Collective Worship Policy 2025/26

Queen Elizabeth's Church of England School/Academy

Our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our commitment to hope finds its theological roots in the story of Job. **'You will be secure because there is hope' Job 11:18**

'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: worship is central to the life of the 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 Queen Elizabeth's 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 Queen Elizabeth's draws on guidance from the Church of England [3]. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities 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 anytime 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 Queen Elizabeth's School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The trustees 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: in Queen Elizabeth's there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non religious world view. 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 and1988 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. (*This means that a parent may, for example, 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 Queen Elizabeth's 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 all 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 at the centre 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 the example of Jesus

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation: policy for Religious Education (RE) in Queen Elizabeth's Church of England School/Academy - see website
Collective worship in schools - GOV.UK
Collective Worship | The Church of England

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:
· pupils' personal development and wellbeing
· SMSC and PSHE
· staff recruitment, retention and professional development
· care, guidance and support
· behaviour, discipline and exclusions
· working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
· working with the wider community
We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and/or on the school website.

How Collective worship is organised :
DACW (daily act collective worship)
Collective worship- weekly
Leadership

DACW:

- DACW is led by tutors during afternoon registration.
- this is delivered via a powerpoint which supports a half termly theme and Bible teaching.
- DACW is rooted in the theological teaching for the half term.
- this is written by the Lead Practitioner for SIAMS/RE/collective worship and populated by the Worship Committee consisting of students and one of the school's chaplains.
- tutors are supported in delivery through annual Inset and monitoring.drop in's throughout the year.

Weekly collective worship:

- weekly collective worship is led by the Head of Year or SLT.
- chaplains lead worship during key religious dates or periods e.g Advent, Easter etc...
- the Lead Practitioner populates the collective worship rota which includes a theme and Bible teaching for the half term.
- assemblies follow a set format gathering- engagement- responding- sending - support is offered through training with SLT/HOY

Annual collective worship
All Year 9 attend a **Welcome Service** at Wimborne Minster led by senior students and also Reverend Canon Andrew Rowland. QE **carol service** is held at the Minister and is led by students.

Planning: CW is written and planned by the LP for SIAMS/RE/CW. This is supported by the worship committee led by a school chaplain and a number of students. The school year is split into 6 half terms with each one focusing on a specific school value. Each week of the half term is then broken down and allocated a specific topic and Bible teaching which acts as an umbrella for the weekly CW.
The CW calendar reflects the Church year and chaplains are invited to take weekly CW on those weeks. If not the worship is led by the LP to ensure consistency and accuracy of the theological message being explored. DACW is written by the LP and is focused on the Bible teaching of the half term and how this can be applied to the specific weekly topic. In order to create opportunities for engagement a number of different materials are used to support delivery. This could include poetry, stories, clips, music etc... Weekly CW follows the Anglican tradition of gathering, engagement, responding and sending. This enables students to become familiar with the traditions and liturgy of the church.

The school has a welcome liturgy which is read at the beginning of each weekly CW and a candle GIF is on the screen to signify a change. At the end of weekly CW and also on each DACW slide is the school prayer. The body of this remains the same with the last lines changing to reflect them/topic of the week. The LP also writes a slide for each weekly CW which explicitly links the Bible teaching of the half term to the topic. This is then delivered by the person taking the assembly and ensures a consistency for all students regardless of year. Each act of CW whether daily or weekly has built in opportunities for spiritual reflection.
In DACW this is done through carefully created questions which enable students to reflect more deeply. One slide a week is headed as 'spirituality' and follows the self-other-world-beyond approach. As a school we acknowledge that spirituality cannot be taught, however, we are committed to providing multiple opportunities throughout the week for students to be able to engage with spiritual reflection when they are ready.

Organisation: CW takes place for all students once a day. For lower school students this is in pm registration and for post 16 students this is delivered in am registration. It is delivered primarily through tutor time and organised to take account of:

- the different groupings for worship, including whole school/key stage/class worship
- the different settings and places for worship; how the worship space is made special; and how the atmosphere for worship is created using:

the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year,
Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,
ritual and liturgical responses,
how the children are seated,
an outdoor area e.g. spiritual garden, the local church

- at what point in the school day worship is held and the amount of time allocated

Roles and Responsibilities:

- the governing body- to review policies and provide robust accountability of the school in delivering and embedding CW and thorough questioning of the headteacher and LP in meetings.
- the Headteacher and the senior leadership team - to provide training and support to all staff involved in CW and to enable this to be an intrinsic and valued part the school day
- clergy and church partners - to support Queen Elizabeth's school in planning and delivering CW
- teaching and support staff - to deliver QE daily and support the Christian ethos of the school.
- pupils- to engage in CW
- parents and carers - to be aware of the nature and purpose of CW in QE
- visitors

Staff development and training: we ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.
Inset days in Sept includes a focus on delivering DACW
Inset on spirituality delivered Jan 2025

Monitoring and evaluation:

- collective worship is monitored and evaluated through student voice- school council drops ins and discussions and google form surveys
- this evidence is then used to give feedback to the head, trustees and QEST to identify next steps to improve
- monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to a worship committee being formed and playing an active role in deciding the content to be covered

Disseminating the policy: we ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website