Collective Worship

Approved by:	Standards Committee	**Date:** 09/07/2025
Last reviewed:	June 2026	
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St Meriadoc Church of England School

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

'Let your Light Shine.' Matthew 5:16

'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 St Meriadoc 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 St Meriadoc 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]

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[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)

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at St Meriadoc 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 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 St Meriadoc should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The trustees/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

In St Meriadoc 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.

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

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

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- 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 St Meriadoc 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 know 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.

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

The organisation of Collective Worship should be listed here under the headings

Leadership

Collective Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church Community. The opportunity for children to have different teachers from the school take collective worship, allows them to build bonds, interact and listen to the viewpoints and interpretations of others. Children are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year,

starting with our Worship Committee and pupils from the class when their teacher is taking worship. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship, when appropriate, and are given guidance on our worship policy. Leaders from other faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness and promote respect for other faiths.

Planning

We have a Collective Worship lead who careful plans the yearly cycle of topics and themes which will be covered. This also reflects the cycle of the Church year. This includes ensuring time is spent exploring our school values and related bible stories. World issues and news stories are also included.

We also have a Worship Leaders team which is made up of a group of children who help plan and deliver the Collective Worship on a weekly basis. The leader of the worship will create a welcoming and invitational atmosphere on arrival to engage the children to be conducive to worship. This could be showing an image or playing music linked to the theme or value to promote discussion and questions.

Children should be given time to share ideas in talk partners. This could be when discussing dilemmas or challenges. Encourage the children to draw on their knowledge of previously learnt biblical teachings.

Organisation

Collective Worships at the infant school include all pupils together. At the junior school Collective Worships are organised into upper and lower school groups. On a Friday, at both schools, all children come together to celebrate how children have been 'Shining their lights.' throughout the week.

Collective Worships take place in the hall 4 days of the week and in classrooms on one day.
We regularly visit Camborne Church for our Collective Worship. This is often linked to the Church year and our children attend special Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday and end of term services. Sung worship is included in the collective worship timetable and is entitled 'Praise through Singing'.

We begin every Collective Worship by lightning a candle. The leader will welcome children and staff be saying 'We light this candle to invite us to worship.' We end our time together by saying 'May peace be with you.'

We end the school day by inviting children to join in a prayer.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The headteacher, the senior leadership team and governors monitor the impact of Collective Worship across the school. This is through Collective Worship observations and discussions with stakeholders.
- They ensure all members of staff and children can join in Collective Worship.

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. This includes accessing training offered through the Diocese and through the Flourishing Schools Programme.

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.