

POLICY DOCUMENT



Stisted
Church of England
Primary Academy

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Status:	APPROVED
Version:	V1.1
Date Approved:	30/06/2025
Approved by:	LGC
Review Frequency:	BIENNIAL
Next Review:	Summer Term 2027

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Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision; We are each unique and beautiful and together we are a masterpiece and the associated values we derive from them Kindness, Connection, Aspiration. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our Academy is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God.
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues.
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs.
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20 which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each academy day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the academy and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church Academies must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the academy premises but all academies are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church, Bluebell Woods) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England academy rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).¹ Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils 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. Pupils 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 pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

- We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.
- We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship; gather, engage, respond, send. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.
- In Stisted Academy, we aim to provide worship spaces which are attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.
- We foster links with All Saints Church, involving the Reverend in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and academy and visit at least four times per year as part of the Christian calendar.
- We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At Stisted Academy we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to Stisted Academy, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice

Leadership

- The Headteacher, all class teachers Whole class, Wellbeing Ambassadors, School Councilors, whole classes, members of the clergy or local church, individual visitors or teams e.g. Christian Youth Outreach CYO, take part in leading daily worship.
- Collective Worship takes place at 10.10am every day for 20 minutes.

Planning

Collective Worship is planned through the year following the Anglican Church year. Themes are selected that focus on God the Father in the Autumn term, God the Son in the Spring term and God the Holy Spirit in the Summer term.

The structure of Collective Worship:

- Welcome and gathering with music, song or candles
- A focal point or stimulus to introduce a theme
- Development of a theme such as telling stories, sharing experiences or performing drama where children are encouraged to respond
- A time of reflection or prayer including a moment of stillness and silence
- Close of worship: A blessing, a song or a thought for the day

- Our pattern for worship here is Gather, Engage, Respond and Send which reflects Anglican tradition
- A range and variety of materials used, include; websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle

Organisation

Collective Worship requires a special and sacred place. This is not just a physical space but a place where the ambience is conducive to reflection and deep thought. It can be the classroom, school hall, local church or outdoors.

Assembly time is 'sacred' in a sense that it is valued by adults and children alike and should be a special uninterrupted time when the children come together to listen, participate and respond.

- It is the responsibility of the leader of the assembly to set the right tone during this time
- and be supported by other adults.
- Supporting adults must bring children to Collective Worship on time and in an appropriate way that reflects the sacred place. Children should not arrive late into the assembly time because this can disturb the ambience.
- Throughout the year Collective worship takes place in All Saints Church in Stisted, in Forest School and in Blue Bell Woods.
- The children enter the hall in their classes and sit crossed legged in their class orders. Year 6's sit on chairs at the back.
- Ritual and liturgical responses - the altar has the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church year. A three wick candle (to represent The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, a cross and bible are placed on the altar. The liturgical responses used are; peace be with you and always with you.
- Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship. Members of CYO lead Collective Worship once every half term and our local vicar leads Collective Worship once a

term. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies, which can be found on our school website. The welcoming Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices of Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed termly by the Headteacher and the Deputy Head through discussions with pupils and staff through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship by the Headteacher.

Collective Worship is monitored by the Headteacher and local Governor, through pupil voice and observations. Opportunities for the Headteacher and Teachers are provided to speak with the Collective Worship Diocesan Lead as well as observing and discussing the delivery of Collective Worship in schools from the Trust.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The headteacher as Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be

reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.