Collective Worship

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Growing as a learning community through Joshua 1:9, we endeavour to seek what is good, treasure what is true, do what is right. Rooted in our Christian understanding of who we are before God, we strive to be fearless advocates of this, dedicated to service and the flourishing of peace.

Based on the policy reproduced by the LDBS March 2026

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

At Monken Hadley our approach to collective worship is deeply rooted in our theologically inspired Christian vision: *"Growing as a learning community through Joshua 1:9, we endeavour to seek what is good, treasure what is true, do what is right."* . Rooted in our Christian understanding of who we are before God, we strive to be fearless advocates of this, dedicated to service and the flourishing of peace. Grounded in this scripture, our worship embodies our commitment to being fearless advocates for truth, goodness, and righteousness. We dedicate ourselves to serving others and nurturing a community where peace and flourishing are central to our shared purpose.

Collective worship is thoughtfully structured and planned to reflect our Christian identity and values. It provides opportunities for all members of our community to explore their place before God, reflect on biblical teachings, and consider how these shape our daily lives. Worship is a time to celebrate, inspire, and unite, encouraging each individual to grow in faith, wisdom, and courage, as modelled in Joshua 1:9: *"Be strong and courageous... for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

Through meaningful acts of worship, we create a sacred space to seek what is good, treasure what is true, and do what is right. Worship not only strengthens our spiritual foundations but also fosters an environment of service, advocacy, and a shared commitment to peace and the flourishing of all in our community. This policy outlines how we intentionally design and deliver worship experiences that live out our vision and support the spiritual growth of every individual within our school.

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.

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 *Resilience, Gratitude, Peace, Joy, Integrity, Humility, Grace, Service and Kindness*

3. Aims of Collective Worship

• 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.

• To reflect the parish tradition of worship, while giving experience over time for pupils to experience the breadth of Anglicanism, including an opportunity for those who are able to participate in the Eucharist.

• 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, Eucharist 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

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, the incumbent of our linked church and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader and governors.

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.

Collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school or key stage. Our school plans systematically, using both long term and short term plans which enables continuity and cohesion. 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, drama, use of IT

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

Our pattern of worship is as follows: whole school worship each day. Our worship consists of 4 parts:

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

7. Collective worship leader

The leader for collective worship is responsible for 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). 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. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

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.

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, parents, and visitors *(explain how these views are gathered).* This feedback plays an essential part in developing the spiritual growth of our school community.

Foundation governors and the worship leader observe and evaluate worship once every term and report back to the whole governing body.

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 a 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.

The school must grant without question any request from a parent to withdraw their child. To enable clear communication, requests are to be made to the headteacher in writing, by email. However, in view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our school, we hope that all pupils will participate in collective worship. This is supported by ensuring that prospective families are fully informed as to what collective worship is and how all present are invited to engage with it and benefit from it. If a pupil is withdrawn from collective worship, parents will have the opportunity to revisit and reconsider this decision.

The right of withdrawal would normally be through the physical withdrawal from the act of worship. Experience suggests that, to avoid misunderstanding, the headteacher will find it helpful to establish with the parent the practical implications of withdrawal. Alternative arrangements should not be used as an opportunity for additional curriculum time, but should ensure that the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural needs of the pupil(s) are attended to. There is no requirement to provide an alternative ‘assembly’. The school will keep a record of all those withdrawn and for how many sessions.