

Collective Worship Policy



Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Education and Vicky Childs
MATCHING GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Matching Green Church of England Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Date: September 2024

Name of school	Matching Green Church of England Primary School
School vision	<p>Matching Green CE Primary School seeks to serve the children in our community, recognising that we are all unique individuals. We want all children and staff to flourish and we aspire to provide experiences that enable children to live 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) and have a lifelong love of learning; by providing a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that engages with our head, heart and hands.</p> <p>We will achieve our school vision to learn with our head, heart and hands by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• providing a rounded inspiring education that unites the academic standards alongside nurturing children's spiritual, moral and cultural development• an exciting and relevant curriculum that enables all learners to flourish in their confidence, wisdom, knowledge and skills• Equipping our children with the essential skills for modern life by promoting their wellbeing and mental health, nurturing their confidence and independence.• Promoting a culture where we aspire to be the best that we can be by making positive choices about how we live and learn.• Being a safe community that lives well together; where all are welcomed and treated with dignity and respect, valuing and celebrating individuals. <p><i>This vision is underpinned by our school Christian values of kindness, endurance, friendship, forgiveness and thankfulness.</i></p>

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Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision of wanting to flourish and to experience 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) with a lifelong love of learning; by providing a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that engages with our head, heart and hands and the associated values we derive from them friendship, forgiveness, endurance, thankfulness and kindness. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the whole school community to worship God.
- To enable all to consider spiritual and moral issues.
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs.
- To encourage participation and response.
- To develop a sense of community spirit across the whole school.
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church school must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.

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- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England schools rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).¹ Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship to gather, engage, reflect, respond and celebrate together. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>

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In Matching Green Church of England School, we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster links with The Lavers with Matching Churches, involving the Reverend. Julia Baldwin in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit at Matching Green Church at least twice per year as part of the Christian calendar.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At Matching Green Church of England School, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice

Leadership

The Headteacher along with class teachers and a small group of children lead Collective Worship each week. On a Friday, the children lead the Collective Worship with a focus of Celebration where we celebrate our achievements from the week that link to our school vision and values.

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Planning

There is a yearly Collective Worship plan which links to themes, bible stories, resources and hymns, together, with Reverend. Julia, we have reviewed our planning cycle against the Christian Calendar. Our planning ensures we use a range of sources and guidance from the Diocese recommended list, including Picture News.

Daily Collective Worship plans ensure the themes are covered in more details:

- Theme
- British value
- Music
- Greeting
- Candle and symbol
- Learning and questioning
- Reflection and stillness
- Prayers
- Hymn
- Ending

Collective Worship is closely linked to our school vision and values where we make reference to these through. We use Celebration Worship to highlight pupils who have gone over and above when demonstrating one of our values.

Our Collective Worship emphasises an importance of the children relating to our Collective Worship through lived personal experiences, setting aspirational goals to develop personally and through collective support. We encourage children to understand the role they play both individually and collectively.

Organisation

We promote a passion for Collective Worship by inviting children to support our organisation. Year 6 children prepare the hall and hold the doors, welcoming children in to our Collective Worship space. We prioritise a spiritual environment by arriving and leaving to music, light a candle or showing a symbol or focal point. We ensure we use ritual and liturgical responses to open and close our Worship. We hold our Collective Worship at the start of each day to set the tone and share our core message for the day, our children are seating in their class year groups to promote connectedness of being together from the start and 15 minutes is allocated each day.

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve.

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We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship. Reverend. Julia leads a Collective Worship every other Monday. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. The welcoming member of staff/Headteacher/Collective Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed through discussions with pupils, staff and Governors through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship.

Collective Worship is monitored by the Headteacher and Governors. Our Collective Worship is developed through professional development and through opportunities to observe the Collective Worship of others. Our school development plan focuses on the growth of Collective Worship by enhancing spiritual and reflective opportunities for the children.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The Headteacher, as Collective Worship Coordinator, is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

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Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Written By:	Vicky Childs
Adopted By:	Matching Green Church of England Primary School
Review Date:	September 2026