



Kennington CE Academy

'Everyone who uses what he has will get more. He will have much more than he needs. But the one who does not use what he has will have everything taken away from him.'
Parable of the Talents. (Matthew 25:14- 30)

Christian Distinctiveness Policy to include Collective Worship

Document Information	Date/source of Policy	Responsibility
Date of review	September 2024	SLT/ CD Leader
Date of new review	September 2026	SLT/ CD Leader
Source of policy		
Date of Adoption		

Our School Vision

We are an Inclusive Community where Christian values empower us. With God's guidance, we work with pride and passion to create life-long learners who fulfil their potential. If we work together, we will be the very best that we can be: achieving, celebrating and succeeding whilst having fun.

We aim to achieve our School Vision by:

- Reflecting on the teachings of Jesus Christ in our daily lives.
- Seeing all children as individuals, helping them to achieve, celebrate and succeed to reach their potential whilst developing their self-esteem, confidence and independence as God intended.
- Helping children to become caring and responsible citizens.
- Fostering a lasting love of learning through creative teaching.
- Continue to strengthen a close partnership with parents, church, governors and the local community.
- Identifying and developing ways the school supports the development of spirituality within all members of the school community (see Spirituality at Kennington CE Academy document).
- Modelling the school's Christian values including:
 - Love and Care, Forgiveness, Everyone is Important, Using Your Talents and Giving.
- Developing an understanding of the Church of England's Vision for Education values of: Hope, Dignity, Community and Wisdom and how they link to our own school values.

We develop this through a number of ways:

- We teach the Christian Values through Collective Worship themes and across our school curriculum, particularly in RE, Godly Play and PSHE lessons. This includes teaching about the value of prayer for different situations.
- We use Christian value stickers. These are stickers that have been designed for our school with a colour and symbol as well as the value written across them. These stickers are given out at different times throughout the day- particularly playtime and lunchtime. The children receive a sticker when they have demonstrated one of our values. The image of the Christian values stickers are displayed in every room around the school and on the school website. We believe this is a visual way for children to demonstrate their use of the Christian values and to be praised on modelling it in their everyday life.
- We have developed a range of displays, reflection corners and areas around the school. These areas are all developed each term to link to the termly theme and Church celebrations. Children are asked to help develop these boards and are encouraged to add their own prayers or leave their own comments. All display boards, regardless of subject, have a Bible reference linked to the unit of work for that board e.g. a reference for habitats in science.
- Reflection time allows individuals to reflect on their behaviour throughout the school day, supported by a member of staff. During this session, our Christian values are discussed and used to support the child to make the right choices in the future.
- We continue to develop our Worship Warriors. These are a group of children from every class across the school, who have a number of responsibilities throughout the school involving both Collective Worship and supporting other children in their understanding of the Christian values and how to action them. The children have their own action plan and roles within that. They support whole school Collective Worship every day in various ways, this could be by supporting the lead through

saying the gathering/ sending as well as the prayer or by planning and leading their own Collective Worship around the termly theme. They also lead different services held at the Church, such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. They are responsible for checking that school displays are maintained and help to develop the Reflective Garden space. They will collect and maintain pupil voice following on from worship, analysing their findings and sharing next steps with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader. Within class, the Worship Warriors are responsible for supporting staff during in-class worship and supporting the planning of Family Worship. The Worship Warriors also take an important role in planning the Prayer Days over the course of the year. They will suggest ideas, resources and help implement in class or during rotation. We believe in doing this, we give the children a greater responsibility over developing their own faith and the chance to become young church leaders within the school and their community.

- We encourage the children to support others in a number of ways across the school year. Our children are keen to show themselves as courageous advocates as well as taking part in social action projects. They take key roles when working together as a community or to support those in need such as MacMillan's, Red Nose Day and our own Charity Fayre. They also organise and run charity events to raise money for our sponsor child as part of Compassion UK.

Responsibilities of the Christian Distinctiveness Leader

- Write new policies and action plans to support the further development of the school's Christian Distinctiveness, including next step information from SIAMS reports.
- Write the SIAMS documentation and take part in the SIAMS inspection.
- Support all stakeholders in their understanding of the Christian values and how to promote them in school.
- Attend relevant courses or meetings and implement outcomes in school, including running the Aquila Collective Worship and Religious Education hub.
- Maintain the relevant areas on the website with updated policies, documents and evidence of our school's Christian Distinctiveness.
- Maintain the display, reflection corners and areas around school.
- Plan the Collective Worship for each term, taking into account the theme, Church or world celebrations and current situations.
- Invite visitors to lead Collective Worship as well as support RE lessons.
- Maintain and update resources for Collective Worship and RE lessons as well as those needed to support the environmental display of the Christian values.
- Support the development of the Worship Warriors, putting into place an action plan.
- Continue to strengthen the relationship between the school, St Mary's Church and the local community through visits, Collective Worship and special occasions or events.
- Monitor and evaluate Collective Worship, pupil voice and make changes where needed.
- Carry out pupil and parental voice surveys regarding the Christian Distinctiveness (Collective Worship and RE within school), analyse and make changes where required.

- Support staff in implementing the Kent Agreed Syllabus for RE.
- Complete the assessment cycle for RE, evaluating impact and identifying next steps within an open action plan.

Collective Worship:

How is this policy a reflection of our distinctive Christian vision?

Our policy and delivery of Collective Worship ensures that our Christian Vision and Values are at the forefront of every school day, providing time for all to pause, reflect and deepen their own spirituality. Collective Worship is seen as an essential start to the day that is recognised by all. The final reflection allows the children to have a positive and focused mind-set for the rest of the day, that asks them to consider themselves, others and their environment. Planning is varied and inclusive where the whole community has opportunities to contribute, lead and participate. It shows progression over the term and takes into consideration the celebrations of the Christian calendar and events in the world whilst delivering sessions that deepen children's understanding and spirituality based around our Christian values, one covered each term, embedded alongside our Christian narrative. Throughout the term, Collective Worship focuses on range of ideas, faiths and big questions to ensure children understand we are all God's children, whether we are of faith or none. Our Collective Worship sessions aim to help children and staff ensure that we do not simply pay lip service to the Vision and Values, we actively live them. All members of the school community are encouraged daily to put our vision into practise from small acts to brighten someone's day or to thinking of wider world issues.

An Introduction to Collective Worship in Kennington Church of England Academy

As a Church of England school, Collective Worship is the beating heart of our school life. It brings and gives life to all we do. Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a school family.

Collective Worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of Love and Care, Forgiveness, Giving, Everyone is Important and Using your Talents and celebrates the central role that each person has to play in our community. Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found within the Church of England and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. Reference will be made to the beliefs and practices of other faith communities so that the children can develop their respect and understanding of these faiths and cultures, linking directly to our Christian value of Everyone is Important. The daily act of Christian worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff members and stakeholders. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

Each adult and child will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality.

Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that children and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Children and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship, we hope to motivate children and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship offers children, staff and the wider school community the opportunity to grow spiritually. As part of our commitment to the spiritual flourishing of all members of our community, there are opportunities to:

- Gather together to share sacred moments of joy, challenge, grief and love
- Explore the school's distinctive Christian Vision and Values in action
- Reflect on the nature of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still, pray and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Explore Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate significant and special times in the Christian calendar.
- Bring awareness of other faith's significant and special times, building understanding and respect for all.

We aim to ensure that Collective Worship:

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all children and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection whether they are engaged in learning in school or at home.
- b) Enables all children and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist. ^[1]_{SEP}
- c) Helps children and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- d) Enables children as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of Collective Worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.

- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for Collective Worship.

The Anglican Christian Tradition

The following are shared as Christian elements of Collective Worship through invitational and inclusive language:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Experiencing Christian symbols in Worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses – Taizé style
- We may also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:
- Using prayers from Common Worship
- Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship

Implementation

Collective Worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, children, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors (such as Ashford School Assemblies) in consultation with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader. This act of Worship often takes place at the start of the school day and in regular school grouping e.g. whole school or year groups. Our school plans systematically and cohesively from a range of resources, including the Canterbury Diocesan Collective Worship Planning, which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. We use specific themes throughout the year to meet our Christian Vision and Values, at a level in accordance with differing age groups and levels of understanding within the school. This ensures there is a shared understanding of the long- and short-term planning of worship and enables continuity. It is inclusive of all children, and governors and school visitors are invited to join. Teaching staff are expected to attend and all other staff are welcome. It takes place either in the school hall, within classrooms or at St Mary's Church.

Weekly Organisation of Collective Worship

Monday	Led by SLT/ Worship Warriors	Whole School Worship @ 8.50am
Tuesday	Led by SLT/ Worship Warriors	Whole School Worship @ 8.50am
Wednesday	Led by Class Teacher/ Worship Warriors	Whole School Worship @ 8.50am
Thursday	Led by MLT/ Worship Warriors.	Whole School Prayer and Praise @ 8.50am
Friday	Led by SLT/ Worship Warriors	Whole School Celebration @ 8.50am

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include: music, hymns, readings, drama, talk partners and use of IT.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community with music, liturgy and the lighting of three candles
- **Engage** – we share a story, reading or event that is then linked to a Bible reading or story, followed by an activity to engage children and adults with the Christian message
- **Respond** - children discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- **Send** – we share the message of the worship again and ask children and adults to think about how this will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with final prayer, liturgy, music and the blowing out of our special candles.

Expectations of children

In Kennington CE Academy, there is an expectation that all children will be involved within Worship on a regular basis. This may be opportunities that are planned ahead of time (as explained below) or unplanned through I wonder questions, asking for volunteers or simply responding to moments of spontaneity.

Children are invited to evaluate and reflect on the impact of acts of worship they have joined with. Their voice is integral to improving the structure, content and in shaping future plans for worship.

Worship Warriors are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of Worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader during lunchtime or specific afternoons to develop their own understanding of Worship and to design a Worship to support the spiritual development of their peers (including presenting to Downs View Infant School where possible). They are responsible for collecting and analysing pupil voice and sharing the findings with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader. Members of the team are responsible for supporting the maintenance of the reflective areas around school. They support a given class and help model our Christian Vision and Values to new children.

Once a year, each class will present a Family Worship session to parents and other family members as well as the school in order to celebrate a theme day or event that links to the school's Vision and Values. Children are encouraged to read prayers in these sessions that they have written or chosen themselves.

Developing Worship

Parents, children and adults in Kennington CE Academy are entitled to be led in Worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of Collective Worship in a Church School context.

Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular Diocesan led training.

The leader for Collective Worship will:

- Ensure that all pupils have access to a daily act of Collective Worship, therefore meeting statutory requirements.
- Ensure that Collective Worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.
- Attend regular training and network meetings with Canterbury Diocese
- Produce and regularly review the Collective Worship policy to ensure that it remains reflects current practice and thinking.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of Collective Worship across the school.
- Ensure all stakeholders know what the expectations of Worship are when leading, planning and joining Worship.
- Join those who are leading worship to provide supportive feedback on how worship could be developed.
- Evaluate the impact of Collective Worship on the whole school community by gathering pupil and adult voice.
- Signpost staff to a wide range of resources to ensure that Worship is both inspiring and engaging.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and resources, to help develop their confidence in leading acts of Worship.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited to lead Collective Worship.
- Meet with and encourage Worship Warriors to enable them to plan, lead and evaluate acts of Worship.

Visitors leading worship

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This includes discussing the content of any worship with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children, as the supervision of children remains the responsibility of school staff.

It is the responsibility of the Christian Distinctiveness Leader and senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading Collective Worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and our school's vision. They will be supported and monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation process of worship.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our school regularly evaluates all acts of Collective Worship and the impact it has on the school and our wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, children and governors in order to grow and develop. Pupil voice is collected on a weekly basis from across the school and evaluated each term. Collective Worship observations are completed every two weeks, with next steps shared with all.

We also welcome the contributions of parents and children which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis by the Christian Distinctiveness Leader and SLT. These are shared with our staff and governing body and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school.

The impact of Collective Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

Right of Withdrawal:

Worship is regarded as a special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, Collective Worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity.

We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of Collective Worship, so would welcome the opportunity to discuss this decision with them. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

Appendix

See Visitor and Safeguarding Policies

See Spirituality Development at Kennington CE Academy

What is Collective Worship?

Legislation requires schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools, to conduct daily acts of Collective Worship. However, the legislation does not define what is meant by the term 'Collective Worship'.

"... Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'collective worship' rather than 'corporate worship'. (DfE Circular 1/94 para 57)

Corporate worship assumes a shared set of beliefs and values, i.e. a worshipping congregation meeting on a Sunday, where the worship is confessional and evangelistic (to spread the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness).

Collective worship, in recognising the collectivity of all participants, can make no such assumption that all have the same beliefs and values.

Collective Worship should be:

"Appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes."
(DfE Circular 1/94 p.22)

Therefore, collective worship in Church of England schools must be inclusive and invitational of all, to ensure all can be present with integrity.

The legal requirements of collective worship in Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools.

- Be conducted in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deeds of the school and Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- The Governing Body should ensure that **all** pupils **each day** engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church

- Arrangements for Collective Worship, in foundation schools of a religious character, are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consulting with the Headteacher (*DfE Circular 1/94 para 52 & 53*)
- All acts of Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character (based on Biblical teachings)
- **All** registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw) must on 'each school day take part in an act of collective worship'.
- If the parent asks that a child should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, then the school must comply. (*Education Reform Act 1988. s9 (3)*) The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from Collective Worship.