

Proverbs 22:6

Direct your children on the right path and when they are older they will not depart from it.



**Celebrating Faith,
Learning and Success**

Date: 23rd January 2023
Review Date: Spring Term 2025

St Botolph's Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

St Botolph's Primary School

Policy for Collective Worship

Introduction

This policy was written in consultation with staff and governors. It explains the policy for collective worship at this school and how we interpret the legislation set out by the government.

The Legal Requirements for Collective Worship

The 1988 Education Act stated that:

- All pupils must take part in a collective act of worship every day.
- The act of collective worship may be as a whole school or in different age groupings.
- It may happen at any time of the school day.
- It has to take place on school premises. (In an aided school the Governors can make arrangements for worship elsewhere on special occasions eg. The local church. In a controlled school acts of worship may take place off school premises but these should be in addition to the statutory acts of collective worship on the premises).
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the legal requirements for Collective Worship are met. (In aided or voluntary controlled school the responsibility for securing daily acts of worship lies with the governing body after consultation with the Headteacher).
- The character and content of collective worship in these schools continues to be determined by governing bodies.
- All staff, including the Headteacher, have the legal right to withdraw from the Act of Collective Worship. The Headteacher remains responsible for finding someone suitable to organise and lead the acts of worship.
- All parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, wholly or partially. The school's responsibility for the child's health and safety is still paramount.

We recognise that in collective worship children and adults will be responding to the worship on offer in different ways and at different levels; some will be passive observers, learning about worship but not participating in it; some will be 'at the threshold', interested in the process and participating in it but not full believers; for others the act of collective worship may be a time of real worship of God. It is the task of collective worship to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised but in which everyone finds something positive for themselves.

The Aims of Collective Worship at St Botolph's

The government requires all schools to provide an act of Collective Worship. At St Botolph's we acknowledge that our school community is not a 'worshipping community' in the same sense as a local church. We provide daily acts of Collective Worship, which we believe help children understand some of the features of worship in a believing Christian community.

The following describe shared Christian elements of collective worship that we will include:

- Using the Bible, either as a source book, or as an inspiration for themes and stories.
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Saints Days.
- Learning and saying traditional prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the Grace.
- Singing a wide variety of hymns, from traditional to rap.
- Using Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning e.g. Cross, crucifix, bread and wine.
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection.
- Using Psalms with simple responses.

The Law also requires us to provide pupils with an opportunity to worship God as part of our Collective Worship. We therefore try to provide an opportunity to respond in the form of quiet reflection at some point in each act of collective worship. This time may involve spoken prayers but more often a time for each pupil and adult present to be quiet and think about what they have heard; this will provide opportunity for each to worship God if they should wish to do so.

The Anglian Church is a worldwide church with a strong commitment to ecumenism. As a Church of England school, we will draw upon appropriate materials from other Christian churches and the Diocese of Ely in their collective worship, as well as inviting visitors from other churches to lead collective worship on occasions.

The Approach to Collective Worship at St Botolph's

The acts of collective worship are planned to give pupils a variety of experiences to enable them to reflect on, and respond to, things which we, as a school community, believe are important. These experiences will include:

- The telling of appropriate stories (Biblical, moral, multi-cultural)
- Drama
- Poetry
- Music
- ICT/Powerpoint/Video

The Aims of Collective Worship

Worship in St Botolph's will be of the highest quality and a central activity in the life of the school and we aim:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to reflect upon God and to give Him honour.
- To help children discover their place in the world.
- To highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension through experiencing worship.
- To provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery.
- To provide an opportunity to celebrate major and some minor Christian festivals.
- To heighten awareness of the ultimate questions/realities of life and to provide the opportunity to reflect upon these. To support the search for meaning.
- To enable children to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to the community, and to respect the integrity of all individuals as a child of God.
- To enable pupils to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer.
- To celebrate gifts, talents and achievements.
- To establish, explore and reinforce the common Christian values of the school community such as community, courage and compassion.
- To foster a feeling of community and belonging in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings.
- To develop personal relationships and to encourage social development.
- To provide an opportunity to empathise with the needs of others.
- To provide an opportunity for children to become acquainted with people from the local and wider community, particularly the local church.
- To encourage respect and care for God's creation by a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues.
- To foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy.
- To give memorable and enjoyable experiences.
- To provide an opportunity to bring before God in prayer personal needs and those of others.

- To share with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level and thereby give them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework.
- To provide an opportunity for children to become acquainted with other faiths and where similarities lie between these faiths and Christianity.

The Organisation of Collective Worship at St Botolph's

There is an act of Collective Worship everyday following the pattern shown below:

Monday	Whole school worship – Christian values led	Senior leader or faith leader	Hall
Tuesday	Whole school – choral worship	Lead for Christian Vision and Collective worship	Hall
Wednesday	Collective worship linked to Monday theme	Teacher	Classroom
Thursday	Collective Worship in Phases linked to the Monday theme	Teacher	Hall
Friday	Whole school - Celebration of those who have lived our values over the week.	Headteacher	Hall

These acts of worship normally last for 15 or 20 minutes.

The acts of worship follow themes designed by Senior Members of staff in consultation with the Christian Vision Lead, staff, and the Rector of Holy Trinity Church. Themes chosen support the aims of the school. While staffs are encouraged to follow these, allowances are made for marking festivals or other newsworthy events.

Additional acts of worship are occasionally held at other times throughout the year eg. Christmas, Easter, Christingle, All Saints Day, Lent and Pentecost as well as Harvest. The 'singing' assembly provides an opportunity to look carefully at some of the songs we use and collective worship stems from this.

Visitors Leading Collective Worship

The School works closely with local clergy who regularly lead our Acts of Worship in school. Each term every year group takes part in an act of worship at our local Church via our family services or special celebrations.

At St Botolph's we appreciate the contribution that visitors can make to collective worship. They can enrich the school's collective worship experience and offer opportunities for pupils to learn from others beyond the school community. We have a briefing pack for visitors.

See Appendix One for further information

Resources for Collective Worship

These are available in the Head's office and from the Christian Vision Lead.

Withdrawal

Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from Collective Worship in accordance with the Education Act. They are advised of this right in the school brochure and asked to contact the Headteacher to make arrangements. No reasons have to be given but discussions with parents over the issues concerning withdrawal are encouraged. Staff also have the right to withdraw.

Monitoring

The senior leaders of the school have responsibility for collective worship alongside the lead for Christian Vision and will monitor termly collective worship. A pupil survey will be carried out annually to evaluate our acts of worship in school.

See Appendix Two

Appendix One

Visitors Leading Collective Worship

Each term every year group takes part in an act of worship at our local Church.

At St Botolph's we appreciate the contribution that visitors can make to collective worship. They can enrich the school's collective worship experience and offer opportunities for pupils to learn from others beyond the school community.

Briefing visitors for school worship we will make sure we tell them:

- Who exactly will attend, whether it will be the whole school or a section of it and if so, which section.
- How long the speaker is expected to talk for.
- The current assembly theme and context for the speaker – what has already been done and what will be done later in the term.
- How pupils and staff are normally involved in collective worship.
- What resources or hardware are available to them, should they so wish.
- Exactly how much their contribution will be – is it just the talk or will they be asked to choose the hymn and lead the prayers.
- Give them plenty of notice – don't assume that a visitor who wears an RE or religious 'hat' can produce an assembly at a few moments notice!
- Invite them to attend an act of collective worship beforehand so that they may see how the school conducts them, or if this is not practical, lend them a copy of the collective worship policy document.
- Some visitors may also need to be told that collective worship is not an appropriate vehicle for hard sell evangelism and that inclusive language ('we all believe') is to be avoided.

Visitors who are regularly involved in collective worship should appreciate sensitive feedback on the appropriateness of their contribution to the school assembly programme.

A Few Dos and Don'ts for those asked to lead collective worship

DO find out

- Who will attend the collective worship – the whole school, or just part of it
- How long you are allowed to speak for (and don't over run).
- Which theme the school is presently following in collective worship, what they have done already and will do in the rest of the term.
- Whether pupils and staff are used to being involved in activities, should you wish them to be so.

Do prepare thoroughly – a ten-minute presentation which addressed the needs and variety of backgrounds of pupils has to be carefully thought out, and should always begin by making a real connection with the children's world.

Do help pupils by allowing them time for silence in which they may think, reflect and respond at their own level.

Do remember the difference between collective and corporate worship. A school assembly is not the appropriate venue for strong evangelism.

Do adopt a variety of approaches in each act of worship or within each series of acts. Introduce them on a variety of occasions to the breadth of Christian experiences and practices.

DON'T

- Talk too much

- Talk down to children
- Merely entertain children
- Talk over children's heads

Don't assume that pupils' presence at worship signifies their personal commitment or involvement. You should not impose on pupil's words or attitudes which they cannot honestly express. Your task is not to compel worship, but to enable it.

Don't conduct an act of worship without visiting the school first. Arrange to meet the Headteacher or Lead for Christian Vision for a discussion of the school's policy and procedures and if possible, be present at an act of worship in the school.

Briefing Sheet for visitors leading school worship:

• Name of visitor and organisation represented	
• DBS check	
• Date of attendance	
• Presenting to ○ Whole School ○ KS1 ○ KS2 Other (please specify)	
• Length of presentation	
• Give the presenter the current term's themes.	
• Give the presenter information on how pupils and staff are normally involved in collective worship.	
• Give the presenter information on what resources or hardware are available to them, should they so wish.	
• Extent of contribution will be ○ talk ○ choose the hymn ○ lead the prayers.	
• Invite the presenter to attend an act of collective worship beforehand so that they may see how the school conducts them. OR	
• Give presenters a copy of the collective worship policy document.	
• Please remember that collective worship is not an appropriate vehicle for hard sell evangelism and that inclusive language ('we all believe') is to be avoided.	

Visitors who are regularly involved in collective worship should appreciate sensitive feedback on the appropriateness of their contribution to the school assembly programme.

Signed _____ School _____

Presenter _____ Date: _____



Dear Pupil,

We are always trying to improve our school. It would help us if you would fill in this questionnaire.

Thank you

Collective Worship Team

	A lot	A bit	Not much	Not at all
I know about the Christian Values of my school.				
I learn what is right and what is wrong in my school.				
I get on well with the other people in my schools				
I can pray and reflect in school if I want to do so.				
I enjoy collective worship				
I enjoy RE lessons				
I learn about God, Jesus and the Bible in RE				
I learn about other world faiths in RE				
I know how well I am doing in RE				
My views about worship and RE are taken seriously				
The school and the church work together				
The things I like best about collective worship are:				
The things I like best about RE are:				