



Tenterden Church of England Junior School

'With God as our companion, we learn, grow and flourish'

Collective Worship Policy

Updated: October 2025

Review due: October 2026

How is this policy a reflection of our distinctive Christian vision?

As a welcoming Church school we aspire to provide care and support for each other and the wider community. Through the practical application of Christian values and a positive growth mind-set our pupils challenge themselves to be independent, inquisitive and knowledgeable; a positive influence on society.

Our Collective Worship policy is designed to support this vision and has been written with input from all stakeholders to aid consistency and fairness.

An Introduction to collective worship in Tenterden C.E. Junior School

As a Church of England school collective worship is the beating heart of our school life. It brings and gives life to all we do. Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a school family.

Collective worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of perseverance, faithfulness, respect and love and celebrates the central role that each pupil and adult have to play in our community.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is 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.

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality. It is supported by all staff.

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.

What is Collective Worship?

Legislation requires schools, including Voluntary Controlled schools, to conduct daily acts of Collective Worship. However, the legislation does not define what is meant by the term 'Collective Worship'.

Collective worship, in recognising the collectivity of all participants, can make no assumption that all have the same beliefs and values. Therefore, collective worship in Church of England schools must be inclusive and invitational of all, to ensure all can be present with integrity.

The legal requirements of collective worship in Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools.

- Be conducted in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deeds of the school and Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- The Governing Body should ensure that all pupils each day engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church
- All acts of worship in Church schools must be Christian in character (based on Biblical teachings)
- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw) must on 'each school day take part in an act of collective worship'.
- If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, then the school must comply. The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from collective worship.

Parental Withdrawal

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, so would welcome the opportunity to discuss this decision with them. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher. Those of non-Christian faith, or non-faith, are encouraged to celebrate and practice their own beliefs within our inclusive school community.

Pupils

A number of pupils are from families who attend Sunday worship, mostly in Anglican churches, and some of these children have Sunday School experience. There are a few children from other faith communities and ethnic minority groups.

Aims and Objectives

Our school worship is central to the life of the school and through reference to our Core Christian Values, contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils, as appropriate to their ages and aptitudes.

- to explore a relationship with God in Jesus Christ.
- to reflect on our Core Christian Values whilst recognising the validity and importance of other Christian denominations, religions and belief systems
- to consider spiritual and moral issues and, through reflection, raise awareness of the ultimate questions of life relating to matters of faith.
- to reflect on their own beliefs.
- to deepen and widen the experience of those of 'faith' and encourage those of 'little or no formal faith' so that they begin to feel for themselves something of what it means to worship.
- to develop an enquiring mind and express and explore their own views openly and honestly through reflection and wondering questions.
- to develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values.
- to foster an awareness of the world around them and a sense of their place within it
- to develop a respect for, and an understanding of, different beliefs.
- to develop a sense of sharing and belonging through different groups of children coming together.
- To have opportunities to live out and explore Biblical teachings.

Achievement of Aims

Organisation

- Takes place daily
- It is all inclusive – it is for all pupils,
- Teaching staff are expected to attend and all other staff and governors are welcome.
- Takes place either in the school hall, classroom or at St. Mildred's Church.
- Opportunities for pupil led reflection or prayer in communal reflection areas around the school and within the classroom.
- Includes celebration in songs, hymns, readings, drama and other creative ways.
- Allows members of the school community to have opportunities to reflect, responding individually or collectively to a statement of belief, prayer, silence or reflection.
- Celebrates the achievements and learning of all pupils.

As a Church of England School, the content of our worship is organised to:

- Observe the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Saints' Days.
- To reflect upon our core Christian values: perseverance, faithfulness, respect and love.
- Use the Bible as a source of knowledge and inspiration for themes and stories.

- Learn and say prayers from a number of sources.
- Allow opportunities to speak personal prayers aloud.
- Sing a wide variety of hymns and songs.
- Experience Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning e.g. cross, crucifix, bread and wine and candles.
- Use Anglican sentences and responses (*e.g The Lord be with you, - and also with you*)

Implementation

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class. Our school plans systematically and cohesively using the 'Fresh Approach to Collective Worship' scheme available on the Canterbury Diocese website. The planning is discussed, and adapted if necessary, in each preceding term by the Churches and Schools Together (CAST) Group including teaching staff and governors from both Tenterden Junior and St. Michael's Primary School and the Rector of both St. Mildred's and St. Michael's. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity. We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include: music, silence, symbolism, drama, and prayer.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community, for example, with music, liturgy and 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 example, discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- **Send** – we share, for example, the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, a final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle.

Expectations of pupils

There is an expectation that all pupils will be involved within worship on a regular basis. This may be opportunities planned ahead of time or unplanned through questioning, asking for volunteers or simply responding to moments of spontaneity.

Pupils are invited to evaluate and reflect on the impact of acts of worship they have joined with. Their voice is integral to improving the structure, content and in shaping future plans for worship.

Pupil worship leaders are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the collective worship leader during to develop their own understanding of worship and to design an act of worship to support the spiritual development of their peers.

Developing worship

Parents, pupils and adults in Tenterden Junior School are entitled to be led in 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.

The leader for collective worship will:

- Ensure that all pupils have access to a daily act of collective worship, therefore meeting statutory requirements.
- Ensure that collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.
- Attend regular training and network meetings with Canterbury Diocese
- Produce and regularly review the collective worship policy to ensure that it remains reflects current practice and thinking.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of collective worship across the school.
- Ensure all stakeholders know what the expectations of worship are when leading, planning and joining worship.
- Join those who are leading worship to provide supportive feedback on how worship could be developed.
- Evaluate the impact of collective worship on the whole school community by gathering pupil and adult voice.
- Signpost staff to a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and resources, to help develop their confidence in leading acts of worship.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited to lead collective worship.
- Meet with and encourage pupil leaders of worship to enable them to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our school regularly evaluates all acts of collective worship and the impact they have on the school and our wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop.

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