

John Keble Church of England Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Rooted together in love, growing without limits...

Believing in the worth of every individual, we are a nurturing, Christian sanctuary of learning, where all can flourish. We aspire for everyone to achieve heights of success, to deepen courage and to experience breadth of creativity, knowing the joy of God's love.

Chair of Governors	Tim Johnston
Head teacher	Catherine Allard
Date	March 2023
Review date	March 2025

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do.

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'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

At John Keble School, worship is central to the life of the school and it 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. Our 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 are very different and collective worship takes account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At John Keble 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 are offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They are offered an understanding of worship by being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflecting upon the teachings of the Bible, as well as liturgy, sacrament and experience the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world are given. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian calendar. Pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

Church of England Guidance

The Collective Worship policy at John Keble School draws on guidance from the Church of England¹. This ensures that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

Legal Requirements

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>

There is a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, except for those in a nursery class. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship is in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. Worship at John Keble School is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions.

The Governing Board at John Keble School has the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship as 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

At John Keble School, 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 our Church of England School is that we are hospitable and inclusive to all in the community we serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of our school, this is made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be choosing our 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 headteacher 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.

Guiding Principles

Collective worship at John Keble 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.
- Make explicit links between Bible stories and the School vision and the Christian values of the school.
- 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

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 on the school website.

Daily Collective worship

We ensure that children have daily collective worship.

Collective worship consists of:

- Mass, led by a priest
- Assemblies, led by the leadership team and the children
- Songs of Praise
- Class worship, led by the staff and children

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.

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.