



Policy on Collective Worship

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Psalm 150:6

Rationale

Collective Worship is central to the daily life of pupils and staff at Archbishop Runcie Church of England (VA) First School and takes place daily in accordance with the Church of England Guidance for Collective Worship and relevant legislation. The contents of all our collective acts of Worship is in accordance with the aims of the school Trust Deeds as reflected in our Mission, Vision, Values & Ethos Statement.

Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship provides a focus for the daily life of our school. Through it, the distinctively Christian ethos and values of our school are reflected and affirmed. Collective Worship aims to be inclusive, invitational and inspiring to the whole school community. Collective Worship provides staff and pupils the opportunity to:

- worship God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- experience a variety of styles of Worship and recognise that within the Anglican Communion there is a diversity of practice;
- develop respect and understanding of both the nature and language of Christian Worship;
- celebrate:
 - Christian festivals;
 - achievements;
 - school values and the ethos of the school as a Christian community;
- grow and deepen their understanding of Christian Worship;
- cultivate a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community based in Christian values;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of Worship;
- develop a sense of unity and identity amongst pupils and between pupils and staff;
- grow spiritually and experience prayer, reflection and stillness;
- explore faith in our current world;
- encounter teachings from the Bible;
- reflect on how Worship can influence their lives, both in and out of school;
- feel safe and affirmed.

At times, Worship will also reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- consider moral issues in a Christian context and to develop social understanding;
- explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage.

Inclusion

The centrality of Worship in this school is made clear to parents who apply to enter their children into our school. Our Worship is designed to be inclusive and parents and children should understand that Worship is an occasion where each individual's integrity is respected. We aim that there should be an integral partnership between the content and conduct of school Worship and the ethos of the whole school.

We are sensitive to the fact that the pupils in our school come from a variety of religious traditions as well as many pupils whose families have no religious affiliation. Pupils who do not come from Christian families should be able to join the daily act of collective Worship, even though this would, in the main, reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief. As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school we aim to reflect the Anglican foundation of the school but not to impinge on the integrity of particular pupils or the faith communities from which they come.

We aim to provide collective Worship that provides pupils, regardless of their beliefs, with the opportunity to;

- consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues;
- explore their own beliefs;
- develop their spirituality;
- participate and respond;
- promote a common ethos and shared values;
- develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others;
- demonstrate respect, tolerance and understanding for those with differing beliefs and backgrounds.

Collective Worship is inclusive of everyone in our school. Prayer is a valued part of Worship; however, it is not compulsory or forced. Children are encouraged to use prayer time to reflect on the learning which has taken place, as well as on their own lives. When a prayer is read, children can make it their own by saying Amen at the end.

“For some pupils the experience of Worship will be tentative and exploratory. For those who have already developed a growing Christian commitment, Worship will be the natural outcome of belief and a place where their deepest thoughts and emotions can be expressed in communion with God.”

‘Open the door’ – D. Barton, A. Brown and E. Brown p12

Pupil Withdrawal

The right to withdraw pupils from any/all Worship is available to all parents. If parents decide to take this option for their children, the school will ensure that pupils are not only adequately supervised and have something purposeful to do but also that they are not made to feel isolated and excluded. Parents who wish to exercise this right must discuss this in person with the Headteacher, before making a formal request, in writing, to withdraw their child. It is important to note that although children can be withdrawn from acts of Worship, they cannot be withdrawn from the ethos of the school as this is evident in all areas of school life.

Organisation, Planning and Evaluation

Our acts of Worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in Worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme, and the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils. Throughout their time at our school children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside traditional elements of Worship such as prayer and song.

- Collective Worship is held daily, usually in the school hall near the beginning of the school day. It is attended by all children in key stage 1 and 2 and all classroom staff are expected to be present.
- Early Years Foundation Stage classes hold Collective Worship separately but Reception children are gradually integrated into whole school Worship in the spring term.
- Each term is planned to take account of important days and the seasons in the Anglican calendar, whilst reflecting on central themes.
- The Head Teacher, Deputy Head, clergy from St Nicholas' and All Saints' lead Worship regularly. Worship is also led by visitors on occasions e.g. charities such as Christian Aid, People's Kitchen.
- When possible, we hold a 'Songs of Praise' which includes more hymn singing/learning.
- Occasionally class prayers are held instead of full school Worship.
- Prayers are said before lunch time and the Lord's Prayer is said at the end of the school day. Children are invited to say Amen if they would like to make the prayer theirs.

The Headteacher plans the themes for each term in consultation with the local clergy. A feedback evaluation is collected by the Worship Council to provide a feedback. The planning is flexible to take into account changing situations, both within and outside the school.

Class Worship

All classes in Key Stage One and Two take part in leading acts of Worship. Class Worship takes a variety of forms and covers different themes throughout the year. Depending on the age and developmental stage of the children, there is an increasing focus on pupil ownership of these acts of Worship.

Impact of Collective Worship

The impact of collective worship is:

- making connections to others, self through meaningful moments
- spiritual development of pupils and adults leading to a flourishing school community.
- children regularly provide thoughtful and respectful responses, both during worship and afterwards (e.g. through pupil voice) through effective gathering, engaging and responding.
- evident in children's attitudes and behaviours. Worship consistently has a central tenet of 'sending' (in our language of spirituality to 'look out'), encouraging children to take action within their own lives no matter their faith or views.
- a good understanding of the liturgical calendar, linking learning with opportunities for worship.

Worship Council

All children in Key Stage One and Two (and Reception from summer term) are represented in the Worship Council. Worship Council representatives are elected by the class annually. The Worship Council's responsibility includes the following over the course of the year, although this list is not exhaustive:

- Evaluating the efficacy of Worship through pupil-led pupil voice and feeding back to relevant Worship Leaders (e.g. the Headteacher)
- Participating and leading parts of adult-led Worship (e.g. the prayer)
- Writing and running their own acts of Worship
- Liaising with church links

Class Prayer and Reflection Area

In each classroom, there is a quiet area where children can reflect, think and pray. This area shows the current liturgical colour, a bible, cross and class prayer book. Throughout the year, themes linked to collective worship may also be added. There is a "tree" displayed that children can add their own prayers to, if they wish.

Services

We regularly visit the churches of All Saints' and St. Nicholas' for services (e.g. Maundy Thursday, Pentecost, Carol service). These are planned and led jointly by local clergy and staff and involve participation from the children. We also hold services in school, usually for Mothering Sunday and Harvest as well as Easter (if school is open during Holy Week). Parents and visitors are regularly invited to services and acts of Worship in school. Year 4 pupils attend the Diocesan School Leaver's Service at the Cathedral Church of St Nicholas' in the summer term.

The School recognises the centrality of the Eucharist in Anglican Worship but because of the age of the children and the desire to be inclusive it is not the practice to have a school Eucharist on a regular basis.

The management role of the Head Teacher

The role of the Head Teacher is to:

- plan the programme of Worship in consultation with clergy & staff;
- ensure records of Worship are kept up to date;
- liaise with visiting clergy;
- support and enable colleagues to plan and lead acts of Worship;
- monitor and advise on resource needs;
- take responsibility for organisation, ordering and maintenance of resources for Worship;
- be aware of the professional development needs of staff;
- lead staff in the development and review of policy and guidelines.

Conclusion

Worship is an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, to support the curriculum and to provide an opportunity for stillness, reflection and prayer in a busy day. Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that Collective Worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Key Personnel

Worship Coordinator: K. Massey

Named Governor: A. Shipton & P. Baker

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the TLA Committee.

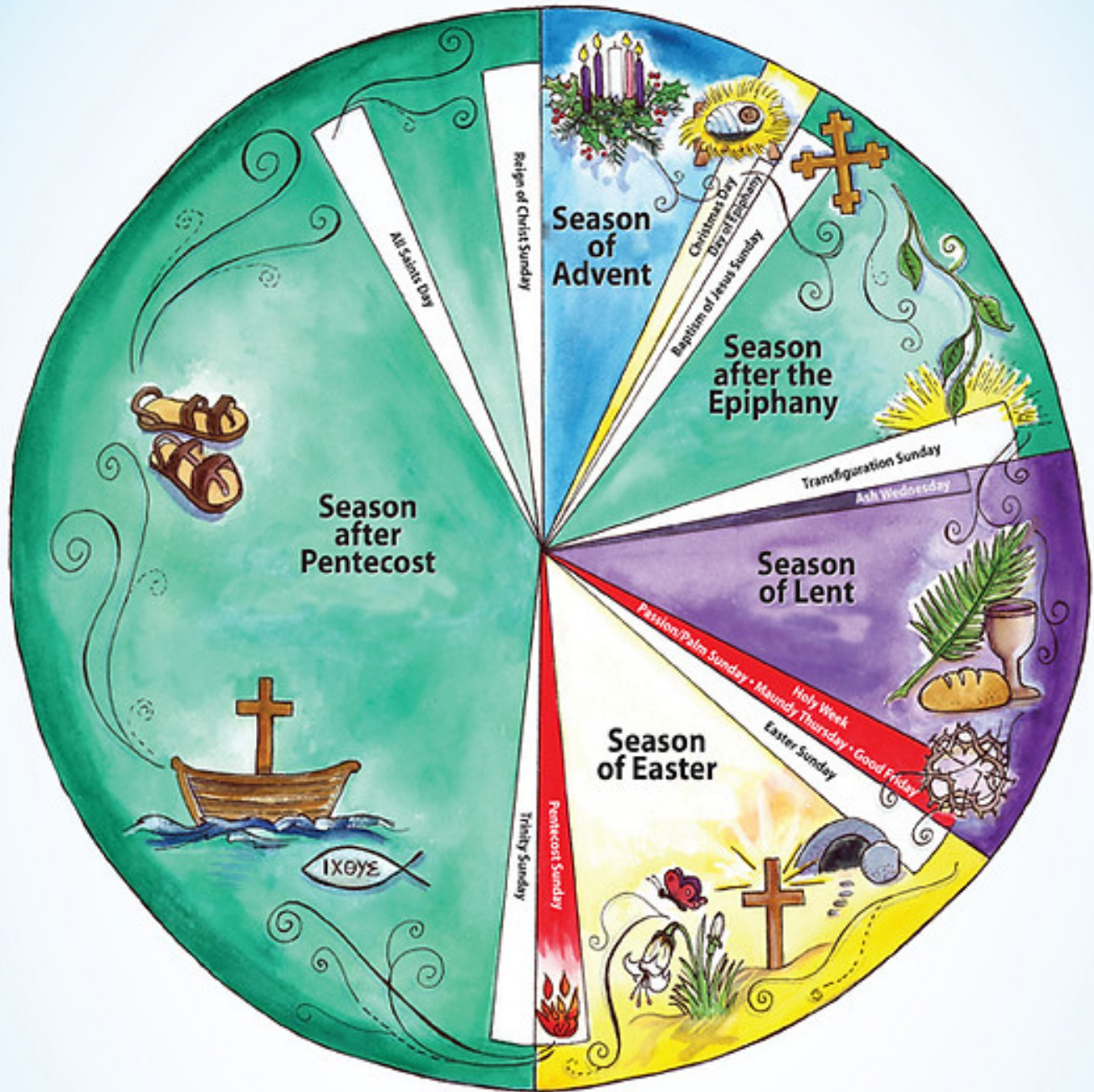
Be courageous; be strong.

Do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

| Date | Reviewed / updated | Staff involved |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Jan 2023 | Reviewed | TLA Cttee |
| Sept 2023 | Re-circulated to all staff | KM |
| Jan 2024 | Agreed | TLA |
| Sept 2024 | Updated | KM/KF |
| March 2025 | Approved | TLA |

THE Seasons OF THE Church Year



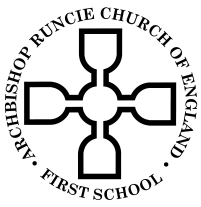
| | |
|------------|---|
| Gathering | <p>Think about focal point, think about senses and ritual – liturgical colour, cross, Bible, music, lighting the candle</p> <p>Think about your Greeting: Welcome everyone, followed by greeting and response / Liturgy e.g. Peace be with you.</p> |
| Engaging | <p>This may be the main part in an act of worship. In a Church school, it should encourage children to engage with the Bible, Christian teaching, and most importantly, with God.</p> <p>How will you share the message? From the Bible? God's people in history? God's people today? Will you use your own experience or current events?</p> |
| Responding | <p>For every pupil and adult present, some response should be possible. All should understand that this is time set aside for deep thought and for each to respond in an appropriate way. Will you spend time thinking or reflecting? Will you pray? Will you do something practical as a response? How?</p> |
| Sending | <p>The ending of the act of worship should be full of purpose, as people are sent out to be different and to 'do' differently. What special words, final blessing or prayer will be used as the worship finishes? How will you signal that worship has ended?</p> |



Planning Worship

| | |
|---|--|
| Date | |
| Leader | |
| Theme | |
| Focus while children are gathering e.g, music/slideshow which create context | |
| Stimulus e.g. illustration/scripture/video | |
| Reflection e.g. how will this shape us? | |
| Sending e.g, how can we take what we have learned into the classroom/playground? | |

| | |
|---|--|
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| Sending e.g, how can we take what we have learned into the classroom/playground? | |



ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) FIRST SCHOOL

STAFF EVALUATION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Date _____ Leader _____

Theme/Purpose _____

Hymns _____

How positive were learner's attitudes to Collective Worship? (Responses, participation, leadership etc)

To what extent do learners and staff derive inspiration, spiritual growth and affirmation from worship?

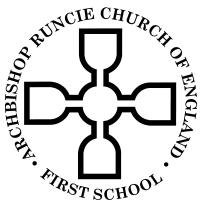
- **Did it have a feeling of gathering?** (silence, calm, excitement, intrigue, other _____)
- **Did it contain something engaging?** (story, song, visitor, questions, other _____)
- **Did it have space for responding?** (singing, praying, discussion, action, other _____)
- **Did it end with a sense of sending?** (purpose, challenge, resolve, blessing, other _____)

Did it develop learners understanding of Anglican traditions and practice? (please tick)

- Biblical (stories, key words of Jesus, famous passages)
- Liturgical (set prayers, The Lord's Prayer, responses, silence)
- Seasonal (festival/Saints Days)
- Symbolic (candles, cross, seasonal colours, silence)
- Worldwide Anglican Communion
- Other Christian traditions
- Respect for other faith traditions
- Involvement in life of the parishes

Did it contribute to Spiritual/ Moral/ Social/ Cultural development of learners and staff? (please circle)

Other evaluation points/comments _____



Children's Evaluation of Collective Worship

Name _____ Date _____

How did Worship make you feel?

What did it make you think about?

What did it help you to understand about God?

Did you learn anything new about yourself?

Do you think it will help you to behave differently?

Did it give you things to think about?

Did it give you a chance to pray if you wanted?

Did you want to ask anything about what you heard/saw/thought?

Did you enjoy it?

Why?