



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

October 2023

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Biennial Review

Vision

Our children know they are blessed and a blessing. We strive to be ambitious for ourselves and each other, have integrity and nurture all.

But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge and in all eagerness and in the love from us that is in you – make sure you excel in this act of kindness too. 2 Corinthians 8:7

‘Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Statement

In Lawford CE Primary School worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school’s vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At Lawford CE Primary School collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (*and other faiths*¹) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.²

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at Lawford CE Primary School draws on guidance from the Church of England³. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities

¹ Collective Worship in a CoFE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

² “To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God”. William Temple (1881-1894)

³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>

and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, “that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, is not relevant. Worship in Lawford CE Primary School Academy should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The governing body school have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

The right of withdrawal

Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply. For example: *a parent may request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.*

Guiding Principles

Collective worship in Lawford CE Primary School aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be part of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.

Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and Layout and Routine:

Definition of Spirituality

Spirituality is an important part of enabling our children to become well regulated and mindful.

At Lawford we believe that spirituality is the building of the inner life of a person (adult or child), giving opportunities for awe, an ability to be still and understand themselves, reflect on the world and to develop an awareness of the common bonds which are greater than themselves.

We offer opportunities to develop spirituality through:

- Forest church and forest school;
- Daily collective worship where big questions are asked and the children explore their role in the world as being blessed and a blessing;
- The use of the reflection garden;
- Prayer Space activities supported by the local churches;
- 'Lawford family' days;
- Enquiry led RE curriculum;
- A curriculum linked through the key concepts of: identity, power, change, care, conflict, and fairness.

Leadership

- Collective worship is led by the headteacher, local clergy and other members of staff. The children also have an opportunity to lead worship through the worship committee or class worship.

Planning

- The cycle of themes and rotas are planned termly. Resources are based on iSingPop, Picture News, the Wild Worship (Rachel Summers) themes relating to Forest church and also the cycle of worship set out by The Diocese of London. These themes are supplemented by key events throughout the year e.g. Black History Month.
- The themes are to be consistently linked to our Christian vision and values and these are also to be a part of our weekly celebration assembly.

Organisation

- The worship table will be dressed in the colours of the church year and have a lit candle placed upon it. The invitation will be 'God is God – **All the time**. All the time – **God is Good**', and the dismissal will be 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ Amen**
- As the school grows we will no longer be able to seat the whole school inside the hall. Therefore with the exception of warm summer and autumn days when the whole school can gather outside the year groups will be split. Initially R, 2, 4 and 6 and 1, 3, and 5. This combination will rotate so that over the year so all classes have had an opportunity to worship with each of the other year groups. A typical week will be, Mondays, whole school/groups x2, Tuesday, key stage worship, Wednesday, whole school/ grouping led by Revd Dom, Thursday, whole school/ grouping – Singing assembly practising songs that reinforce worship themes, Friday, whole school/ groupings – Celebration assembly.
- Forest Church will take place for one class each week. It will be held outside in most weathers – not high winds. Each class should have a Forest Church session at least once a term. These sessions will last about an hour.