St. Paul's C of E VA Primary and Nursery School

Walk On Water

Collective Worship Policy



Date Reviewed: June 2026
Next review date: June 2027

Our School Vision:

To inspire a community which values everyone and their God given potential, encouraging all to flourish, achieve and believe in future possibilities. This is based on our belief that:



WOW – **W**alk **o**n **W**ater
This is a theme which is throughout the bible. In Matthew 14 we read of the miracle of Jesus stilling the wind and the waves. Jesus wanted to spend some time alone in prayer so he told his disciples to go on ahead of him and take the boat to the other side of the lake. In the middle of the night, the disciples were caught in a storm and looked over and saw Jesus walking towards them on the water! The disciples thought they were seeing a ghost. Jesus asked Peter to walk out to him so Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water too. When Peter began looking at the waves instead of Jesus, he began to sink. Jesus saved him. We believe that we can learn from this story and that we too can '**W**alk **o**n **W**ater' - the possibilities are endless.

Our School Values
At St Paul's we want to focus on three key values:



Our School Aims
In order to achieve this over-arching vision and live out these values we have developed the following aims:

- **INSPIRE -** To build a vibrant and inspiring learning environment which promotes curiosity, creativity and enthusiasm.
- **BELONG -** To promote a sense of community where every individual feels happy, safe, respected and valued.
- **ACHIEVE -** To strive for excellence in all areas.
- **FLOURISH -** To allow everyone to flourish and develop their God-given potential.
- **BELIEVE -** To lay a foundation of knowledge, skills and faith so that life can be approached with confidence, resilience and self-belief.

Policy Statement
As a Church school, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos where children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. It is the heartbeat of our school life – a time to gather together, reaffirm our vision and associated values

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 (see spirituality on a page).

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

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs

- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

The 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 schools 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.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school 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

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

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 observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship and use the model of GERS (gather, engage, respond, send to structure our worship):

Gathering

We gather together and greet each other as we come to play a part in this community and prepare to meet God.

Engaging

We engage with the big things and the little things in life and encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible. We listen for God's message for us and consider how we will share God's message.

Responding

We respond to what we have heard and seen together and as individuals. There may be a practical response or opportunity for reflection.

Sending

After special words of blessing, we are then sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world, dismissed with God's blessing.

At St Paul's, 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 St Paul's Church, involving the Vicar of St Paul's Church in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit monthly plus at Easter and Christmas 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.

Reflection and the Practice Opportunities of Prayer:

Worship also takes place outside acts of collective worship and this includes individual opportunities for personal reflection and prayer. Pupils are invited to say a morning prayer of choice is said at the start of the day and school prayers are said before lunchtime and at the end of the day (see below). Circle Time, prayer tables, songs, Godly Play and class prayers offer a variety of opportunities for children and the adults in those classes to learn about, explore and reflect on the Christian faith, their own faith and also their own praises and thanksgivings, needs, hurts and concerns.

A proportion of children and adults are also members of other Christian communities and we seek to reflect those communities in the worship that we offer in school. Children know that many adults in school pray themselves and are able to discuss the place of prayer and worship in their lives together.

Pupils will learn about the Lord's Prayer and its importance in Christian belief and practice.

In addition we have set school prayers:

Lunchtime Prayer
Thank you Lord for the food we eat,
And for the friends we share it with.
Amen.

End of the Day Prayer
God our Father I come to say,
Thank you for your love today.
Thank you for my family,
And all the friends you give to me.
Guard me in the dark of night,
And in the morning send your light.
Amen.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At St Paul's 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. However, having chosen to send their children to St Paul's School, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Planning
Planning for Collective Worship is led by the Headteacher/CW lead and is undertaken in consultation with the incumbent of St Paul's Church. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year and are linked to the school's vision and values. A variety of resources are used including those from the Diocese.
The Headteacher ensures that leaders and visiting speakers receive copies of the long-term plans. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the plans as a basis for developing their own short term plans for individual acts of worship.

Organisation
An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups. Where collective worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering.

The Headteacher and other members of staff together with groups of children take turns to conduct Collective Worship. The local vicar of St Paul's Langleybury takes a weekly Collective worship (post is vacant currently).

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point.

An act of collective worship takes place each day:
Monday: Whole school led by Head Teacher or Worship Group
Tuesday: Whole school led by the Vicar or outside speakers from the Christian community
Wednesday: Whole school singing of hymns
Thursday: Class worship led by class teachers or House worship led by House Captains.
Friday: Whole school celebration 'wow' worship linked to school values led by different members of staff.

We use Friday morning Wow Worship as an opportunity to share children's work and to celebrate their successes in an assembly. These then culminate in an act of Collective Worship linked to the week's value and play an important role in promoting the ethos of the school and its vision.

We invite parents to our class led assemblies to see their children share what they have been learning about. Governors are also welcome to attend acts of worship at any time.

Resources
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. We have a collection of CDs which are used to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. Those leading worship also access professional development opportunities.

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.

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, have access to regular diocesan led training.

Monitoring and Evaluation
We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. We intend to make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead it before asking them to submit short term plans. The

coordinator, foundation governors and others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria. The coordinator and foundation governors report back to the whole Governing Body once per term.

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 year. Collective Worship is drawn up alongside the RE Leader with support from the Diocese and the Parish Priest. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review
This policy will be reviewed every year.

Links to Other Policies:
- Spirituality on One Page