

SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Developing Church of England Education



POLICY STATEMENT

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN OUR CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

The daily act of Collective Worship is a legal requirement in all schools. In a Church of England School it should always be Christian worship and it should reflect the traditions of the Church of England, developing learners' understanding of Anglican traditions and practice.

Collective Worship needs to make a major contribution to upholding and supporting the religious character and Christian distinctiveness of a church school. The importance of worship therefore should be central to the life of the school.

Collective Worship should be of the highest quality, engaging all participants and aiming to inspire and affect pupils and staff, enabling spiritual growth. It should provide opportunity for everyone in the school to participate; this includes the chance for pupils to plan and lead worship.

There needs to be opportunities to:

- ✓ sing, pray and give praise and thanksgiving to God;
- ✓ reflect on the attributes of God and on the teachings of Jesus Christ;
- ✓ listen to and learn from The Holy Bible;
- ✓ promote and affirm Christian values;
- ✓ celebrate special times in the Christian Calendar;
- ✓ share each other's joys and challenges;
- ✓ foster respect and unity;
- ✓ deepen spiritual awareness and reflection;
- ✓ experience services of The Eucharist, depending on the tradition of the parish church.

There should be a partnership with the Incumbent / School Chaplain in developing and leading the school's programme of Collective Worship and use made of the parish church for some worship. There needs to be professional development, support and resources to equip staff in leading quality collective worship.

Collective Worship should have an effect upon the thinking and day-to-day actions of the whole school community outside of the act of Collective Worship itself, impacting upon school life and on the daily lives of the members of the school community outside school.

For Collective Worship to be outstanding there should be a clear structure which includes creative and thorough planning and a formal system of evaluation. For this reason it is recommended a Faith Group, involving a wide variety of stakeholders, meets periodically to monitor and evaluate Collective Worship policy and practice. They should have regard for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools through which the impact of Collective Worship on the school community will be inspected.

For Collective Worship to be truly effective and make a full contribution to the Christian distinctiveness of the school, it is an aspiration that the whole school community should be included. In particular, no pupils should be excluded as experiencing daily Collective Worship is their entitlement and an important aspect of being part of a church school.

It is expected that by working in a church school, the staff share the vision and distinctive Christian ethos of the school and readily participate in Collective Worship. Although legally parents have the option of withdrawing their children from Collective Worship, it is expected that by applying to a church school, parents understand the school's distinctive Christian character and recognise that Collective Worship is central to the life of the school, therefore not feeling it necessary to withdraw their child. For these reasons it is vital that the aims of Collective Worship are properly understood by the whole school community and that although the Collective Worship is clearly of a Christian nature, it is inclusive and affirming and therefore seen as non-threatening and relevant for all pupils in our diocesan church schools.