



ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS C. E. (FOUNDATION) PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy

This policy is written in support of the Vision and Values of St Michael and All Angels (Foundation) Primary and Pre-School.

Last Reviewed	Spring 2025
Next Review Due	Spring 2026

Linked Policies and Documents:

- Religious Education

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The Law

The current law is determined by the Education Reform Act 1988, with some requirements deriving from the Education Regulations 1981. In summary the law says this:

- All pupils must attend a daily act of collective worship, except for sixth formers who are allowed to decide for themselves whether to attend;
- The legal framework outlined here applies to maintained LA schools. In schools with a religious character collective worship is governed by the trust deed. Arrangements in free schools and academies is determined by the funding agreement.
- There is no need for an act of collective worship to include the whole school all at once. It may be through year groups, classes, key stages or in any combination.
- It may take place at any time during the school day and should normally be on school premises.
- It must be appropriate to the age, aptitude and family background of pupils.
- Responsibility lies with the head and governors, though the precise duties may vary according to the type of school.
- Details of arrangements for collective worship, including the policy, must be documented and available to the public.

Withdrawal of pupils

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from collective worship. However, it is always good practice to arrange to discuss this with parents if a request emerges. There may be issues about a particular aspect of the programme which may be allayed after discussion. If the parent still feels they wish to withdraw their child, the request should be made in writing to the head teacher. This must be allowed by the school, which also needs to provide alternative activity and supervision for this pupil, although this must be at no additional cost to the school or local authority.

The value of collective worship

The school sees the time set aside for Collective Worship as being a time for sharing and togetherness; a sharing of knowledge, feelings and experience. It is seen as a time when we foster a sense of belonging to the school, to the wider community of our school and to the society and world in which we live. We aim for our programme of collective worship to enrich the life of school in many ways and try to be creative and imaginative in organising this provision. We believe that collective worship:

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- Offers space for the **school community** to learn, grow and celebrate together;
- Provides an opportunity for **personal reflection** on individual life or wider issues;
- Nurtures all aspects of **SMSC development**, especially spiritual development;
- Offers opportunities to develop understanding of diverse faiths and cultures, so contributing to the promotion of **fundamental values**;
- Enables us to meet and engage with the **local community** through participants in assemblies;
- Responds to **topical or local issues** in a flexible and sensitive way;
- Provides chances for pupils and staff to **develop their own abilities** in preparing, presenting or evaluating assemblies.

We see collective worship as an educational opportunity with clear objectives for spiritual development and wider SMSC awareness. We use this time to encourage pupils to:

- Show interest in, and a concern for, members of the school community
- Celebrate special occasions together
- Show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community, the wider world
- Share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by groups within the school
- Explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards, manifested in religions and society
- Reflect upon dimensions of human life – the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, sorrowful
- Reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.

Organisation of Collective Worship

The format of Collective Worship is kept relatively simple. These elements fall into four phases common in each act of worship —gathering, engaging, responding, sending.

1. *Gathering* — Marking the start of the worship and drawing everyone together. This may include a specific form of welcome, a regular prayer, a call and response, specific actions such as lighting a candle etc.

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2. *Engaging* — Communicating the message of the worship and stimulating thinking, for example telling and explaining a bible story, investigating a particular theme, talking about a current topical issue etc.
3. *Responding* — Giving opportunity for individual thought about and response to the message / challenge. This may include pupils sharing their ideas, a time of silent and / or guided reflection, prayers in response to the theme etc.
4. *Sending* — Marking the end of the worship and sending everyone out with purpose. This may include a challenge to apply what they have learnt from the theme, a closing prayer, a call and response, specific actions such as extinguishing the candle etc.

Additional elements should be included to enhance the sense of the collective, for example, saying a shared weekly prayer for the week in each act of worship or using a common worship song or the use of candles to help create an atmosphere promoting awe and wonder.

Other components of Collective Worship:

- The involvement of the pupils, parents and visitors.
- There are joint acts of worship at St Michael's church at least once each term and are usually our main celebrations (Harvest, Christmas, Easter, End of term etc.) including Whole School Eucharist.
- Visitors are invited from other faith communities, ethical traditions, community groups and Christian denominations also enrich Collective Worship and build partnerships with the local community. Those with extremist or intolerant views, of any political or religious kind, will not be allowed access to the school or opportunities to interact with pupils, including during assemblies and other school activities.
- Prayers are offered regularly outside of Collective Worship during the school day.

Principles and practice at our school

These are our key principles in planning collective worship:

- All children will take part in Collective Worship every day.
- All members of staff will be given the opportunity to lead Collective Worship.
- All children will also be given the opportunity to take a lead and to participate.
- Members of appropriate organisations will be invited to share in Collective Worship.

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- Themes used will sometimes relate to the cycle of the seasons, the wonders of the world, the deeds of man and the celebration of religious festivals. They will also relate to the children's interests – classroom activities, the interests of the community and values upheld by individuals and other communities.
- The themes will be put forward in a variety of ways, e.g. through story, prose, poetry, drama, art, music, discussion.
- There will be opportunity to recognise the distinctiveness of the many faiths and world views shared in our community.
- The collective worship will include the singing of hymns and songs and opportunities are given, both to join in with and to listen to prayers.
- Time will also be provided for silence and reflection.
- The School will meet sometimes as a whole and sometimes in smaller groups.

Reflection and prayer

Collective worship should include opportunity for reflection. This may include the use of prayers. Sensitivity should be used to ensure that prayer or other forms of spiritual reflection are as inclusive as possible, recognising the diverse beliefs and backgrounds of the school community. Assumptions or assertions about specific doctrinal beliefs may make it difficult for members of some faith communities, or pupils without religious affiliation, to participate. It may be introduced with a phrase that recognises pupils will use the words in different ways. Some may reflect the words of the prayer in their own thoughts. Others, with no specific religious faith, will be able to reflect on the theme and the aspiration of the words without necessarily implying belief in a deity or conformity to a particular religious tradition.

Visitors

Visitors can enrich collective worship and build partnership with the local community. We invite members of faith communities, other ethical traditions and community groups to share in the programme. We ensure full safeguarding procedures are in place. Regular visitors to school who have access to children should have DBS enhanced disclosure. We will ensure that extremist or intolerant views, of any political or religious kind, will not be allowed in assemblies or elsewhere and we will follow appropriate safeguarding policies as appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to access to Collective worship. All children will have access to appropriate resources within the school. These will reflect a multi-cultural society, without stereotyping or discrimination. We are mindful of the need

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to promote the inclusion of all protected characteristics and all children will be given the opportunity to participate in all activities.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy and guidance will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis by all stakeholders of the school including pupils, parents, staff and governors.

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