

Collective Worship for Church of England (CofE) Schools

Low Trenchard Church of England School

Last Updated May 2025

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

L E W - Love Equality Wisdom

Together we grow in wisdom like The Good Samaritan showing compassion to others; upholding dignity; supporting the potential in everyone.

The structure and planning of collective worship at our school are carefully designed to embody and live out our theologically rooted Christian vision of *Love, Equality, and Wisdom*, as seen through the parable of the Good Samaritan. Each act of worship provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on what it means to love others selflessly, treat all people with dignity and equality, and make wise, compassionate choices in everyday life. By drawing on the example of the Samaritan—who acted with courage and kindness across social boundaries—our worship encourages the whole school community to live out these values in action, fostering a culture where everyone is seen, valued, and supported.

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.

Policy Statement

In Low Trenchard 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 (and associated values of Low Trenchard).

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.

At Low Trenchard 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 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 faiths*¹) 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 our school, spirituality is deeply connected to our Christian vision of *Love, Equality, and Wisdom*, and is brought to life through the story of the Good Samaritan. Using the imagery of **windows, mirrors, and doors**, we help children grow spiritually by encouraging them to look out (*windows*) at the needs and experiences of others, just as the Samaritan did when he saw the wounded man with compassion. Through *mirrors*, pupils reflect on their own choices, attitudes, and capacity to love others equally, regardless of difference. *Doors* invite them to respond with wise and courageous actions that promote kindness, justice, and inclusion. In this way, spirituality becomes a living expression of our vision, shaping a community where all are valued, supported, and inspired to serve others. This enhances and enriches collective worship and individuals' spiritual development.

Church of England Guidance

The collective worship policy at Lew Trenchard 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.'

Legal Requirements

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 anytime 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 Lew Trenchard should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The trustees and 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

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)

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>

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework, school policy, local and national guidance.

They have a 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

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? **[Trusts only]**

The right of withdrawal

In *Leviathan* 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.

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.

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

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

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.)

Guiding Principles

Collective worship in Lew Trenchard 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.

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation

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

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

Each week we have 5 Collective worships:

Head's collective worship which explores the termly themes.

Open the Book – Bible Stories

Picture News – Exploring Current Affairs/British Values/Protected characteristics/Rights of the child

Praise and Worship

Celebration of the school's lived vision and values

See Over-Arching Theme plan for more details.

Leadership

Member of staff responsible for collective worship is Louise Hussey EHT/Liz Davy HoS.

- Who leads daily worship: the headteacher, a member of staff, a pupil or small group of pupils, a whole class, a member of the clergy or local church, individual visitors or teams e.g. Open the Book
- Support and guidance is given to visitors leading worship. An information leaflet for visitors is produced by the Diocese.

Planning

- The EHT plans Collective worship.

- All members of the school community, especially children, are equipped to plan and lead acts of worship
- Collective worship reflects the cycle of the Church's year and special services
- How the Christian vision and values of the school are identified, expressed and celebrated through collective worship
- Explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school
- A pattern for worship is used which reflects Anglican tradition
- A range and variety of materials used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
- Opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today's world
- The Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God is explored
- Spiritual growth and development is nurtured through prayer, stillness and reflection, creativity, song, dance, music
- **Access to high quality resources and training to support planning**

Organisation

CW organised to take account of:

- Worship is whole school
- The hall is set up for CW so that the worship space is made special; and the atmosphere for worship is created using:
 - The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year,
 - Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,
 - Ritual and liturgical responses,
 - How the children are seated,
 - On occasion, the local church
- Collective worship is held every day from 2.45pm to 3.15pm

Roles and Responsibilities

Outline here the roles and responsibilities of each member of the school community to uphold the principles and actions of this policy:

- The governing body – monitoring application of this policy
- The headteacher and the senior leadership team – planning and holding CW
- Clergy and church partners – links to the church and CW support
- Teaching and support staff – contributing to CW and supporting the aims and ethos of CW

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. Support and training should also be made available to partners from the local church who lead worship.

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.

Monitoring and evaluation

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation:

- Practical strategies used to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship by different stakeholders – these include Collective Worship observations, planning scrutiny, pupil conferencing and pupil CW reflections
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship happens termly and is led by children, staff,, foundation governors, clergy
- Evidence shows how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time. This evidence is used to support in SIAMs.

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

Other Useful Documents: (can be found on the diocesan website⁴)

Date of last review:

Headteacher signed:

Date:

Chair of Governors signed:

Date:

Date of next review:

⁴ <https://exeter.anglican.org/schools/christian-ethos-siams/collective-worship/>