



The Ark Federation, part of St . Christopher’s Multi Academy Trust Policy for Collective Worship

This policy was reviewed by the Teaching and Learning committee of the Ark Federation on 1st March 2017 and approved by the Local Governing Body on 13th March 2017
The governors will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness annually.

Chair of Governors:

Chairs of the Ethos Groups

All Saints.....

Beer.....

Rationale:

The Education Reform Act 1988 states:

"The educational curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils and of society".

At our schools we seek to be an inclusive community, however, we respect the right of parents under the 1988 Act to be able withdraw their children from Acts of Collective Worship.

Aims:

The aim of this Collective Worship policy is to ensure that our school provides positive opportunities for our pupils and adults to:

- worship God
- reflect on values that are of a Christian nature and to explore their own beliefs
- learn about and to be nurtured in the Christian faith
- develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- engage in and respond to the worship offered
- consider the needs of others and the world around them
- reflect on and nurture our school ethos

Our daily Act of Collective Worship is an important means of developing the spiritual and moral aspects of school life. The daily Act of Worship will be Christian in nature, aiming to provide pupils and adults with an opportunity to worship Christ, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs. It should promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.

The Statutory Duty of Church Schools:

Church Schools in the Diocese must fulfil the following legal requirement for Collective Worship:

Provide a daily Act of Worship for all pupils which will be in accordance with the school’s trust deed.

After consulting with the governing body, the Headteacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging daily Collective Worship.

The daily Act of Collective Worship in a Church School is wholly of a Christian character. The precise nature will also recognise family background, ages and abilities of the pupils. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 states that a single Act of Worship or separate Acts of Worship in groups may be provided.

Parents have the right to request the Headteacher to withdraw their child from the Act of Worship (1998 Education Act). *The School expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the Headteacher followed by written confirmation of withdrawal.*

Staff employed by the school may also withdraw from Acts of Collective Worship. *If the Headteacher exercises this right, he / she maintains the statutory responsibility for Acts of Worship in the School.*

The withdrawal of pupils from Acts of Worship for other school reasons (for example, peripatetic music lessons) is against the law.

Collective Worship in Foundation Schools with a religious character and voluntary schools will be in accordance with the school's trust deed and parents will be informed about this and the times of Collective Acts of Worship will be outlined in the school prospectus. Where provision is not made by a trust deed, the worship should be in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified for the school.

Responsibility for Acts of Worship:

The school governors are responsible for ensuring that the legal requirements are met. The headteacher may lead Acts of Worship and delegate, as appropriate, in consultation with school governors.

Approach and Content:

Collective Worship will draw upon a range of approaches suitable for the age range, including the active participation by the pupils in:

- reading and use of Bible stories
- reflecting on Christian symbols and their meaning
- use of a visual focus for prayer and reflection and making use of traditional prayers and responses
- use of religious artefacts
- extending knowledge of the New Testament, festivals and events of the Christian year and creating opportunities to participate in The Eucharist, when appropriate
- use of silence, poetry, music, singing of hymns (both traditional and contemporary), dance and audio-visual presentations to enrich meaning and message
- the work of the Church today
- the example of great lives given in the service of others
- discussing and modelling how to lead our lives as good citizens in the service of our community and how together and as individuals we can exemplify the Christian ethic
- an appreciation and wonder of the world in which we live

School Collective Worship characteristics may be described as including a range of worthy feelings e.g.

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| * wonder / awe | * reverence | * new beginnings |
| * achievement | * hope | * selflessness / sacrifice |
| * forgiveness | * dedication | * love |
| * reflection | * thankfulness | * respect |
| * compassion | * faithfulness | * fellowship |

The Federation's Collective Act of Worship is, therefore, to give all those engaged in the life of the school the opportunity to enjoy these senses by coming together to share such characteristics in a Christian manner. The format will be a broad range of liturgical styles recognised by the Church of England.

The Federation's Collective Act of Worship is recognised as a focal point in each school for all our concerns, thankfulness and aspirations expressed collectively. It is a daily Act, with a variety of settings, which include whole school and class provision.

The school can make use of the knowledge from the other cultures and faiths within the framework of a "Christian" tradition – such an approach should have regard to the pupils, community and local church.

Planning & Implementation

The school timetable arranges for an Act of Worship each day. Our Collective Acts of Worship are regularly held in the Parish Church at All Saints and the school hall at Beer, with special occasions in the Parish Church.

The Exeter Diocesan Five Year Worship Plan provides a valued structure for our Long Term (overall themes), Medium Term (weekly plans and who is responsible), and Short Term planning (who is leading today's Act of Worship). The Headteacher ensures planning is appropriate with the support of the clergy.

Singing and music are considered important elements within our collective worship. Children and staff who play instruments are encouraged to use their skills to accompany the singing of hymns. The appropriate use of recorded music is encouraged.

External speakers, including 'Open the Book' may be invited and the teacher will need to have regard to the specific training and experience of such speakers and appropriateness for children of primary age. The local clergy offer help in their role throughout the year and attend the family services at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and for Leavers.

The School recognises that there is a difference between Acts of Collective Worship and the *assembly* of pupils. On some occasions, assembly may proceed or follow an Act of Collective Worship. When this happens the transition from assembly to worship will be marked in some suitable way, for instance the lighting of a candle or reflecting on an image, moments of silences and reflection.

The right of withdrawal does not extend to *assemblies*.

Professional Development, Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:

Regular monitoring of our Acts of Worship will take place through the recording of outcomes. This includes a sample of the service(s), photographs; and pupils' and adults' evaluative comments.

The school governors, through the Ethos Group, will review Acts of Worship termly. The governor (s) concerned will ensure that practices are in accordance with school policy, appropriate resources are provided and outcomes are evaluated.

We seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on Collective Worship and to be part of the evaluation process.

Appendix to the Ark Federation Policy for Collective Worship

Additional Guidelines:

1) Sources:

This policy statement reflects the practices within the school and summarises some of the main points outlined in such publications as:

- School Worship - The National Society
- Exeter Diocesan Guidelines and website.

The Exeter Diocesan Website (Schools: Collective Acts of Worship) is a key source for further information.

2) A summary of Guidance:

Collective Worship should reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to God. School worship is different in character to worship amongst groups with beliefs in common, hence the use of the word "collective" rather than "corporate".

Presentations should seek to:

- be set with an appropriate, reflective atmosphere leading towards an important event
eg. music on entering; lighting of a candle to signal the start with words e.g We light this candle to remember Jesus is the light of the world....)
- state a clear worship focus/objective at the outset
eg. "Today in our Act of Worship we thank God for and... ask Him to help us to... (What it is about)
- ensure that speech is clear – everyone can hear and see
- seek everyone's active engagement by extending the child's knowledge, attitudes and skills
eg. thinking is challenged and there is opportunity for reflection based on the clearly stated focus/objective
- provide variety
note: see 5 above – music, dance, drama – and not dependent, for example, on children each reading their own long story
- draw a clear conclusion relating to the original focus/objective
eg. "We have thanked God for ... and asked Him to What it was about.
We close our Act of Worship with our hymn"

Those leading Collective Acts of Worship may wish to ensure key opportunities for Collective Worship are evident:

- Preparation: Symbols / Music on entry;
- Objective: "Today we thank God for...and ask Him to help us....."
- Presentation / drama/ display of relevant materials
- Reading: explicit Christian content / explanation (Jesus / New Testament)
- Prayer and Reflection (use of images / candles)
- Hymn: explicit significance shared
- Plenary: "Today we thanked God for...and asked Him to help us....." ...and ... the thought we take away is

Collective Worship should reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to God.

This is an important area of our school life reflecting the Christian distinctiveness of our School and is undertaken in concert with the school's Religious Education programme (see our scheme of work for RE).