Harbour Schools Partnership

A guiding light for education

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

St Martin's C of E Primary and Nursery School

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NB. 'Trustees' means the Directors referred to in the Trust's Articles of Association

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1. HISTORY OF MOST RECENT POLICY CHANGES

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of change E.g TU request, change in legislation

2. SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

2.1 In our school, our Christan vision shapes all we do.

2.2 Our vision statement is: Being the best we can be for ourselves, others and God's world

The structure and planning of collective worship are central to living out our theologically rooted Christian vision of *"being the best we can be for ourselves, others and God's world"* (John 10:10). Through weekly whole-school worship based on our vision, values, Christian festivals and significant celebrations, pupils are encouraged to reflect on what it means to live life in all its fullness. Sung worship provides opportunities for praise, joy and shared spiritual expression, while Picture News sessions help pupils consider current national and global events through the lens of Christian values, inspiring them to care for others and God's world. Class worship enables deeper reflection on the themes explored in collective worship, helping pupils make meaningful connections to their daily lives. Celebration assemblies recognise and affirm children who demonstrate our school values and SHINE principles, encouraging everyone to grow into the best version of themselves and contribute positively to the school community and wider world.

2.2 Collective worship in a church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10), living out the Church of England's Vision for Education (2016). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, developing community and understanding of living well together.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 At St Martin's, collective worship is central to the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school. It is well planned so that the whole school family gathers together daily and is engaged on a journey of discovery and spiritual development, exploring the teachings of Jesus

and the Bible. Collective worship strengthens and supports our school's identity and reaffirms our Christian vision (and associated values of kindness, hope, faith, grace, love and mercy).

3.2 For Christians, worship in church is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different, and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

3.3 At St Martin's 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.

3.4 Through collective worship, pupils and adults 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, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament, and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. 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[1]) calendar. Pupils and adults will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.[2] We have therefore considered what spirituality and spiritual development means to us as a school and have our own agreed definition and language of spirituality. We discuss spirituality through the image of our spirituality rings, with ourselves at the centre, then others, the wider world and then God. This enhances and enriches collective worship and individuals' spiritual development.

4. CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUIDANCE

4.1 The collective worship policy at St Martin's draws on guidance from the Church of England[3]. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils and adults to flourish. Leaders and governance should ensure that 'collective worship is the unique heartbeat of a Church school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations with God, both as individuals and together.'

5. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools and academies 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. In other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a

[1] Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This should be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

[2] "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God". William Temple (1881-1894)

[3] https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship; https://www.nse.org.uk/curriculum-and-inclusion/collective-worship

community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is **not** relevant. Worship in St Martin's should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

5.2 The Local Governing Body of the school are tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship in enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, in consultation with the headteacher. They also have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework, school policy, local and national guidance.

5.3 They have responsibility to ensure that:

- Collective worship reflects the schools Anglican/Methodist foundation and enables the spiritual flourishing of those in the school community
- The school has a regular and meaningful relationship with the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) accessing expertise and support for collective worship, as well as effective regular partnership with the parish/local church

5.4 Additionally, the trustees/governing body of the school consider the SIAMS sub-questions from IQ3:

a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
b) How do partnerships with the DBE, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?
c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?
d) In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?
e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

6. THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

6.1 At St Martin's, we recognise that some children and families are not Christians and are members of another faith or hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that we are invitational and inclusive to all in the community we serve. Collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of all church schools, and the Christian foundation and vision of the school shapes worship and the spirituality in the school. All are warmly welcomed to be part of daily collective worship as part of the school community.

6.2 The 1944, 1988 and 1998 Education Acts state that parents/carers have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

6.3 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 headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent/carer would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as 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

6.4 Where parents/carers have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher 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

6.5 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 must comply. *(This means that a parent/carer may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)*

7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

6.1 Collective worship at St Martin's aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school community.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth and development through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Be central in the life of the school and is shaped by the school's vision and the Anglican foundation of the school.
- Provide opportunities for pupils and adults to be inspired by the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world.
- 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 non-religious beliefs 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 appreciating that Christians worship in different ways.
- Help pupils to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church's 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 pupils the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well-known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all pupils 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 if it supports their own spiritual development.

- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the diverse work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY AND LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES & DOCUMENTATION

This policy is based on the Trust's Collective Worship Model Policy and has been adapted to reflect the school's Christian vision, values and current collective worship practice. In developing the policy, account was taken of Church of England guidance, SIAMS expectations and the school's existing worship provision. The policy has been reviewed by senior leaders and the RE Leader and is subject to approval by the Governing Body. Stakeholder feedback gathered through ongoing monitoring and evaluation will inform future revisions.

8.1 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 wellbeing
- Spiritual development, SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents and carers
- Working with the wider community

8.1 We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

9. HOW COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS ORGANISED

Daily acts of collective worship at St Martin's are organised in the following ways. However, there are occasions where the order of the worships may change and 3-4 times each term we have a collective worship lead by the ICE Team.

Monday – Whole School Collective worship (led by Rev Jon or Senior Leaders)
Tuesday – Sung worship (alternately whole school and class based)
Wednesday – Picture News
Thursday – Class worship (linked to the whole school collective worship)
Friday – Celebration Worship

9.1 Leadership

9.1.1 Member of staff responsible for collective worship is Nathan Talbot (RE Lead and Class teacher)
- Worship is led by the Headteacher, other senior leaders or Rev Jon Holder (Cranbrook Church) and weekly prayers are written and read by children. The ICE Team also lead worship approximately 10 times per year.

9.2 Planning

Collective worship is carefully planned by the RE Leader, who produces a termly programme ensuring breadth, progression and explicit links to biblical teaching, the Church's year and the school's Christian vision of '*being the best we can be for ourselves, others and God's world*' (John 10:10).

Worship themes reflect Christian values, significant religious festivals, national and global events, and opportunities for spiritual development, with Picture News providing a contemporary context through which pupils explore issues affecting themselves, others and God's world.

Pupils play an active role in shaping and leading worship; nominated children and classes write and lead weekly prayers, while the pupil prayer group gathers prayers from across the school through the prayer box and creates a half-termly prayer that reflects the hopes, concerns and thanksgivings of the school community.

Worship follows a recognisable Anglican pattern of gathering, engaging, responding and sending, creating opportunities for prayer, stillness, reflection and shared celebration.

The lighting of a candle provides a focal point for prayer and reflection, while Bible stories and teachings are explicitly linked to the school's values and SHINE principles, helping pupils understand how Christian beliefs influence daily life.

Worship throughout the year explores key aspects of Christian faith, including the Trinitarian nature of God, through the celebration of major Christian festivals and special services.

A wide range of high-quality resources, including scripture, stories, music, song, artwork, film clips, artefacts and current affairs materials, enrich worship and support engagement for all learners. Through opportunities for prayer, reflection, creativity, music and discussion, collective worship nurtures spiritual growth and enables both children and adults to explore faith in today's world. Planning is supported by high-quality diocesan and national resources, alongside professional development opportunities that ensure worship remains meaningful, inclusive and deeply rooted in the school's Christian vision.

9.3 Organisation

Collective worship is a central part of school life, bringing together more than 420 pupils and staff in the school hall two to three times each week. As the hall is also used as Cranbrook Church, it provides a distinctly Christian environment that strengthens the school's connection with the local worshipping community and reinforces its Christian vision. Daily acts of worship, lasting approximately 20 to 30 minutes, create regular opportunities for the whole school community to gather, reflect, pray and celebrate together. This shared experience fosters a strong sense of belonging and collective identity, enabling pupils and adults to explore what it means to be the best they can be for themselves, others and God's world. Through engaging and inclusive worship, all members of the community are encouraged to reflect on Christian values, deepen their spiritual understanding and consider how faith can inspire positive action in their everyday lives.

9.4 Role & Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- Ensure that collective worship reflects the school's Christian vision and complies with statutory requirements.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of collective worship as part of the school's Christian distinctiveness.
- Support leaders in providing high-quality worship experiences and access to appropriate resources and training.

- Encourage strong links between the school, church and wider community.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- Champion and model the school's Christian vision and values through collective worship.
- Ensure that collective worship is inclusive, engaging and accessible to all members of the school community.
- Work with the RE Leader, clergy and church partners to plan, monitor and evaluate worship.
- Support and empower pupils and staff to participate in the planning and leadership of worship.
- Ensure appropriate professional development opportunities are available for staff.

Clergy and Church Partners

- Support the planning and delivery of collective worship, bringing theological insight and knowledge of Christian practice.
- Help pupils and staff develop their understanding of Christian faith, worship and the Anglican tradition.
- Strengthen links between the school, church and wider community through regular involvement in worship and special services.
- Contribute to the celebration of key Christian festivals and significant events within the Church's year.

Teaching and Support Staff

- Actively participate in and support collective worship.
- Model the school's Christian values and vision in their daily interactions.
- Encourage pupil engagement, reflection, prayer and discussion.
- Support pupils in planning, leading and evaluating acts of worship.
- Contribute ideas and resources to enrich worship experiences.

Pupils

- Participate respectfully and thoughtfully in acts of collective worship.
- Contribute to the planning, leadership and evaluation of worship opportunities.
- Write and lead prayers, reflections and presentations where appropriate.
- Demonstrate the school's values and vision in their actions and relationships.
- Share ideas through pupil groups, including the prayer group and worship leaders.

Parents and Carers

- Support the Christian vision and values of the school.
- Encourage children to reflect on themes explored through collective worship.
- Engage with opportunities to celebrate and share in the life of the school community.
- Respect the distinctive Christian character of the school and the role of collective worship within it.

Visitors

- Respect and uphold the school's Christian vision, values and worship expectations when working with pupils.
- Contribute positively to collective worship where invited, ensuring that content is appropriate and inclusive.
- Support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through their involvement in school life.
- Work in partnership with school leaders to enrich pupils' experiences and understanding of faith, values and the wider world.

9.5 Staff Development & Training

9.5.1 We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Support and training should also be made available to partners from the local church who lead worship.

9.5.2 The school's named lead for collective worship accesses updates and training through the optional annual training offered by the diocesan education team and through the termly diocesan update meetings.

9.6 Monitoring and evaluation

Collective worship is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that it remains meaningful, inclusive and firmly rooted in the school's Christian vision of *'being the best we can be for ourselves, others and God's world'* (John 10:10). The RE Leader, senior leaders and the Foundation Governor work collaboratively to monitor the quality, effectiveness and impact of collective worship through observations, learning walks, discussions with pupils and staff, and reviews of planning.
Particular attention is given to how worship promotes spiritual development, reflects Anglican tradition, develops understanding of Christian beliefs and values, and enables pupils to make connections between faith and everyday life.
Pupil voice is a significant aspect of this process, with the nominated prayer group providing regular feedback on worship themes, prayer opportunities and the impact of worship on the school community.
Findings from monitoring and evaluation are used to celebrate strengths, identify areas for development and inform future planning, ensuring that collective worship continues to support the flourishing of all members of the school community

10. DISSEMINATING AND REVIEWING THE POLICY

10.1 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. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if there is a significant change to the current legislation or guidance.