

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION

Collective Worship Policy

In our schools, our Christian vision shapes all we do; our worship creates opportunities for every child and adult to reflect upon living life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Number *SVF034*

Version Number *01*

Issue Date *Mar 26*

Date of Review *Mar 29*



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2 VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Reason for Issue	Date of Issue
01	Initial Issue For Federation	March 2023
02	Review and update	March 2026

3 INTRODUCTION

The following identifies Sodbury Vale Federation and the schools within it policy regarding collective worship, who is responsible and involved and how this is undertaken through the school.

4 RATIONALE

St John's Mead VC and Horton VA Church of England Schools

In our schools, our Christian visions shape all we do and we will aspire to worship that enables 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.

4.1 POLICY STATEMENT

In our schools, worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the schools' visions. 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.

Collective Worship takes account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils. In our schools, 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. It is a place where all can flourish spiritually.

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 and reflection on the Bible. Imaginative use will be made of resources of liturgy, music and art. 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) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

4.2 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. Worship is to be distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions.

The governing body has 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 Executive Headteacher.

4.3 THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

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. In our schools, we consider the shared values we have with other faiths and the background and culture of children. This may include hearing the stories of other faiths in Collective Worship.

As Collective Worship occupies such a central place in the life of a 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 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. On occasions, a parent/carer may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents/carers wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the Executive Headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements.

There will be a discussion of:

- The elements of worship in which the parent/carer would object to the child taking part,
- Other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school (e.g. prayer and reflective areas),
- The practical implications of withdrawal,
- Whether the parent/carer will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much.

Where parents/carers have withdrawn their children from Collective Worship and request religious worship according to their faith or denomination, the governors and Executive Headteacher 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/carer asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school will comply.

5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Collective worship will:

- have a pivotal place in the life of the school,

- support pupils and adults to flourish spiritually,
- be the central vehicle by which the schools' visions are 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 use the school prayer 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. (Horton School),
- 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.

6 DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY AND LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

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 well-being:

- 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 on the school website.

7 HOW COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS ORGANISED

7.1.1 Leadership

- Daily worship is led by the Executive Headteacher, members of staff, a pupil or small group of pupils, a whole class, a member of the clergy or local church, Bible Stories team, I Sing Pop.
- Members of the school community, especially children, are equipped to plan and lead acts of worship

7.1.2 Planning

- The Collective worship lead is the Executive Headteacher.
- The worship for each term is organised to develop an understanding and practical application of the Christian value selected for each term.
- Explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school worship also reflects the cycle of the Church year.
- A pattern for worship is used which reflects Anglican tradition.
- A range and variety of materials are used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
- Opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today's world.
- The Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God is explored.
- Spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured.

7.1.3 Organisation

There are different groupings for worship, including:

- whole school
- key stage
- class worship.

The worship space is made special by creating a silent expectant atmosphere and by using:

- Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point,
- ritual and liturgical responses,
- outdoor areas e.g. spiritual garden,
- the local church.

7.1.4 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.

8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Ethos Committee is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of collective worship through:

- reflections in the values books,

- governor visits,
- pupil voice.

9 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.

Date of last review: March 2026

Headteacher signed:

Date:

Chair of Governors signed:



Date: 30/03/2026