



# Axbridge C of E Academy

Together We Inspire, Thrive & Excel

## Collective Worship Policy

Date of Policy: January 2025

Date of Review: January 2027





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Together We Inspire, Thrive & Excel

Last Updated: January 2025

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

*'I have come so that you may have life, a life in all its fullness' John 10:10*

It is underpinned by our school Christian Values of Faith, Hope and Love, inspired by the passage from Corinthians 13:13,

*"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."*



'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). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together'.

## Policy Statement

In Axbridge C of E Academy Worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, Worship 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.

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At Axbridge C of E Academy 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 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, readings 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*) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

## **Legal Requirements**

There must be a daily act of Collective Worship in all maintained schools 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 Axbridge C of E Academy should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The Local Partnership Board have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

## **The right of withdrawal**

In Axbridge C of E Academy there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non- religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As Collective Worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is

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hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within Collective Worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from Collective Worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents 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 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 will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents 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 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 may, for example, request their child does not take part in a Carol Service when otherwise the child takes part in daily Collective Worship.)*

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## Guiding Principles

Collective Worship in Axbridge C of E Academy aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- 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 none 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 contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church 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 children 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 children 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.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the 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
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- 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

### Leadership

- Collective Worship is led by teachers and the Headteacher. Collective Worship leaders, who are involved with the planning of CW, also help lead the Worship on a daily basis, in a variety of different ways. We are fortunate enough to be able to welcome our local vicars; Rev Alistair Forster, Rev Julie Sims and Rev Sue Hoskins, into the school to lead worship on a monthly basis too. On occasion, we are also able to welcome visitors into the school to lead worship, and they help support our children's spiritual development
- Visitors leading worship are expected to follow and adhere to the wholly Christian nature that Collective Worship follows at Axbridge.
- We hold a monthly church service, led by the vicars supporting the school, on key school messages and values. This takes place at St John the Baptist Church in Axbridge.

### Planning

- The responsibility of planning, organising and leading Collective Worship is shared between the Head teacher, the Staff and the Partnership Board.

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- We take the themes of our Collective Worship from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our Collective Worship reflect and build on themes that we teach as part of the school curriculum.
- Multi-cultural stories and resources are used when relevant.
- Old and New Testament stories are included and seasonal worship such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost are celebrated.
- Each term there are multiple themes for Collective Worship, but a main focus remains around the core school Christian Values. These are shared on a regular basis via the school newsletter and through our school reward system, that explicitly encourages and celebrates our chosen values.
- There is a weekly opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our children within the life of the school or in the wider world and how they promote our school's Christian Values.
- Music is selected for the children to enter and leave worship, nurturing a period of reflection and stillness. We celebrate in music and song.
- A candle is lit to mark the beginning of worship, encouraging children to begin their reflective time, as they join together in a Candle Prayer.
- Teachers and children leading worship will follow the Gather, Engage, Respond and Send model (GERS) and provide opportunity for children to develop their spiritual awareness and understanding
- Children are encouraged to take an active part in worship by responding to questions, offering solutions to problems, taking part in role play situations or by writing and reading prayers.
- Specific stories and characters from the Bible have been selected to explore, discuss and understand our Christian Values in greater depth.
- Collective Worship will be regularly shared with the wider Church family at the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist. The services will often be led by children from the school. The services in the church include:
  - ✓ A Harvest Thanksgiving Service;
  - ✓ A Carol Service or Christingle Service
  - ✓ A Mother's Day Service
  - ✓ An Easter Service
  - ✓ A Leavers Service for Year 4 at the end of term 6.
- A range and variety of materials are used for Collective Worship, in order to make it inclusive and engaging. This includes, but is not limited to; websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points and visitors.



- Children are encouraged to create their own prayers and share these in Collective Worship, these are then stored in a central book and used for further worship.
- Worship planning explicitly explores the nature of the Trinity and is referenced through the artefacts used within Collective Worship (candle, bible and cross)

## Organisation

- Worship themes are linked to the promotion of our school Christian vision, Christian values, religious festivals, key events and celebrations.
- The hall, in which the worship takes place, will have a candle, a bible and a cross, to reflect the Trinity.
- All Collective Worship is held in the morning and involves the whole school.
- Each class has a reflective area in their classrooms that, when able, children use as a focal point, prayer station or for a moment of stillness and quiet. All reflective areas are expected to have the school's Christian vision, the Christian values, a Bible, Journal, candle and cross.
- The use of the church liturgical colours marks the seasons of the Church Year for a further focal point for the children and staff.
- The Lord's Prayer is used during Monday Worship, with the children expected to know the words. It is also used in Church and when members of the clergy visit.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Whole School Worship - Headteacher to lead	Worship through Song	Whole School Worship	Whole School Worship	Celebration Worship - Headteacher to lead
Once a month, member of the clergy to lead.				Once a month, visit to Church, led by clergy.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- The Local Partnership Board: to promote the school's Christian Vision within and outside of the school. Monitoring plans and liaising with the subject lead.





- The Headteacher and the senior leadership team: to promote the school's Christian Vision within the school. Providing support to members of staff and carry out monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship.
- Clergy and church partners: Reverend Alistair Forster, Reverend Julie Sims and Reverend Sue Hoskins support our school through leading Collective Worship on a rota basis. They support in the delivery of worship and Reverend Alistair plays a key part in our annual services held in the Church.
- Subject lead: They will provide an overview of worship per half term accessible by all. They will liaise with clergy to produce a timetable of services. Support and guidance will be offered to all members of staff for leading class worship. The subject lead will work with Collective Worship Leaders to plan, monitor and evaluate.
- Teaching and support staff: Lead Collective Worship on a daily basis. Use the planning provided but are able to adapt to suit the current needs. Encourage children to take on our Christian Vision and promote our Christian values.
- Pupils: To take on Christian Vision and live it, in accordance with our values. To feed back to Collective Worship Leaders and members of staff to evaluate and improve our Collective Worship provision.
- Parents and carers: To support our Christian Vision and support their children to live in keeping with our Christian values.
- Visitors: Respect and adhere to the guidelines in this policy, particularly about leading Collective Worship and adhering to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The document, Guidance for Visitors Leading Collective Worship is a useful resource

## **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.

The Collective Worship lead will attend regular training run by the Diocese and disseminate as appropriate. The partners of the school supporting in their specific SIAMS or Foundation Local Partner role, will also attend training where appropriate.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

Evaluation of Worship is carried out by the Collective Worship Leaders, staff and Foundation Local Partners through:

- Checking that practice matches aims and objectives
- Observation of children's attentiveness and level of interest

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- Classroom feedback from pupils, both written and verbal.
- Comments from parents, visitor and Local Partners.
- The extent of the influence upon pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school day and beyond.

## Disseminating 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.

## Other Useful Documents:

This information can be found on the diocesan website:  
<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/schools/re-Collective-Worship-and-spirituality/Collective-Worship/#:~:text=A%20daily%20act%20of%20Collective,reflects%20their%20ethos%20and%20values.>

- Guidance for Visitors Leading Collective Worship, (including a code of conduct)
- Example Visitors Leaflet about Collective Worship
- Collective Worship Planning Proformas
- Evaluation and Monitoring - Ideas and Systems
- Suggested Resources for Collective Worship
- Spirituality - What is it?

Date of last review: January 2025

Headteacher signed: 

Date: 08/01/2025

Chair of Partners signed: 

Date: 08/01/2025

