



Beamminster
St. Mary's Academy

Where children come first; belonging and building together

Respect † Trust † Kindness † Friendship † Responsibility

Collective Worship Policy

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At Beaminster St Mary's 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.

However, in Beaminster St Mary's Academy the purpose of collective worship will be to lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

*"Worship in (CofE) schools promotes theological and Religious Literacy and liberates participants to an imagining of a different order of justice, mercy and hope"*¹

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*)² calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.³

1) Legal Framework

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. 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

¹ CEE Vision statement "Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good" Autumn 2016

² 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.

³ "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)

in Beaminster St Mary's Academy should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The governing body 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.

1a) The right of withdrawal

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 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.)

2) Guiding Principles

Collective worship in Beaminster St Mary's 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.

3) 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 on the school website.

4) Our actions

Leadership

- CW is led by the headteacher, Rev. Jo Neary, members of staff and children and visiting speakers

Planning

- A termly overview of worship is planned by Rev Jo in consultation with the headteacher
- Children are equipped to plan and lead acts of worship by working alongside the Ethos committee
- The worship overview reflects the cycle of the Church year
- The Christian 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
- There is a pattern for worship which reflects Anglican tradition including the lighting of a candle to signify the start of worship, and key elements associated with gathering, engaging, responding and sending.
- 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*
- Collective Worship themes provide opportunities for children and adults to explore faith in today's world
- Collective Worship allows the exploration of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God
- Collective Worship allows for spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection

Organisation

- Collective worship is held each day as whole school and class based worship
- A focal point including a cross and candle is used to ensure the worship space is made special.
- Worship is generally held at the start of each afternoon, for 15 minutes

5) 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.

6) 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.

7) Monitoring and evaluation

- The Headteacher and Ethos group use a variety of strategies to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship including pupil discussion and observation.
- Pupil responses are gathered and shared in a collective worship portfolio in the hall.

Appendix 1 - Guidance for Visitors

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS

Representatives of religious communities can make a vital contribution to learning when visiting schools or acting as guides to their place of worship or community activity.

Like other organisations that work with children, churches, other places of worship and faith-based organisations need to have appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

In particular, these arrangements should include:

- procedures for staff and others to report concerns that they may have about the children they meet that are in line with “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused”. (Visitors will need to be referred to the School’s safeguarding policy).
- appropriate codes of practice for staff, particularly those working directly with children, such as those issued by the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)
- recruitment procedures in accordance with safer recruitment guidance and NSSCB procedures, alongside training and supervision of staff (paid or voluntary).

(Working Together, 2010)

Spiritual and moral development and religious learning can be stimulated through encounters between people of faith and school pupils of all ages.⁴

AWARENESS

When working with school pupils, representatives of religious communities should be aware that:

- schools are *diverse* communities: they usually include members of different faith groups, children from secular families and (within Christianity or other faiths) different denominational allegiances, and that it is important to show sensitivity to this plurality. Each child’s beliefs and experiences must be respected.

⁴ This guidance is adapted from advice offered by NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE).

PREPARATION

In order to make their presentations to school pupils effective, representatives of religious communities should:

- comply with the “Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People” ethos of the school;
- be familiar with the school’s aims, ethos and policies, and plan their involvement in the light of the aims and curriculum of the school;
- plan their presentation carefully. Religious visitors to schools need to be in good communication with the link person in the school. They should be aware of the Value or the theme for the term, clear about the purpose of the visit and how the visitors’ contribution links to the overall purpose for Collective Worship;

Visitors should :

1. discuss their input with teachers in advance, and be open to teachers’ suggestions;
2. take account of the differing abilities of the pupils;
3. where appropriate, use a variety of teaching methods and styles, including those which elicit a response from all the pupils;
4. select the content of their presentation carefully, avoiding the temptation to try and get the whole of their faith across (for example, teaching six year olds all there is to know about Jesus in a 20 minute session!).

TALKING WITH PUPILS

When talking with pupils, representatives of religious communities should:

- make clear to pupils who they are, who they represent, and what they are offering to the pupils;
- be willing to have an openness and humility to learn from pupils’ and staff’ insights.
- be willing to share their own experiences, beliefs and insights, but avoid criticising the experiences and insights of others
- seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods which involve the pupils actively, and to communicate at appropriate levels for the age group(s) concerned;
- develop ways of speaking to pupils which communicate an open approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to convert them.

This question will help representatives of religious communities to reflect on their approach: *If a member of another religion visited my child’s school and contributed in the same way that I have done, would I, as a parent, be happy with the education given?*

Communications between children and adults, by whatever method must take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web cams and blogs. The School's Social Media Policy which specifies acceptable and permissible modes of communication must be adhered to and "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People" adopted.

It should be noted, therefore, that these professional boundaries extend beyond a visitor's contact with pupils within the school premises and include any further contact that may be made with pupils in the wider community.

Appendix 2 Visitors leaflet

Beaminster St Mary's Academy

Guidelines for those leading Collective Worship

We are delighted that you will be visiting our school to lead our Collective Worship.

At Beaminster St Mary's Academy we value our daily acts of collective worship extremely highly. Through it we identify, affirm and celebrate those ideals and values that we hold to be of central importance to us as a community.

It is important, for visitors to be aware that children in our school come from a range of faith backgrounds, and none; we therefore ask that those who lead Collective Worship take account of this in the preparation and delivery of their material.

At Beaminster St Mary's Academy we prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and to that end would like you to have enhanced DBS clearance. If you already have DBS clearance, please bring your certificate with you so that the details can be recorded on our school system. If you do not have DBS clearance, please let us know so we can support your visit appropriately.

Each child at Beaminster St Mary's Academy is involved in an act of worship every day. These take place in a variety of different groupings:

Monday - Whole School Worship 3 pm

Tuesday - Class Worship 3pm

Wednesday – Whole School Worship 1.30pm

Thursday - Singing Worship 3.00 pm

Friday - Whole School (Celebration) Worship 3pm

We hope you will find the following guidelines helpful.

We ask that visitors arrive ready to begin promptly at 2.55pm.

If you require any special resources or equipment e.g. Data Projector, OHP or CD player, please let us know in advance and we will endeavour to have them ready when you arrive.

The children enter the hall class by class with their class teacher and when everyone is ready to begin the worship children are invited to light the three candles and you will be introduced to the children. Whilst the children enter, music is played and focus for worship is displayed on a table at the front. If you have a preference for a piece of music or an object that could act as a focus for your time of worship, you are most welcome to bring it along. If you have a song or hymn which is especially appropriate that you would like to be sung, please let us know in good time.

Some of our visitors like to include a short time of prayer in the worship and it may be helpful to know that we use the modern language version of The Lord's Prayer which can be found on the back page of this leaflet.

We ask that your act of worship should last no longer than 15 minutes and - that it includes a short opportunity for quiet reflection on one aspect of your theme. This could be time of silence or you may wish to play music or read a relevant poem. When the worship is complete, please blow out the candle. A child or member of staff will want to thank you for your visit. There may be some announcements that need to be made at this point. Do feel free to leave if you wish, remembering to sign out and return your badge to the secretary's office.

Once again may we thank you for your visit.

Individual Act of worship planner

Date:	Whole School/Year/House/ KS/Class	Value / Topic/ Theme
Key Message – you want children/young people to take away		
Gathering		
Engaging		
Responding		
Sending Out		

Appendix 3 Ideas and systems of evaluation and monitoring

Ideas for Evaluating Collective Worship in Church Schools

In THEORY it would be possible to reflect after every collective worship, evaluate the various aspects of the format of the worship and make a judgement of the impact of the worship on the school community.

In REALITY in the busy life of a school this is almost impossible. In stating this, however, I acknowledge that good leaders and teachers:

- evaluate continuously
- reflect after every teaching and learning event and
- alter their thinking and behaviour in the future.

Self Evaluation by Pupils and Staff

Step 1

Monday - imagine that your school holds whole school worship on a Monday – led by a senior leader in the school (vicar, head, deputy, assistant head etc)

Step2

Tuesday - there is class worship.

- Class teachers are asked to discuss the previous day's worship with the class using the 4 simple questions below.
- The class teacher does not have to prepare more material but be prepared to review openly what took place and the impact and influence the worship had.
- The purpose is to discover what the pupils have remembered, understood and learned from the worship.
- If the children did not understand – the class teacher is in an ideal position to develop the ideas at an appropriate level for the class.
- Simply discussing the worship – gives it relevance and importance and for some, a better or deeper understanding.
- The school may use a class liturgy to support this and have a class worship box in which they have a class worship book where any reflections of depth may be recorded by a class worship monitor (KS2 + or recorded by a TA)

Step 3

The class teacher now has information that can be shared verbally (and may have written evidence from the class worship book) with the leadership at the next staff meeting. It should only take a few minutes to gather feedback from the classes.

Consequences

The children will soon realise that the school is interested in their views on worship and that worship and their views matter.

After a couple of weeks they may well be taking more note of the Monday worship – they know it will be discussed the next day.

The school is giving voice to the pupils. It is also providing them with a vocabulary and language to discuss worship.

Over time the school will be more informed about what works – has impact and influence.

The pupils and staff will better understand what the purpose of worship is and can become.

The pupils and staff will be more confident to prepare and lead worship for a class or school.

Worship will develop in the school through pupil voice and be a demonstrable aspect of the school that is both Christian and distinctive.

Using a Worship Council/ School Council to evaluate worship

The 4 simple questions to ask pupils.

1. Tell me one thing you liked about the Collective Worship you have just been in? - This is a personal idea just about your feelings or thoughts.
2. Tell me one thing that would have made it better for you? - This is a personal idea just about your feelings or thoughts.
 - a. Tell me what it was about? - This is about factual recall.
3. Tell me why did the person leading the worship do what they did? (How you phrase this depends on the age of the pupils):-
 - a. So what was the point?
 - b. What do you take away?
 - c. What do we learn about how we live our lives?

Further thoughts

If the only purpose of evaluation is to provide an audit trail for inspection then the rationale is flawed – if it is to improve practice then here are some thoughts other than a daily record that could be more effective.

- Invite another adult (Vicar, governor, learning support, parent) to talk to pupils of all ages about how Collective Worship feels for them. Record the outcome

of these conversations and review them with staff who lead Collective Worship, Leadership Team, the vicar or governors.

- Set aside 15 minutes of a staff meeting once a term to review how staff feel about Collective Worship. Record the outcome of these discussions and review them with staff who lead Collective Worship, Leadership Team, the vicar or governors.
- Add a question on the parent and or the pupil questionnaires about perceptions of Collective Worship.
- Invite the vicar or diocesan officer to observe a Collective Worship and spend quality time afterwards to discuss the various aspects of the worship.
- Invite a diocesan officer to review the overall planning of worship.
- Video a Collective Worship and watch and reflect on it yourself. You could place the camera on the floor pointing upwards so it captures a child's eye view.

Appendix 4

Suggested Resources for Collective Worship in CofE Schools

The resources in the table below represent those that are recommended by three or more dioceses.

A first port of call for many will be the excellent website

<http://www.assemblies.org.uk/>

Several dioceses also encourage the use of Barnabas in schools resources for CW

www.barnabasinschools.org.uk

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'Story Assemblies for the School Year' (bks 1&2) published by brf -

<http://www.brf.org.uk/news/story-assemblies-school-year-volume-2> .

Resource	source	Website link
Values for Life (and associated publications)	Jumping Fish	www.imaginer.co.uk you need to click on Jumping Fish for Values for life http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/jumping-fish
Roots and Fruits and Out of the Box	Imaginer	www.imaginer.co.uk Materials written by Shahne Vickery that support Value education and spiritual development in schools
Be Bold	Church House Publishing	Amazon and ebay
Diaries of Reflection	Salisbury	www.salisbury.anglican.org/schools/collective-worship/diaries-of-reflection
Teachers Dozen	Methodist Church	www.teachersdozen.co.uk
Open the Book		www.openthebook.net

There are a further two year's worth of stories that the author has self-published online - <http://storyassemblies.webplus.net/> .

In terms of Music for CW many suggest Fischy music www.fischy.com then there is <http://www.outoftheark.co.uk/series/songs-for-every/>

Prayer Spirituality

<http://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/home>

<http://www.breatheresource.org.uk/>

<http://www.orisonschools.org.uk/home>

Review

This policy will be reviewed every year.

Date of this policy: November 2022

Date for review: November 2023