, increasingly take leadership roles including planning, leading readings/prayers, selecting songs, and evaluating worship.
- **Clergy and church partners** contribute regularly to worship and strengthen the school–church partnership.

9.5 Staff Development & Training

- 9.5.1 We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Support and training should also be made available to partners from the local church who lead worship.
- 9.5.2 The school’s named lead for collective worship accesses updates and training through the optional annual training offered by the diocesan education team and through the termly diocesan update meetings.

9.6 Monitoring and evaluation

Collective worship is monitored regularly by school leaders, governors, clergy, staff and children.

Pupil voice is gathered through discussions, surveys and worship evaluations.

Staff provide feedback on the impact and effectiveness of collective worship.

Foundation governors and clergy observe worship and provide feedback.

Monitoring takes place throughout the year as part of the school's evaluation cycle.

Feedback is used to identify strengths and areas for development.

Actions arising from monitoring help improve the quality and impact of worship over time.

Evidence is collected through observations, pupil voice, planning records, photographs and governor reports.

Monitoring and evaluation contribute to the school's self-evaluation and provide evidence for SIAMS inspections.

The impact of collective worship on pupils' spiritual development, understanding of Christian values and engagement with worship is reviewed regularly.

10. DISSEMINATING AND REVIEWING THE POLICY

- 10.1 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. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if there is a significant change to the current legislation or guidance.