

Upham CE (A) Primary School

Policy for Collective Worship



Approved by Governors – 15 October 2026

Review date – by End October 2029

Upham CE (Aided) Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Upham CE(A) Primary school is committed to offering high quality collective worship. This is an important time where the whole school community comes together and is a key component in how we enable all children and staff to flourish and to 'live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Collective worship is part of the heartbeat of the school and enables us to have conversations about God and belief and encounter faith. Our trust deeds from 1847 describe the purpose of the school '*for promoting the education of the poor in the principles of the Established Church*'. Though the definition of 'poor' does not mean the same as it did in 1847, the principle remains the same, to encourage all children, regardless of context, to be included within our Christian hospitality of the Anglican church, wherever they may be on the journey of faith and belief. Our school vision is based on steering this journey with our Christian values of 'Love' and 'Care' at it's heart. This vision is informed by the prime commandment:



Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it. Love your neighbour as yourself'.

(Matthew 22: 37-39)

Collective Worship and the Law

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that Collective Worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our Collective Worship on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Anglican Christian Church. However, we conduct our Collective Worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school and the ages, aptitude and family backgrounds of the children.

Aims and Objectives of Collective Worship

We aspire for our collective worship to be inclusive, invitational and inspiring, as underpinned by the following aims and objectives:

- Explore our school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, it will reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.

- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

Inclusive, Invitational and Inspirational

Inclusive: Families, children and staff at Upham CE Primary School come from a variety of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds and many pupils will be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time through school. Collective worship is always inclusive of everyone's context and prior experiences and children are given time to reflect, ask questions, consider what they think (which may be to agree or disagree) and develop their own opinions. Language will be used carefully during collective worship, avoiding the assumption that all those present have faith, so that all can reflect on what they think. This contributes to our approach towards spirituality, using four key metaphors to help children think about themselves and the world in different ways. The mirror is held up to help reflect on self (so part of learning to love self). The door is stepped through to meet someone else, to think about them, empathise with their point of view and uniqueness (learn to love others). The window is looked through to see the world beyond, to explore other cultures and people, to think about other lives and have awe and wonder for the world and creation. The flame represents unanswerable questions, the big questions about life, death, why we are here and also faith (learning to love God). These tools are used across the curriculum and in worship - the symbols are used as prompts in presentations, learning tasks and whilst teachers are talking to prompt that we are thinking a certain way.

Invitational: Children, families and staff can expect to encounter worship which is invitational in that there is no compulsion to do something or think a certain way. Children will be encouraged to join in but if they do not, to ensure they act in a way that enables those who do want to. This is especially true during prayer where children may reflect at a personal level or just observe a quiet moment whilst others actively pray. This invitational approach does not mean complex, thought provoking aspects are not explored, just that children's responses may be varied.

Inspiring: Collective worship is about asking questions, many of which cannot be easily answered. Through reflection about themselves and others, worship should encourage children to want to change and develop themselves positively. They may be inspired to find out more, act in a different way, try to influence someone or something about the world or want to speak to someone. Part of the motivation to engage with worship comes from framing content and ideas from aspects of life the children have shared that they care about. These areas provide a gateway to other, deeper thinking and new ideas.

Provision

Collective worship is a prominent, daily act for children. It is usually timed at 10.10am so that it is prioritised at the start of the school day, so messages can be acted upon and utilised but critically not the first thing children experience so their 'learning brains' are warmed up and ready. This also means that any children starting the day in a dysregulated manner (due to needs/ social contexts) have time to settle into the day. This places worship at a 'sweet spot' in the day so that children are able to get the most from this moment in a considered way.

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship which is most frequently a whole school Collective Worship in the hall, though on occasion due to an event, may be a class worship. A focal point is used at the front of the hall which would include elements such as candles, liturgical colours, a cross and bible stories. Lighting of candles help children to recognise the collective nature of all

being together as being a different and significant part of the school day. Music is also used carefully to create an appropriate atmosphere but also to include, invite and inspire. Children will often sing songs of worship which over time will be a balance of hymns, very traditional songs or more contemporary.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and reverential way. Our Collective Worship reflects the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Collective Worship also provides an opportunity to encourage and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school.

Parents are invited to participate in collective worship, some of which take place in the local village church, The Blessed Mary, Upham. These are often highlighted via the weekly newsletter during particular times of the year. Governors' attendance is always welcomed. The newsletter is also used as a key way of sharing aspects of worship and prayer with parents to encourage discussion at home and to develop involvement.

Displays and areas around the school are used to communicate aspects of worship. We aim to embed the values of the Christian faith throughout the school and encourage worship to be something which is done throughout our lives, not just at times when we gather together. We encourage children, if they wish to, to also worship and offer personal prayers at any time and in any place, though the 'thoughtful spaces' created in each class and also outside are useful for this. At key celebration times during the year; Harvest, Christmas and Easter, a collective worship will take place at the Blessed Mary Church, Upham. Families are invited to attend, though are not required to do so. The event is an act of collective worship and will therefore contain elements such as: traditional/ formal and newer liturgy, songs of worship (balance of classical and modern hymns and songs), sharing of prayers including The Lord's Prayer (traditional and modern versions), sharing of bible teachings with application to wider life and wherever possible and a blessing from an available member of clergy. There will also be a broad, overall message for the worship for everyone to take away with them which would link from collective worships previously in school, for example how Jesus' birth at Christmas fulfilled God's promise, as prophesised in the bible. Children will be integral in sharing aspects of the worship with the oldest children from Years 5 & 6 volunteering to take lead roles.

The annual leaver's service is collaboratively planned and delivered entirely by year 6, also in Blessed Mary Church. It is a culmination of children's spiritual development at the school, giving them the opportunity to reflect on their spiritual development through the school.

Our values of love and care for others and the world is used to shape how we plan Collective worship. Overview planning is completed in the context of pupil voice; their views and opinions about the world and the UK are used to help frame themes and enquiries for other material to be 'hung on'. This places worship as a key vehicle in helping the children reflect on the meaning of God's love but also their own love and how this is turned into care for others and our planet. Child voice is also used to drive the most critical time of spiritual reflection and self improvement during Lent.

Prayer as Part of Collective Worship

Prayers are often said and when used done so in an invitational manner for children to join in with, contribute to or say themselves. A respectful approach is created so those children who wish to engage in prayer can do so meaningfully.

Often prayers are said together, the act of being together being the reason to pray. Saying 'The Lord's prayer' is a good example and this is often spoken with British Sign Language to accentuate meaning of key words and promote engagement with the content. Our school prayer, written by the children to our vision and values, is also used collectively at moments of reflection:

Dear Loving God,
Make sure we are patient and understanding and take time to listen.
Help us to be brave, to face new challenges.
Please help us to be grateful for the opportunities we have to grow. Encourage us to use kind words to help others shine.
Give us strength to persevere and keep trying different things by ourselves until we succeed.
Support us to do our best in everything we do to make the most of our time at Upham.
Amen

Prayers may be led by and adults or children or at a more personal level; a soft toy of a Dove is often used to help reinforce the idea of the Holy Spirit being with us.

During key times of the Christian year, classes will write prayers to say in church Collective Worships. These will incorporate ideas from different children and are produced collaboratively which a few volunteers may share on behalf of their class.

Developing Staff Expertise and Knowledge

The headteacher, David Woolley, is responsible for leading the policy, practice and provision for collective worship and ensure staff have a secure understanding in leading collective worship with children, families and staff from all faiths and none. Worship overview planning is produced by the headteacher in order for staff to have a reference point for enquiry, biblical content, themes and liturgy and to support them to deliver worship. Worship is often led by children and adults will support them to contribute meaningfully. Where clergy or parish staff deliver worship, they will also have support from school adults throughout and have access to school resources and planning. Worship will be monitored through a range of different processes including informal and formal observations, observations by clergy and/ or governors and also children, results being fed back constructively to the provider.

Right of Withdrawal

All children are entitled to attend Collective Worship. However, a parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the worship. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from Collective Worship.

Appendix 1. Methodology for Overview Planning for Christian Worship

In accordance with the aims of our trust deeds, through worship we aim to develop knowledge, awareness and understanding of Holy Scripture and the liturgy and teaching of the established church. The structure for the academic year plan will be drawn initially from the seasons and key festivals from the Anglican Church year. From previously gathered children's views, areas of interest and thoughts about the world will be used to shape themes and ideas to ensure they are inviting, engaging and relevant to children. Around this structure, a balance of teachings from Holy Scripture, creeds and prayers will be incorporated. Our school values of 'Love' and 'Care' will be reinforced across the year and to develop understanding of wider Christian values, each half term a different value will be explored for a week, using planning and resources from the Diocese to support delivery. World/ UK events or charitable moments may also be used as a stimuli though care needs to be taken to ensure world/ UK events are appropriate for the age and contexts of the children.

Elements will be drawn from:

Overview of The Christian Calendar	
	Structure of the Year (with Liturgical Colours)
Autumn Term	Creationtide
	Harvest
	All Saints Day
	Remembrance
	Advent
	Christmas
Spring Term	Epiphany
	Lent (Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday)
	Mothering Sunday
	Holy Week (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Day)
Summer Term	Ascension
	Pentecost (Whit Sunday)
	Trinity Sunday

The following table is a summary of key bible teachings from The New and Old Testaments which can be drawn upon. Some of these teachings could be used within thematic areas.

Themes of Bible Teaching			
Love (Matthew 22)	Greatest Commandment Mt22 Good Samaritan 1 Corinthians 13 John 15 Agape, Phileo, Storge, Eros Lazarus Jonathon & David (Philia) Joseph, Cain & Able (lack of Philia) Being built into a spiritual family 1 James 2	Faith / Trust	Abraham Genesis Noah Daniel Ruth –Friendship and Faithfulness James 2 Doubting Thomas John14:6
		Grace	Moses (chosen by God late in life) Leaders/God uses the weak (Exodus)
		Joy	Lord of The Sabbath Mt 12 Mk 2 Lk6
Care (kindness)	Exodus – God Saves/Rescues Mt6 Luke 6 Do not worry	Parables	The Lost Sheep Mt18 Lk15 Rich Young Man Mt19 Mk10 Lk18 Talents Mt25 Lk19
Sacrifice	Jesus Samson		

	Doing God's will – Jonah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel Esther Exodus - Passover		Sower Mk4 Mt13 Lk8 Mustard Seed Mk4 Mt13 Lk13 Rich Fool Lk12 Mt10 Lost Son Lk15
Fruits of the spirit	Galatians	10 Commandments	Exodus
Hope	David & Goliath	Trinity	John 10:29-30
Beatitudes	Matthew 5:3-12 Luke6:20-22	Creation (Genesis)	Creation – Creation/Stewardship Adam and Eve – The Fall/Sin Cain and Abel – Honour God/Giving

Old Testament Teaching		New Testament Teaching	
Book	Character/ stories/ themes	Book	Character/ stories/ themes
Genesis	Creation – Creation/Stewardship	Acts (Various)	Paul – Missionary Journeys
Genesis	Adam and Eve – The Fall/Sin	Romans (Key Verses)	The Gospel – Key Verses/Truths
Genesis	Cain and Abel – Honour God/Giving	1 Cor 12	Family - many parts but one body
Genesis	Noah – Sin/Righteousness/Trust/Faith	1 Cor 13	Love – Faith Hope and Love
Genesis	Abraham – Trust/Faith	Galatians 5	Fruit of the Spirit – Love Peace etc
Genesis	Isaac, Jacob, Esau – Favorites....	Ephesians 6	Amour of God – Helmet, Shield etc
Genesis	Joseph – God works for good	Philippians 2	Jesus – example/attitude....humble
Exodus	Moses – Leaders/God uses the weak	Colossians 3	Holy Living
Exodus	Plagues – God Warns/Judges	James 2	Faith and Action
Exodus	Passover – Sacrifice	1 Peter 2	Being built into a spiritual family
Exodus	Exodus – God Saves/Rescues	Revelation 21	Heaven
Exodus	Israel Wanderings - Disobedience	The Gospels	Key Bible Stories
Exodus	10 Commandments – God's Rules	Mt 22 Mk 12	Love – Greatest Commandment
Joshua	Joshua – War/Peace	Lk 10 Mt 22 Mk 12	Love – Good Samaritan
Judges	Gideon, Samson, Deborah - Various	John 15	Love – Agape, Phileo, Storge, Eros
Ruth	Ruth –Friendship and Faithfulness	Mt 6 Luke 12	Care/Kindness ..Do not worry
1 Samuel	Samuel – Listening/God Calls	Mt 5 Luke 6	The Beatitudes
1 Samuel	David and Goliath – Courage	Mt 7 Luke 6	The wise and foolish builders
1 Samuel	Saul, Jonathan, David - Friendship	Mt12 Mk2 Lk6	Lord of the Sabbath
2 Samuel	David – A man after God's Heart	Mt14 Mk6 Lk9 Jn6	Feeding of the 5000
1 Kings	Solomon – Wisdom and Worldliness	Mt 18 Lk 15	The Parables of the Lost Sheep
1 Kings	Elijah and Elisha – Prophets Warning	Mt 19 Mk10 Lk18	The Rich Young Man
Nehemiah	Nehemiah - Leadership	Mt 25 Lk19	The Parable of the Talents
Esther	Esther – 'for such a time as this'	Mk1 Mt4 Lk5 Jn1	The Calling of the first disciples
Job	Job - suffering	Mk2 Lk 5	The Healing of the Paralytic
Proverbs	Solomon - Wisdom	Mk4 Mt13 Lk8	The Parable of the Sower
Isaiah	Isaiah – Prophecy and Jesus	Mk4 Mt13 Lk13	The Parable of the Mustard Seed
Daniel	Daniel – Trust, Courage, Idolatry	Lk6 Mt 5	Love for Enemies
Jonah	Jonah – Obedience, Speaking out	Lk11 Mt6	Jesus teaching on Prayer The LP
		Lk12 Mt10	The parable of the Rich fool
		Lk15	The parable of the lost son
		John 2	Jesus changes water into wine
		John 3	Jesus and Nicodemus
		John 6	Jesus walks on water
		John 11	The death of Lazarus
		John 14	Doubting Thomas John 14v6
		John	Miracles
		John	The I AM sayings
		John 10:29-30	Jesus explaining The Trinity of The Father, Son and Holy Spirit