

# **BOTLEY C of E (Controlled) PRIMARY SCHOOL** **POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**



This policy is to be read in conjunction with: School Ethos and Culture, Equal Opportunities, Intercultural and RE policies.

*Matthew 19:14*

*Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'*

## **1.0 RATIONALE:**

The original 'Terms of Union' with the National Society for Anglican schools established the principal that:

*'The Children are to be regularly assembled for the purpose of attending Divine Service in the Parish Church or other place of worship under the Establishment unless such person be assigned for their non-attendance as is satisfactory to the Managers of the School.'*

Therefore worship can take place in church, the school hall, a classroom or any suitable place. Church schools can ensure pupils' entitlement by designating wherever the children are assembled as suitable e.g. the residential centre the children are attending, the coach that takes them there, the hill overlooking the school used at Rogation to view the village etc.).

The 'Terms of Union' allowed parents to withdraw children from worship. This right is established in law through the 1998 Education Act which gives parents the legal right to withdraw their children from **parts of or all of** collective worship, without giving a reason for doing so. Schools must comply with this wish and must ensure a duty of care for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship. Governors must therefore ensure that this is clearly stated in the school prospectus and the school's worship policy document. Collective worship guidance is contained in Circular 1/94.

Current legal requirements for all maintained schools ensures that every child in the school is entitled to an opportunity for a daily act of collective worship.

*'The arrangements for the required collective worship may, in respect of each school day, provide for a single act of worship for all pupils or for separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups.'*

*The School Standards and Framework Act 1998*

Schools should not withdraw pupils from collective worship as it is a breach of their entitlement in law. If there is pressure to withdraw children in order to accommodate for example, peripatetic music lessons, the school must be able to offer collective worship for those pupils at another time in the day. A quiet time on their own or with a couple of other children does not feel like Collective Worship. Withdrawing children is therefore best avoided.

In accordance with our Trust Deeds as a Church of England School all such Acts of Worship will follow the principles of the Anglican Faith and should, we believe, be a time when we encourage all in the school community to explore and reflect on the spiritual and moral dimensions of life.

## **2.0 AIMS:**

Collective Worship at Botley Primary School aims:

- 2.1 To develop:
  - a. social and moral values;
  - b. spiritual awareness;
  - c. knowledge of Christian values, beliefs, celebrations and patterns of worship;
  - d. a thorough understanding of our school heart values;
  - e. awareness of other beliefs, traditions, cultures and values;
  - f. a sense of group identity, of belonging and sharing;
  - g. an understanding of the Bible.
- 2.2 To provide the opportunity:
  - a. to celebrate achievements or special occasions;
  - b. to worship God;
  - c. to share and experience differences;
  - d. to think about others;
  - e. for stillness and reflection and a break from the busy School day;
  - f. to learn how to behave in a large social gathering.

## **3.0 PRINCIPLES:**

Collective Worship at Botley Primary School will:

As worship:

- Should at its simplest create a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us
- Be distinctively Christian
- Use and promote the clearly identified core Christian values of the school
- Have ***Integrity*** as acts of Anglican worship whilst being ***Invitational, Inclusive*** and ***inspirational***
- Be based on Biblical text or themes
- Enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- Be central in importance to the life of our school community, which is part of a wider community that embraces the whole world
- Reflect on human existence
- Use the seasons and festivals of the Christian year
- Develop understanding of Anglican traditions and the practice of the local parish church

For people:

- Develop personal spirituality within the school community through a range of experiences including individual and collective prayer
- Engage pupils and adults with collective worship, making it relevant and transformational to the lives of members of the whole school community
- Celebrate the God given gifts and talents of individuals and the whole school community
- Make a significant contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of members of the school community
- Consider the beliefs and values of others, especially those within the school community
- Raise aspirations of individuals and the school community
- Celebrate of the values and ethos of the School

To comply:

- Reflect the trust deed
- Be clearly outlined in the school prospectus and documentation
- Involve learners and adults in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship
- Be monitored and evaluated for the impact it has on the school community by foundation governors

#### **4.0 PROCEDURES:**

Collective Worship should use the ‘central attributes’ as suggested by the Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses:

**Gathering** Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony.

**Engaging** Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content.

**Responding** Ensuring that there is time and opportunity for individual, group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways.

**Sending** Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas and to conclude the worship.

All staff will be expected to abide by the following practices and procedures.

4.1 Themes explored will be appropriate to pupils whatever their background or personal beliefs, whether Christian or not.

- 4.2 A collective act of worship may provide opportunities to:
- a. focus on a particular issue;
  - b. encourage reflection.
  - c. develop a sense of reverence.
  - d. encourage different responses e.g.
    - prayer
    - singing
    - stillness or thinking time
    - listening to a short passage, poem or story
    - repeating or reciting a response
  - e. evoke those feelings and senses from which worship most naturally arises e.g.
    - sense of beauty
    - feeling of pride
    - sense of awe and wonder
    - sense of pity
    - sense of smallness in the face of the greatness of things
    - sense of grandness in the face of the smallness of things
    - sense of happiness
    - feeling of shared sadness
    - sense of peace
    - sense of thankfulness
    - sense of stillness
  - f. actively participate in acts of worship.
- 4.3 In order to create an atmosphere of calmness prior to the start of Collective Worship:
- a. children will be expected to be quiet when they leave their classrooms and silent on entering the School hall;
  - b. staff are also expected to respect this silence;
  - c. music will be played on entering and leaving the hall;
  - d. disciplinary matters will be separated as far as possible from the Act of Worship. If children do not behave appropriately they will be dealt with quietly so that others are not disturbed. This may mean moving them away from other children and then talking to them after the Act of Worship is over.
- 4.4 An Act of Worship will take place daily in any suitable place. In order to ensure the children gain their entitlement the school can designate wherever the children are assembled as appropriate.
- 4.5 An Act of Worship will take place in church at least once a term.
- 4.6 The right to withdraw pupils from parts or all of Collective Worship is available to all parents. Children who are withdrawn from Collective Worship at the parents' request will be supervised by a teacher or member of the Support Staff. However, this matter should be discussed with the Headteacher as it may be possible to agree that the child could be present during Collective Worship, but not take part in the worship element. Children who are withdrawn will not be made to feel isolated or 'different'.

- 4.7 A variety of methods of presentation will be used to help stimulate and maintain the children’s interest in collective worship e.g. stories, poems, artefacts, movement, drama, films, slides, pictures, discussion etc.
- 4.8 The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Team will ensure records and resources are maintained and will monitor the content and quality of acts of Collective Worship at least once every half term.
- 4.9 Collective Worship will be encouraged through the exploration of a series of themes which all staff will follow.
- 4.10 ‘One off’ acts of Collective Worship will also take place however on different issues e.g. Saints’ Days, school and national events, road safety, charities, stranger danger, rail safety etc. There is also a need for some flexibility in order to respond to the unexpected where appropriate.
- 4.11 Within Worship all children will be invited to participate within prayer.

*Matthew 18:3*

*And he said: ‘Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

The content of this Policy has been fully reviewed and agreed by the School’s Governing Body and the Rector of All Saints’ Church, Botley.

Signed: 

Date: 11.03.2026

*(Chair of the Whole Governing Body)*

Review Date: March 2028

Review Date	Changes made in addition to review and renewal date changes	Changes
24.2.26	Yes	Addition of point ‘d’ in 2.1.