



Aim high, be courageous, show love
St NICHOLAS
C of E Primary School, Kenilworth

Collective Worship Policy

Aim high, be courageous, show love

Reviewed and revised: September 2026

Next review: September 2028

Introduction

Church of England schools are committed to offering high-quality collective worship. At St Nicholas C of E Primary School, collective worship is at the heart of the daily life of the school. It provides opportunities for pupils and adults to gather as a community, encounter Christian teaching, explore big questions, reflect on their own lives and consider how our Christian vision can be lived out through our choices and actions.

Our worship is distinctively Christian and reflects the Anglican foundation of the school. It is inclusive, invitational and inspiring. We seek to welcome all members of our school community, whatever their faith, belief or worldview, and to provide opportunities to engage at a level that is meaningful to them.

1. Aims and purpose

- To repeatedly explore our school vision – Aim high, be courageous, show love – and help pupils and adults understand how it can be lived out in daily life.
- To make meaningful connections between our Christian vision, Bible stories and passages, Christian teaching and the experiences of pupils.
- To provide opportunities to encounter faith and to engage in conversations and big questions about God, life, meaning, purpose and the world around us.
- To develop understanding of Christian belief, including the person and teachings of Jesus and the Christian understanding of God.
- To contribute to the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults by providing meaningful opportunities, without compulsion, for prayer, stillness, silence, reflection, worship and encounter with Christian faith.
- To enable pupils to encounter a range of Anglican and wider Christian traditions, including the seasons and festivals of the Christian year.
- To inspire pupils and adults to put their beliefs and values into action through service, compassion and justice, developing the confidence to become courageous advocates for positive change within their school, local community and wider world.

- To enable pupils to contribute to the planning, leading and evaluation of worship.

2. The character of collective worship

Inclusive

Collective worship at St Nicholas is designed to be accessible to all. Language is used carefully so that participation does not assume a particular faith position. Pupils and adults are encouraged to listen, wonder, question, contribute and reflect. Worship recognises and respects the diversity of faith, belief, worldview and background within our community, and affirms the dignity and worth of every person. Worship affirms the dignity and worth of every person and provides age-appropriate opportunities to encounter and celebrate the diversity of people within our school, local community and wider world, including the protected characteristics.

Invitational

Worship invites rather than compels. Opportunities for prayer are offered, but pupils and adults are not required to pray. Those who do not wish to pray are always given the opportunity to use the time for quiet thought or reflection. Similarly, responses in Prayer and Reflection Books may take the form of thoughts, reflections, drawings, symbols, questions or prayers; children are never required to write a prayer.

Inspiring

Worship aims to be engaging and thought-provoking. It encourages pupils to consider big questions, make connections with their own lives, think about the needs of others and consider how they might put the school vision into action. It should enable pupils to leave worship with something to think about, respond to or act upon.

Collective worship reflects the traditions of the Church of England through appropriate use of the Bible, Christian prayer, music and song, symbols, liturgical responses and the seasons and festivals of the Christian year. Pupils encounter different ways in which Christians worship within the Anglican tradition and the wider Christian Church.

3. The experience of worship at St Nicholas

Collective worship is not viewed as a series of isolated assemblies. Themes develop across the week and across each half term. Whole-school worship introduces key ideas which are revisited and explored more personally through class worship, discussion and reflection.

Half-termly planning is organised around an overarching theme and, where appropriate, a Big Question. Weekly themes connect Christian teaching and Bible passages with our school vision, British Values, the liturgical year and significant national, global and community events. This creates a clear thread through worship while allowing flexibility to respond to current events and the needs of the school community.

A typical worship uses a simple rhythm of Gather, Engage/Explore, Respond and Send. This may include lighting a candle, a Bible story or passage, discussion, music, images, drama, silence, reflection, prayer and a practical challenge.

Collective worship is an opportunity for pupils and adults to pause together within the rhythm of school life. Adults participate in worship alongside pupils and are also invited to reflect, pray and consider the implications of the school's Christian vision for their own lives and actions.

4. Organisation of collective worship

A daily act of collective worship is provided. Worship may take place as a whole school, through Teams, in phases or within individual classes.

Day	Typical pattern
Monday	Whole-school collective worship, usually delivered through Teams and led by the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. This introduces the main theme, Big Question, Bible focus and link to the school vision for the week.
Tuesday	Class collective worship. Classes revisit and deepen the weekly theme through discussion, reflection and age-appropriate activities. Prayer and Reflection Books may be used as part of this worship.
Wednesday	Class collective worship providing further opportunities to explore the half-termly or weekly theme through Christian teaching, reflection, prayer, stillness and discussion. This may include connections to wellbeing, relationships, values and current issues. Prayer and Reflection Books may be used where appropriate.
Thursday	Singing worship, using music and song as an expression of worship and an opportunity to explore Christian teaching and the school vision.
Friday	Celebration assembly/worship, recognising pupils' achievements, contributions and character. Where appropriate, the Star of the Week focus reinforces the theme explored in worship during the week.

The pattern may be adapted for church services, festivals, special events, visitors or other significant occasions. Local clergy, the Children and Families Worker, staff, pupils and other appropriate visitors may contribute to worship during the year.

The school works in partnership with St Nicholas Church. Clergy and the Children and Families Worker contribute regularly to collective worship and support the development of worship and the school's Christian distinctiveness.

5. Pupil participation and leadership

Pupil voice is an important part of collective worship. Pupils are encouraged to contribute ideas, questions and reflections, and to take an active role in worship where appropriate. The Prayer and Reflection Council supports the development of worship, contributes to leading aspects of worship and helps gather pupil views and evaluate its impact.

6. Prayer and Reflection Books

Classes have Prayer and Reflection Books which provide a space for pupils to respond to worship and record significant reflections over time. Children are given freedom in how they respond. This may include writing, drawing, symbols, questions, personal reflections or prayer. The books are intended to support genuine spiritual reflection rather than provide a prescribed written task, and pupils are not required to write a prayer.

7. Christian festivals, other faiths and the wider world

The Christian calendar has an important influence on collective worship. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Harvest and other significant Christian occasions are marked appropriately.

As a Church of England school, collective worship remains distinctively Christian. At appropriate points pupils may also encounter and respectfully learn about people, festivals, beliefs and practices from different faiths and worldviews. These opportunities support understanding, mutual respect and life in modern Britain, while maintaining the distinction between collective worship and the school's Religious Education curriculum.

Worship may also respond to significant local, national and global events and themes such as Remembrance, anti-bullying, inclusion, justice, stewardship and charitable action.

8. British Values and wider personal development

British Values are woven meaningfully into collective worship rather than treated only as isolated topics. Through Christian teaching, stories, discussion and reflection, pupils encounter democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. Where appropriate, worship also supports pupils' understanding of diversity, inclusion, protected characteristics, responsible citizenship and courageous advocacy.

9. Resources

A wide range of resources may be used to enrich worship, including Bible readings and stories, music, drama, poetry, images, artefacts, candles, silence, digital resources and real-life stories. Lyfta may be used where it supports the planned theme by enabling pupils to encounter diverse people, perspectives and global contexts. Resources are selected because they serve the purpose of the worship rather than because a particular resource or programme must be used.

10. Right of withdrawal

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship. A parent wishing to exercise this right should contact the Headteacher in writing and make clear the extent of the withdrawal requested. Parents are not required to give a reason. The school will make appropriate arrangements for supervision during the period concerned. The Headteacher maintains a record of pupils withdrawn from collective worship.

11. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the organisation and planning of collective worship. The quality and impact of worship are monitored through pupil voice, staff feedback, Prayer and Reflection Council involvement, observation of worship and discussion with governors and church partners.

The governor with responsibility for Religious Education and collective worship supports monitoring and provides appropriate challenge and support in relation to the school's Church of England foundation and SIAMS.

Governors are encouraged to attend collective worship throughout the year as part of their understanding and monitoring of the school's Christian vision and ethos.

Evaluation focuses not only on whether worship has taken place, but on its impact: what pupils and adults understand, how worship supports spiritual flourishing, how well pupils can articulate connections with the Christian vision, and how worship influences attitudes and actions within school life.

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure that it continues to reflect the lived practice of collective worship at St Nicholas and current statutory and Church of England expectations.

Appendix 1 – Planning principles

- Collective worship is rooted in the school's Christian vision: Aim high, be courageous, show love.
- Each half term has an overarching theme and may include a Big Question.
- Monday whole-school worship establishes the main weekly focus.
- Class worship provides opportunities to revisit, question, deepen and personally respond to the theme.
- Bible stories and passages are explained in an age-appropriate way so that pupils understand their context and relevance.
- Prayer is always invitational; quiet reflection is always a valid response.
- Prayer and Reflection Books are used to support meaningful reflection rather than to produce uniform written outcomes.
- British Values, significant events and wider issues are woven into themes where there is a meaningful connection.
- Celebration at the end of the week may reinforce the week's theme through the Star of the Week focus.
- Planning remains flexible enough to respond to events affecting the school, local community and wider world.