



LAWFORD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Collective Worship Policy

Approved December 2023

Reviewed December 2025

Biennial review

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

Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our 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***, and the associated values we derive from them Love, Hope Trust Community and Service. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, 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.

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.

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

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 also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship – gather, engage, respond, send. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

At Lawford CE Primary School, 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 'The Cross Reach' Churches, involving the members of the local church during the interregnum, in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit either St Mary's, Lawford or St Mary's, Mistley for services during the year 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.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

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

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At Lawford CE Primary 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 endeavor 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 Lawford CE Primary 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.

Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice

Leadership

- Worship is led by a range of staff. The headteacher leads worship as do all teachers, visiting speakers and clergy. The cycle is at appendix A.

Planning

The overall themes are planned termly linked to the church year (headteacher's assembly) or themed through values - ISing Pop; or current affairs/ themed days (e.g. Holocaust Memorial Day) -Picture News collective worship resources. Picture books linked to values are used to support biblical texts. The Wild Worship (Rachel Summers) themes relating to Forest church are made available to staff. The leader will adapt any resources to link to the school's specific values or vision as the theme dictates. The children are invited to share their thoughts and understanding. They are invited to reflect on big ideas and join in with prayer towards the end of each act of worship. The assembly usually ends with a song linked to the theme. The music for entry and departure is rotated through the year to expose the children to a range of different musical traditions and classical styles.

Organisation

Collective worship is held daily. Where a member of the local church group is not able to attend this will be held in class. Class worship is also used when the hall is not available e.g. during nativity performances. All children are welcome and only those who fell unable to cope with the hall will not attend (except where they have been withdrawn). The school has purchased 'Pop Box' resources to support those not in worship with the whole school.

Depending on the day and or grouping worship may take place at 0900 or 1445. Typically, the act of worship is about 20 minutes long. The worship table is dressed in the colours of the church year. Once a term each class has 'forest church' - a class based act of worship linked to the weekly theme held in the copse on the school grounds. This session will last for 40 minutes to an hour.

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The headteacher and deputy attend training held at the diocese. They support staff in using the resources provided. The school looks to keep adding to resources over time and add them to SharePoint to create a wide range of resources to meet different needs and styles.

Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. The welcoming member of staff/headteacher/Collective Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices Collective Worship. The purpose is 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.

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.

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.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is reviewed by the SLT and governors through discussions with pupils and staff through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship. The worship committee have recently taken on the responsibility for reflecting on worship and feeding back to the headteacher.

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 two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.