



**East Brent**  
C of E Academy

Where a Love of Learning is Nurtured and Enriched

## Collective Worship Policy



<b>Date Agreed</b>	September 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	September 2025

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our school foundations are led through inclusive Christian Values that centre the children as the pearls of our school community. Our theologically rooted vision links to the Parable known as the **Pearl of Great Price, Matthew 13:44**, which teaches us that the Kingdom of God is a treasure more precious than anything in this world. Just as we inspire children as learners, we encourage them to believe in themselves, respect one another and understand the importance of showing peace and love in the world that God created for us all. The children are upheld as the 'pearls' of our school.

We believe values help define our character and ethos and by doing so affect our behaviour, beliefs and actions. They are our guide for living a life that will help all flourish.

At East Brent CofE Academy our Christian Values are represented through six words that give purpose, direction and a firm grounding in all we seek to do. These are present among our school community and feature as a focus during each half term.

### **Peace – Endurance – Aspiration – Respect – Love - Service**

'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 East Brent Church of England 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.

At East Brent Church of England 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, 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*<sup>1</sup>) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.<sup>2</sup>

## 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 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.

The Local Partnership Board school 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 East Brent Church of England Academy there are 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 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

<sup>2</sup> "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)

- 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.)*

## **Guiding Principles**

Collective worship in East Brent Church of England 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 know 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
- 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**

Collective worship is organised to provide a variety of groupings and will take place in the school hall or the classroom. Acts of worship will usually last for approximately 15 minutes, although it is recognised that this time will be shortened or lengthened when appropriate. Collective acts of worship are incorporated into whole school and class. Some children may miss elements of collective worship for intervention time but this is kept to a minimum. Reception children have collective worship as part of their daily routine and structure within the classroom for the first few weeks in September. As the Autumn Term progresses Reception children join whole school collective worship.

## Leadership

- Daily worship is led by the headteacher, a member of staff, a small group of pupils, a whole class, a member of the clergy or local church or an individual visitor or team

## Planning

- The weekly themes of Collective Worship are planned by the Head as Collective Worship lead. Collective worship is planned by the head teacher, RE lead, class teacher or by the member of the clergy leading the worship. Small groups of children are involved in planning their child led collective worship that follows the structure: gathering, engaging, responding and sending. Thursday is child led worship at East Brent
- Worship reflects the cycle of the Church year with special events and services being held in church
- The Christian values of the school are identified and expressed and celebrated through collective worship on a half termly basis. Autumn 1 Peace, Autumn 2 endurance, Spring 1 aspiration, Spring 2 respect, Summer 1 Love and Summer 2 Service
- Explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school
- A range and variety of materials are used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
- Spiritual growth is encouraged, and time is given through prayer, stillness and reflection during worship.

## Organisation

How is CW organised to take account of:

- Whole school worship happens daily. Class Collective Worship may be organised for themed days and weeks such as Children's Mental Health Week
- Collective Worship happens in the school hall. A candle is lit on the hall reflection area and a hymn is playing as the children enter. Children sing on entering and seating.
- The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year are represented on the hall reflection area and in classrooms in the class reflection areas
- On the reflection area in the hall we have a children's bible, a candle and a cross. Hymns are played and sung. In the hall we have our Christian Values display at the front and our Spirituality trees along the back wall
- Our ritual response to open Collective Worship is "This is the day that the Lord has made" with the children responding "Let us rejoice and be glad in it"
- The Year 4 children sit on benches at the back and the rest of the school sit on the floor crossed legged. Adults sit alongside SEND pupils who need support

- We are developing a spiritual area on our field with plants growing to attract butterflies and other wildlife
- Collective Worship is at 10:30am Monday to Thursday for 15 minutes and 3:00pm on a Friday afternoon for 20 minutes

### **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.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

- Local Partners, WLT Trustee, Head and RE lead will monitor acts of collective worship.
- Children will write reflections in their class floor books

### **Disseminating the policy**

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff, Local Partners parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.