

# SLS Collective Worship Policy 2025



*Educating through faith, hope and love*

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# SLS Collective Worship Policy

## Our Christian Vision

St Luke's Church of England School is a school for the whole community. Our vision has Jesus' promise "I came to give life—life in all its fullness" at its heart (John 10:10). We believe that all children deserve an education of the highest quality in order to flourish and enjoy a life filled with meaning and purpose. Our children combine a care for others with a love for learning, and an appreciation of the importance of spiritual, mental and physical well-being. We serve local children, parents and the community within the context of Christian belief and practice.

### 1. How is the policy a reflection of our theologically rooted Christian vision?

During the planning and experience of Collective Worship, we aim to explore our school's Christian vision and how it shapes and guides all we do as a school. We reflect on our core Christian values of faith, hope and love, and reflect on how they build the Christian characteristics of friendship, perseverance, courage, trust, compassion and forgiveness. As adults and children come together as a whole school, we explore the teaching of Jesus and the Bible, and consider how we can apply these to how we live well and be courageous advocates as a school, local and worldwide community.

### 2. Introduction

In Church of England schools, Collective Worship is seen as more than a daily 'awe and wonder' moment. It is the unique heartbeat of the school and will be offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together.

*We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives...Collective Worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office 2016) page 10

Collective Worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a whole school family. Collective Worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school and reaffirms our Christian vision and associated values of faith, hope and love.

### 3. Aims of Collective Worship

As we gather for Collective Worship, we:

- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.

- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Reflect the parish tradition of worship, while giving experience over time for pupils to experience the breadth of Anglicanism.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship and festivals.
- Explore the school's Christian vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues.
- Enable pupils the opportunity to make a positive contribution to worship through involvement with aspects of the planning, leading and evaluation of Collective Worship.

#### 4. Legal requirements

Collective Worship:

- Should be conducted in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and Instrument of Government and be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- Unless the right of withdrawal has been exercised all pupils must take part each day in an act of Collective Worship (DfE circular 1/94 para. 51) and the Governing Body should ensure that all pupils **each day** engage in a distinctively Christian act of worship.
- Arrangements for Collective Worship in foundation schools of a religious character (i.e. church schools) are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consultation with the headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52&53).

#### 5. Planning of worship

The daily Christian act of worship is central to our Christian ethos. It makes an important contribution to the spiritual flourishing of the whole school community. We are committed to providing a daily act of Christian worship which is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality.

A half-termly Collective Worship planning document is created by the Headteacher and the Assistant Head, which enables continuity and cohesion. We use the guidance and resources provided by the LDBS as a starting point for planning our Collective Worship, and adapt them to support the current needs of our school community.

Each act of Collective Worship is then planned by the Collective Worship leader for that day – either a member of the SLT or a church representative.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and our planning incorporates a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include music, silence, symbolism, physical resources and the use of IT.

When planning acts of worship, we follow the Church of England guidance to ensure that the worship is:

- **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 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.

## 6. Pattern of Worship

Collective Worship takes as a gathering of the whole school at 3pm in the school hall. Its placement at the end of the day allows all children and adults to be physically and mentally present. Our pattern of worship is as follows:

- **Monday:** led by a member of senior staff
- **Tuesday:** led by a member of senior staff
- **Wednesday:** *worship takes place at St Luke’s Church* and is led by a member of the clergy or the youth and families’ worker
- **Thursday:** led by a member of senior staff with a particular focus on music
- **Friday:** led by a member of senior staff with a focus on celebrating achievement across the school, including sharing Christian Value nominations – when children have noticed other children or adults who have demonstrated our core Christian values during the week

Our worship consists of 4 parts:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community with the lighting of a candle
- **Engage** – we share, for example, a Bible reading, followed by an opportunity to engage pupils with the Christian message
- **Respond** – pupils, for example, discuss, share and reflect
- **Send** – we share, for example, the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day, learning or behaviour. We close with a song, a final prayer, and the blowing out of our special candle

## 7. Collective Worship leaders

The Headteacher is the Collective Worship lead and shares with other members of the SLT the responsibility for the long-term planning of worship, leading acts of worship and supporting staff and pupils who are planning and leading aspects of worship. The leader also monitors the quality of worship and evaluates its impact across the school community.

## 8. Visitors leading worship

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies which are available from the school office. This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. The supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff, who will always be present should Collective Worship be led by a visitor.

It is the responsibility of senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its context and our school's vision. Please refer to LDBS guidance for visitors leading worship.

## 9. CPD and training

Parents, pupils and adults in school are entitled to be led in Christian worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of Collective Worship in a church school context. Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular diocesan led training.

## 10. Monitoring and evaluation

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of Collective Worship and the impact they have on pupils and adults within the school community.

This involves monitoring by school leaders, the Collective Worship leader and governors and takes place both informally and formally. Everyone who leads worship is asked to evaluate, reflecting on how they can improve and develop their practice. We welcome the views of all those who participate in our worship, including pupils, staff and worship leaders. Their views will be gathered termly in a discussion based around the SIAMS IQ3 questions. This feedback plays an essential part in developing the spiritual growth of our school community.

Our link governor for Collective Worship will have the opportunity to observe Collective Worship as part of their annual Governor Visit, and feedback their observations to the whole governing body using the SLS Governor Visit report format. As part of our school community, governors are of course welcome to join our Collective Worship at any point in the school year.

The impact of Collective Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

## 11. Parents and Carers

As a school we recognise that a partnership with parents/carers is essential to help pupils flourish. Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, Collective Worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of Collective Worship, However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all pupils will participate in Collective Worship, and that anyone wishing to withdraw their child will discuss this with the headteacher before making their decision. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw pupils from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

## 12. Evaluation / Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Collective Worship leader in consultation with the Headteacher and ratified every **three years** by the Governing Body.

Complaints Procedure

If anyone in the school community feels that this policy is not being followed then they should raise the matter first with the Headteacher and, if concerns persists, with the Chair of Governors who will facilitate the appropriate action, which may include an investigation. If there is a formal complaint, then the school's complaints procedure will be followed.

Copies of this policy will be available in the staff handbook, from the school office and on the school website.

This policy has been agreed by the Headteacher and the Governing Body.

Headteacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors' signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_