



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

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TOGETHER WE EMPOWER EXCELLENCE

'I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.'- John 10:10

Within the Learning Academy Partnership we believe that Collective Worship is a fundamental part of the life of our academies. It offers our children the opportunity to reflect, consider their own beliefs and values and to come together to share a collective sense of community rooted in Christian Values. It provides an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, to support our curriculum and to provide an opportunity for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day for our pupils.

The Legal Position

In accordance with the Learning Academy Partnership (South West) Master Funding Agreement, each of our academies shall make provision for a daily act of worship.

The overall responsibility for the leading and monitoring of Collective Worship in each individual academy rests with the Head of Academy. The responsibility of planning for Collective Worship rests with the Head of Academy and, where appropriate, the Trust RE and Christian Distinctiveness Lead.

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that Collective Worship must be for all registered pupils on a daily basis. Furthermore, acts of worship "*must be wholly or mainly of a broadly christian character, i.e. reflect the broad traditions of christian belief.*"

Within each of our academy schools, we have developed a distinctive range of themes and topics through which Collective Worship takes place (applicable to each setting) and these are available to discuss upon request. We recognise that in our schools we have children from a variety of faith backgrounds and that many children have no religious background at all. Great care is taken in our Collective Worship to ensure that all children feel valued and special and that their integrity as human beings is consistently upheld; Collective Worship in our schools is inclusive.

In Church of England schools, Collective Worship will be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In community schools, acts of worship "*must be wholly or mainly of a broadly christian character, i.e. reflect the broad traditions of christian belief.*" -1988 *Education Reform Act*

For further guidance please also refer to:

http://exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Exeter_Diocese_RE_CW_Withdrawal_Policy.pdf

Parents do have, of course, the right of withdrawal from Collective Worship. Parents who have any concerns about the provision and practice of our Collective Worship are strongly encouraged to contact the Headteacher.

We believe that Collective Worship is important because it provides opportunities for children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and we aim for Collective Worship to be 'engaging, inspiring and transformational'. It provides children with time to develop an increasing sense of self-awareness, consider moral issues within a Christian context and to deepen their understanding of worship within a setting that is distinctively Christian.

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection; this may also include hymn practice. The school provides a variety of opportunities and ways to allow the children to engage in prayer and reflection. However, it is not a requirement that children must engage in prayer if they do not wish to.

The academy recognises that there is a difference between Acts of Collective Worship and the assembly of children. An assembly is the coming together of members of the school that is for purposes other than Collective Worship. On some occasions assembly may precede or follow an Act of Collective Worship. When this happens, the transition from Assembly to Collective worship will be

marked in a clear and appropriate way.

Worship within the school will be collective, as opposed to corporate, and there will be many different opportunities for the children to respond.

Aims

Within the Trust, Collective Worship is of a broadly Christian nature with an Anglican foundational approach. We aim to give pupils and school staff alike the opportunity to:

- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Opportunities to be still
- 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 Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar
- To experience and learn about different approaches to liturgical Anglican worship
- Engage in prayer and explore what prayer is

<https://www.churchofengland.org/education/church-schools-academies/collective-worship.aspx>

It is our vision that Collective Worship will also provide opportunities to contribute to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of each child. Such opportunities may include:

- Experience of what worship is and what people do when they worship
- Explore, reflect on and think more deeply about important moral and social issues within a Christian context
- Allow reflection and response to the fundamental questions of life and those things that are of eternal concern and value to human beings
- Foster a sense of awe and wonder
- Celebrate all that is of value in life
- Express their concerns, hopes and joy
- Have an opportunity to build a relationship with God
- Give expression to, and reaffirm and practise the values of the school community
- Nurture their individual spiritual growth
- Celebrate the whole school community and the individual values that everyone brings
- Provide a safe space in which children can express thoughts and feelings
- Appreciate the values and beliefs that people live by
- Acknowledge and become more aware of the needs of others

In addition to this, we also aim to provide opportunities to explore the beliefs and practices of other Christian denominations and, where appropriate, people of other faiths and world views. These may include opportunities to:

- Develop respect and sensitivity for the beliefs and practices of people of other faiths and worldviews
- Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others
- To encourage global citizenship and social responsibility
- To encourage positive contribution to the wider community
- To develop a sense of increasing respect and understanding in order to live cohesively in pluralistic societies

Church of England Academies

A further aspect of our Collective Worship is that the school provides a variety of opportunities to allow the children to engage in prayer and reflection in a number of different ways. Each class within a Church of England Academy has a Worship/Prayer Corner which is kept fresh, up to date and relevant. In addition to the whole Academy Act of Worship, set prayers in classrooms throughout the day may include the following: 'The Morning Prayer', 'lunch time prayer' and 'The Lord's Prayer.'

Other opportunities to engage in prayer and reflection may include:

1. Prayer Corners
2. Set prayers
3. Prayer Spaces in Schools
4. Visits to the local church in the parish

Rights of Withdrawal

At each academy we seek to be an inclusive community. However, we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children for Collective Worship. Parents will be invited to discuss withdrawal and to explore how their concern may be met. Parents are not obliged to attend such a meeting in which case withdrawal shall be put into effect immediately and the school will notify the parent.

Withdrawal from Collective Worship may be in whole or part.

The academy will provide a system of suitable supervision for children withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship in line with safeguarding procedures. However, no additional work will be set or followed in this time as this is time for reflection. Also, alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts (see, for example, Part 6 of the Education Act 2002, and Circular 1/94).

Parents may also be asked to provide materials for reflection suitable for the child's age and ability.

The expectation is that all teachers will participate in Collective Worship unless they have requested not to as is their right in law, with the exception of teachers where it is explicitly stated in their contract.

Weekly Acts of Worship

The first Act of Worship of the week will set the scene for the week and reflect the Church calendar, our school ethos, key Christian Values and current events.

Throughout the rest of the week daily Acts of Worship will take place and each academy will determine their own timetable to provide provision for this.

Additional Acts of Worship throughout the week may include a class collective worship, hymn practice, worship led by a member of the local church and worship as part of the celebration of children's achievements that week.

Planning, Recording and Evaluation

Collective Worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation. The content of Collective Worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning.

Each week/month/term there is a theme for Collective worship based on resources selected by each individual academy and the calendar of the church year. Those leading worship that week are encouraged to relate their worship to this theme. During the week the children will have the opportunity to reflect on the theme from a variety of viewpoints. Class teachers develop and explore both within class worship and, where appropriate, wider curricular opportunities, their class worship from the themes and events that occur during the week.

This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

The quality of worship is evaluated by the Worship Lead (Head of Academy) and Executive Lead in consultation with the Local Governance Committee. Children will, as appropriate, form part of the monitoring and evaluation of worship and can inform themes for the next term.

Our Foundation Trustees, through the work of the Local Governance Committees will have a role monitoring Collective Worship at the academy.

We also seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on Collective Worship and to be a part of the evaluation process.

Visits and Visitors

As part of the curriculum, each academy ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship.

Before inviting speakers into school, teachers will complete the proforma in the Trips and Visits Guidance which is then authorised by the Head of Academy who is responsible for ensuring that the Prevent guidance is adhered to.

Visitors to the academy are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge.

All visitors to the school and visits to places of worship are in line with the academy safeguarding and health and safety policies. We ensure that all visitors are in line with the Prevent and British Values curriculum and that they have engaged in dialogue regarding the purpose of the visit with a member of staff pre-visit.

Children also attend, where possible, whole school worship in church to celebrate annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Services.

Resources

Resources for Collective Worship will be kept current and funded as necessary.

Conclusion

Collective Worship plays a very important role in our school as we seek to develop our children in the skills of reflection and empathy, to encourage and celebrate their talents and to promote their spiritual and moral development.