

Trinity & St Michael's CE & M Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

As a Christian school our vision is to promote Jesus' example and **do everything in love**. Our ethos is based on our 8 Christian values of love, perseverance, forgiveness, friendship, thankfulness, courage, respect, and compassion. It is within the vision and ethos that this policy is written and will be implemented.



“Stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong, **do everything in love.**”

(1 Corinthians 16 13-14)

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Introduction

As a Christian school our vision is to serve the families of our village community by transforming children's opportunities through the immersion in high quality education. Trinity & St Michael's Church of England and Methodist Church School (TSM) promotes a nurturing environment where every pupil is enabled to thrive and grow educationally, socially and spiritually. It is with the firm foundations of knowledge and self-belief that our pupils will develop their group consciousness for the community and the wider world.

At TSM we recognise and value collective worship as central to fostering a sense of community and in expressing the school's Christian vision. In practice this means that structure, planning, evaluation, participation, collaboration, and inspection of worship are all taken seriously and ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and **do everything in love** (1 Corinthians).

Collective worship is seen as more than a daily 'awe and wonder' moment. It is the unique heartbeat of our school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God.

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...Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.

This form of encounter through worship should be truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplify the principles of Christian hospitality. This is an approach that seeks to meet the needs of all, wherever they may be on their journey of faith and belief.

1. Legal Framework and Fundamentals

TSM is a Voluntary Aided Maintained Church of England and Methodist Primary School. In addition to the national legal requirement that there should be daily worship, as a church school, we have a Trust Deed which states that:

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and the Methodist Church and in partnership with the Church at parish, circuit and diocesan and district level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Collective worship is grounded in the historical past and enshrined in educational law to be *'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'*. The requirement to reflect the Anglican and Methodist status of the school as expressed in its trust deed liberates those leading collective worship to build on the rich, lived diversity of Anglican and Methodist tradition and identity. In the same way as worship in churches is aspirational, constantly evolving and being re-imagined there is an expectation of a continuous, dynamic reimagining of what collective worship means at Trinity & St Michael's Church of England and Methodist Primary School.

Legal Framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998

- 1.2. This policy also has due regard to guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (1994) 'Religious Education and Collective Worship'

Church of England's (May 2021) Guidance for collective worship

- 1.3. This policy will be implemented alongside the following school policies:

RE Policy and Vision Document

Inclusive, Invitational, Inspiring

Inclusive

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. At Trinity & St Michael's Church of England and Methodist Primary School, pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Pupils and Staff will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils are given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There is space to consent, and dissent; to participate and to stand back; and to consider. It is an expectation that care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

Collective worship will not be 'done to' but will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion requires pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship. Although part of a national legislative framework, collective worship grows out of our local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds. It reflects the faith, belief, and ethnic communities the school serves. Collective worship validates, embraces and celebrates all protected characteristics.

Invitational

Parents, pupils and adults can expect to encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There should be no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship should provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. The metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' captures this idea. The warmth of the fire derives from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at its heart. There is no value to an encounter with a watered down, lowest common denominator version of faith. Importantly the door is open, all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable. Pupils and adults will always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and should be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer will always be accompanied by the option to reflect.

Inspiring

Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter to be inspirational. Worship should be formational and transformational: it should enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It should motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result of inspirational collective worship, they should be inspired to become courageous advocates of causes. It should encourage them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

2. Definition of collective worship

- 2.1. For the purpose of this policy, “**collective worship**” is an act which is additional to the national curriculum.
- 2.2. To “**take part**” in collective worship implies more than a passive attendance, such that it should have the ability to elicit responses from pupils even though they may not feel able to actively identify in the act of worship on a particular occasion.
- 2.3 Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils’ education. As such we are concerned to resource it properly and ensure that it is of the highest standard. *The worship and prayer life of the school is not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities will be taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum generally and at the end of (morning and afternoon) sessions as well as graces before lunch.*
- 2.4 Forms of worship within our denominations differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to our Trust Deeds. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage (Church of England and Methodist), we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian Church.
- 2.5 Whatever the approaches, we expect that pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them. These would include:
 - The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
 - The nature of human beings as children of God, part of his creation and, though sinful, destined for eternal life;
 - Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity’s relationship with God;
 - The central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity;
 - The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance;
 - The importance of prayer;
 - The central symbols of Christianity;
 - The cycle of the Church year.

3. Aims of collective worship

The aspiration to provide collective worship that is **Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring** is underpinned by the following aims and objectives and will be monitored and quality assured through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

3.1. Collective worship aims to:

Enable pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues, as well as explore their own beliefs.

Offer all pupils and adults, without compulsion, to grow spirituality through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.

Explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues.

Help pupils and adults appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing an understanding of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God (Father; Son; Holy Spirit)

Encourage participation and response via active involvement or through listening and participating in the worship offered.

Provide and enable pupils with the opportunity to plan, lead or contribute to discussions on key themes and topics, e.g. morality.

Provide a peaceful environment to enable stillness, prayer and reflection.

Help pupils to develop an awareness of their community and the spirit of helping others thus helping to create courageous advocates.

Develop a spirit of community and an understanding of individuals with other beliefs.

Acknowledge diversity and affirm each individual's life stance, whether religious or not.

Promote a common ethos and shared values.

Reinforce positive attitudes.

Enable pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different forms, 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 and Agape.

4. Organisation and planning

The rhythm of daily worship allows pupils and adults to step away from the target-driven culture of much of education, creating a space for an encounter with faith in God. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on larger questions of meaning and purpose. Pupils and adults can expect that the school's collective worship practices will provide a shared set of

symbols, signs, words and actions which give the community a language upon which it can draw, in times of joy and grief. Such an experience is key to fostering a sense of fellowship and cohesion within the school community. Whether in times of crisis or celebration, this time set aside in the school day provides staff and pupils with the opportunity to gather and support one another as a community.

Throughout the year, the school community may meet to celebrate and mark certain seasons in the Church calendar, such as Lent and Advent. Other important events in the school year, such as the start and end of the academic year, may be marked by formal acts of collective worship. Pupils and adults will encounter the practice of regular prayer and worship as a normal part of the life of the school. These activities will help provide a rhythm and stillness as a pattern of community life.

Parents, pupils and adults can expect that worship at TSM will follow a recognisable structure that will help focus worship on one idea. This helps to give organisation and clarity to the unfolding of that idea, as well as helping the leader to ensure that worship is age-appropriate and moves away from making it a performance art. This could take the form of a welcome or prayer followed by a consideration of a Bible passage or story that the group can then reflect on through discussion, prayer, silent reflection or music.

- 4.1. The school will implement collective worship in line with advice given by the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).
- 4.2. Every pupil will participate in the act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents.
- 4.3. Worship will be of Christian character.
- 4.4. The act of worship will be held for 20 minutes daily in the school hall or in the classroom.
- 4.5. The content of all acts of collective worship will be considered to ensure suitability and relevance to pupils of all ages and backgrounds.
- 4.6. The headteacher or lead teacher will establish a timetable for collective worship to make sure progression from each session is carried on to the next, as well as to ensure that learning is practically applied by pupils to their lives inside and outside of school.
- 4.7. The school Minister's will regularly help to deliver collective worship.
- 4.8. The school may invite visitors or guest speakers to speak during collective worship, in accordance with the timetabled theme.
- 4.9. The school aims to deliver a varied collective worship programme to pupils. The current schedule is outlined in the table below:

Day of the week	Delivery of programme	Led By	Venue
Monday	A whole-school worship	Ministers/ Senior Leader	Hall or Classroom in person or via Zoom
Tuesday	Key Stage Collective worship for KS1 pupils Collective Class worship is delivered to KS2 pupils by their class teacher. The themes for these assemblies are usually the same, though content will be differentiated appropriate to pupils' ages.	KS1 Class teachers on rota KS2 teachers	Hall Classroom
Wednesday	Key Stage Collective worship for KS2 pupils Collective Class worship is delivered to KS1 pupils by their class teacher. The themes for these assemblies are usually the same, though content will be differentiated appropriate to pupils' ages.	KS1 Class teachers on rota KS2 teachers	Hall Classroom
Thursday	Collective Class Worship – the theme for these sessions will be delivered by the diocese as part of their 'Worship across the diocese' series.	Teachers	Classroom
Friday	Whole School Prayer and Praise worship. Values awards. Sharing examples of the values being lived out in school	Senior Leaders	Hall or classroom via zoom

4.10 Once every term, representatives from each year group meet to discuss issues and the themes of worship covered that term with the school ministers. Class representatives also help to plan collective worship.

4.11 Prayer, hymns, and time for reflection will be a regular part of collective worship and participating individuals will recite the school's vision prayer and the Lord's prayer.

4.12 Collective worship will address key themes such as:

Creation.

Fall.

Salvation.

Justification.

Redemption.

Sanctification.

Faith, hope and love.

4.13 All topics covered will be suitable to the age of pupils participating in collective worship and will be inclusive for all needs.

4.14 Class Prayer Areas

Each class has an area for worship which is central to class worships, R.E lessons and child-initiated times.

4.15 Spiritual Garden

This is a protected space available for quiet contemplation, discussion and reflection at playtimes and lunchtimes.

5. Implementation and Content

5.1. The school aims to promote rich and meaningful experiences of collective worship that are appropriate to pupils' needs, ages and interests by:

Presenting displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas and thoughts.

Encouraging pupils to reflect and contemplate on their thoughts, feelings and beliefs.

Using artefacts, secular stories, resources, music, art, drama and guest speakers to engage pupils' interest.

Involving pupils in different experiences of worship, e.g. silence, prayer, rituals and shared or written prayers.

5.2. The school will take into account pupils of different ages and abilities when delivering the collective worship programme.

5.3. The school will arrange for learning mentors to assist pupils with SEND if the need arises.

5.4. Inspection of collective worship will be arranged with the following religious authority:

- The Church of England Education Office and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

5.5 Developing Spirituality and Educational Character

Spiritual character: developing understanding in these four areas
<p>Myself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reflect upon personal belief • To reflect upon ourselves and our lives as part of a bigger picture • To recognise personal strengths and weakness • To note feelings and opinions • To recognise that everyone gets things wrong and makes mistakes, but it is possible to move beyond them • To think in a new way • To gain inspiration • To receive a challenge to live differently • To rejoice un being unique and precious • To change behaviour in response to new learning
<p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To feel a sense of belonging to a group that shares and celebrates together, as well as being thoughtful or sad together. • To experience a feeling of connectedness to others in the world and a sense of responsibility towards them. • To realise that life can be hard and challenging, that there is difficulty to be faced, but people can do it together with others.
<p>Our World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get a sense of things unseen • To wonder • To recognise the preciousness of our planet and the natural world
<p>GOD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To think about God • To listen to God • To make a response to God • To explore a relationship with Gid • To enjoy being in the presence of God • To offer praise and thanksgiving to God
Educational Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about different ways of worshipping and about imagery and symbolism • To learn about the faith of the local church community • To participate in marking important features of the church calendar • To explore the Christian vision and values of the school • To use stillness and quietness • To have a quiet moment in a busy day • To celebrate gifts, talents and achievements • To consider spiritual questions raised in the rest of the curriculum

6. Developing staff expertise and knowledge: Confidence through professionalism

Parents, pupils and adults are entitled to be led in worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a Church school context and by those who are professional in their approach to working with pupils and adults from all faiths and none. Therefore, it should be a priority to build up the expertise of staff, pupils, clergy and other adults in facilitating collective worship. To do this the school will ensure the following.

- Worship leaders, including clergy, have access to regular training, primarily through local Methodist/diocesan education teams.
- Pupil worship leaders are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of worship.
- Worship leaders, including clergy, have access to high quality and current resources.
- The governing body have robust systems in place to monitor the impact of worship effectively; this monitoring will include and meaningfully involve pupil voice. Those facilitating worship will have the opportunity to receive feedback and the hear the outcome of evaluation.
- Those from outside agencies and church groups invited into the school to facilitate worship should be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and the school's vision. They should be supported and monitored as part of the school's systems for the evaluation of the impact of worship.
- The headteacher is the named member of staff responsible for collective worship with responsibility for ensuring that appropriate policy and practice are in place and publicly available.

7. Collective Worship and Growing Faith

The local church community, through its foundation and ex officio governors, are inheritors and guardians of the school's historic trust deed. This involves honouring tradition while re-imagining how this might look today. Today this has found new expression in the 'Growing Faith adventure'. (Church of England)

'Growing Faith' promotes a partnership between the three local communities of church, school and household to provide space to talk of faith and spiritual matters or ask challenging questions within and between these three communities.

Three principles exemplify this approach:

- Connected Communities: looking for meaningful community connections between church, school and household.
- Encounters with God: encountering faith and belief by engaging in conversations about God as individuals and together.
- Imaginative practices: searching for 'a new way of being church' and creating new thinking and new doing in relation to children, young people and households.

This has been described as developing 'faith talk' in the 'Faith in the Nexus' report. Specifically, the Church school is a place for 'faith talk' where Encounters with God may happen. The 'Growing Faith adventure is not part of the SIAMS schedule but the local church should normally expect to be part of a church school partnership that encourages and supports the school in effectively developing the impact of and provision for worship. Families can also expect to be partners in collective worship: involved, informed and enabled to collaborate at home if they should wish.

8. Right to withdraw

- 8.1 Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and are not required to provide a reason for doing so.
- 8.2 Parents will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the headteacher following a request of withdrawal in terms of:
- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part in.
 - The practical implications of their withdrawal.
 - Whether the parent will require notice in advance of such worship, and if so, what period of notice is preferred.
- 8.3 Alternative provision will be arranged for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.
- 8.4 Alternative provision may involve religious worship relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:
- The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational collective worship with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.
 - Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.
- 8.5 The alternative provision will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

9. Monitoring and review

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher in agreement with the governing board.
- 9.2 This policy will be evaluated in accordance with feedback from questionnaires and class discussions.
- 9.3 Any changes made to this policy and the collective worship programme will be communicated to all members of staff.
- 9.4 The scheduled review date for this policy is Sept 2026

Appendix 1: Worship Evaluation

Trinity & St Michael's Church of England and Methodist Primary School
Collective Worship Feedback
'Do everything in love'

Date	
Class/Year group	
Focus/value	

How did worship express the school's vision?	
How was worship <i>Inclusive, Invitational, Inspiring</i> ?	<p>Inclusive</p> <p>Invitational</p> <p>Inspiring</p>
How engaging was worship for children and adults?	<p>Children</p> <p>Adults</p>
How did worship offer all children and adults the opportunity without compulsion to develop their <i>spirituality</i> (Mirror, window, door Relationship with oneself, others, God and beyond)	
What opportunities were there to worship in a variety of ways (This will give a rounded picture over time)	<p>Music</p> <p>Silence</p> <p>Singing</p> <p>Story</p> <p>Prayer</p> <p>Reflection</p> <p>Other</p>
How did worship help pupils and adults appreciate relevance of faith in today's world and the teachings of Jesus and the Bible?	

What impact has worship had on shaping thoughts and behaviour of children and adults in your class?	
Are there any responses to the worship from the children or adults that you would like to share?	
What, in your opinion, could improve the experience of collective worship at school?	