



St Edward's
Church of England
Academy

Collective Worship Policy

Approved by Trustees
Last reviewed on: February 2023
Next review due: February 2025
Non-Statutory Policy

RECOGNISE • ENCOURAGE • STRIVE • PREPARE • EMPATHISE • CHRISTIAN • TEAMWORK



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THE VISION FOR EDUCATION WITHIN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

There are fundamental reasons, rooted in the Bible, which have motivated centuries of Christian involvement in schooling in this country and around the world. The God of all creation is concerned with everything related to education.

There is a fresh articulation of the Church of England's vision for education as we meet the challenges and take the opportunities offered by the present situation. The vision is not simply for Church schools but, recognising the Church's involvement in education over many centuries, the Church of England seeks to promote educational excellence everywhere, for everyone. In Church schools like St Edward's Church of England Academy, the deeply Christian foundation for this vision will be seen explicitly in teaching and learning both in RE and across the curriculum, and also in the authentically Christian worship and ethos. The Church's vision for education can be expressed and promoted as one of human flourishing that inspires what the school is and does.

The vision is deeply Christian with the promise by Jesus of 'life in all its fullness' at its heart. This vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, within a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate our vision for education:

- Wisdom
- Hope
- Community
- Dignity

The vision, in line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, is for the common good of the whole community and its environment, whether national, regional or local. It is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences, and the forming of new settlements in order to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.



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ST EDWARD'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY VISION, ETHOS AND VALUES

The Vision for Education at our Academy

At St Edward's Church of England Academy, we are commissioned to celebrate and support the talents and potential of all in our community (Matthew 28: 18-12). In our Academy, we are all journeying together in order to learn through faith, grow through hope and achieve through love (Corinthians 13:13), allowing all to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

We are an avowedly inclusive community where all are welcomed, supported and celebrated for all they are and for all they do. Our Academy is a place of and a space for flourishing and fulfilment because here...

...we are 10:10 people.

The ethos and values of St Edward's Church of England Academy are based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and underpin everything that we are and everything that we do, which is encompassed in the word 'RESPECT'.

Each letter links to the Academy motto – *Learn for Life*.

'Learn for Life'

- Recognise and Encourage everyone's potential, individual skills and talents
- Strive to be the best we can be
- Prepare for the challenges of life
- Empathise – promoting the values of respect, kindness, compassion, fairness, forgiveness, love, honesty and trust
- Christian – a community where we learn from the teachings of Jesus so that we can contribute to the family of St Edward's and beyond
- Teamwork – an environment where we work together so we can all achieve our potential



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Collective Worship

As a Church of England Academy worship is central to our existence.

Worship is...

'Giving honour and reverence to a supreme being. Christian worship is concerned with bringing praise, prayer, thanksgiving and adoration to God.

It is an activity of response: in words, action and thoughts'.

Mission Statement

Collective worship plays a central part in the life of St Edwards Church of England Academy. As an expression of the Christian ethos and spiritual life of the school it offers the whole school community opportunities to experience/participate in/take responsibility for the living expression of Christian worship, valued and honoured through the school's Anglican Foundation. This is set within the context of the corporate community of our school and its historic partnership with St Edwards Church, Leek. We affirm every individual's unique contribution, regardless of age, gender, ability, background or religion.

Legal requirements:

Trust Deed

Our daily act of collective worship is in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school. This requires worship to be consistent with the faith, principles and practice of the Church of England.

DfE guidance

We also take into account DfES legislation. The following link will take you to the current legislation. <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collective-worship-in-schools>



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1988 Education Act

We also take into account the 1988 Education that states,

‘... all pupils in attendance at a maintained school **shall in each school day** take part in an act of collective worship’

And, that this should be,

‘... mainly of a broadly Christian character’

Worship and/or Assemblies

Some schools have a celebration assembly in order to celebrate pupil’s achievements. Care should be taken that this is still regarded as an act of worship through saying prayer at the end of the celebration to thank God for pupil’s achievements and successes. In order for worship to be worship it must include a prayer.

Here at St Edward’s Church of England Academy we have an Academy prayer:

**Let us place ourselves in the
presence of the Lord**



I can because I am

I am here to listen

Because I can listen I can learn

Because I can learn I can lead

Because I can lead I can love

Because I can love I can live life to the full

Because I am a 10:10 person



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Section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist School (SIAMS)

All church schools, whether they are Voluntary Aided (VA) or Voluntary Controlled (VC), will be inspected on collective worship and the impact this has on the whole school community. Here at St Edward's Church of England Academy this inspection will evaluate the school's collective worship on the following:

Worship is invitational, offering everyone the opportunity to engage, whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity. All who wish to are actively engaged in worship, whether they are engaged in learning in school or at home. Prayer is a natural and valued part of the culture of the school. It is not compulsory or forced. All who wish to will have regular opportunities to pray and reflect. Pupils talk about the value of prayer and reflection both in formal and informal contexts and how being still and reflective in their own lives can be helpful. As appropriate to context, pupils speak of their personal use of prayer and reflection. Pupils recognise that worship provides meaningful opportunities to contribute to their spiritual development.

Statutory obligations are met in context

Worship is creative and pupils talk about how it often inspires them to action. It has variety, for example, involving music and liturgy, silence, story and reflection and, where appropriate, the Eucharist. Staff and pupils talk about how worship causes them to reflect on their behaviour, values and attitudes. Worship enables pupils to develop an appreciation of the variety of elements and styles found in the diversity of liturgical and other traditions of the worldwide Anglican/Methodist Church and its diversity of expression within the UK. Worship provokes thoughtful and respectful responses from pupils. They are aware of the central importance of the Eucharist/Communion to Christian worship.

Planning for collective worship ensures that pupils have opportunities to encounter the teachings of Jesus and explore the relevance of his teaching in today's world. Pupils talk about the meaning of the different elements of Christian worship including belief in the trinitarian nature of God.

An effective shared approach to planning allows appropriate opportunities for pupils to gather (either face to face or online), engage and respond. The planning, monitoring, and evaluation of collective worship involves a range of members of the community. Pupils are



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actively involved in this process, often taking a consultative role. Most leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.

The right of withdrawal – see appendix 1

We recognize the right of withdrawal from worship for pupils at the request of parents and staff, but encourage discussion with the relevant individuals to ensure that there is understanding of the aims and objectives of worship and strategies for minimising the disruption caused by any withdrawals

Aims of worship

The gathering of pupils each day incorporates collective worship. Worship will be:

- Appropriate to the age, aptitude and family background of pupils
- Provided in a variety of settings, groupings and timings, with a variety of leaders e.g.
 - House Tutor Time
 - Key Stage Assemblies
 - House Assemblies
 - Whole Academy Assemblies
 - Visits from our local clergy
 - Visits to our local Churches
 - Visits to Cathedrals
 - Camps and overnight retreats

Worship should provide opportunities to:

- Enhance the spiritual development and response of pupils
- Foster reflection, meditation, prayer and silence
- Create an atmosphere in which God is both normal and natural
- Foster a reverential attitude to God
- Foster Empathy and imagination, enabling pupils to participate in a variety of ways
- Actively involve pupils in the delivery of worship in creative and imaginative ways (reading, poetry, drama, dance, quiet/silent reflection, prayer, singing)
- Explore and enjoy praise, prayer and the rituals of Christianity (the Anglican tradition in particular)
- Affirm the Christian faith and central Christian status of Jesus as the Son of God



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- Affirm the Christian belief in the Trinity and explore the meaning of each person of Trinity
- Explore Eucharistic worship within the Anglican tradition (you need to explain how this is achieved e.g. taught Eucharist, observation of it, taking part but receiving a blessing, taught RE lessons etc.)
- Enable pupils to reflect on the experiences of Christian adherents
- Foster and value a search for a faith to live by
- Explore the schools/academies Christian values to deepen pupils understanding of them and how they relate to the school/academy, local community and wider world
- Learn about and reflect upon Christian teaching, Biblical material and Christian festivals, in a way that relates to the pupil's experience and to living together in community
- Worship together rather than apart
- Provide an evocative setting for worship that fosters spiritual growth and reflection
- Experience a broad spectrum of Christian tradition (various expressions of worship)
- Inspire pupils to explore further their own faith and tradition
- Encourage pupils and staff to plan, participate and lead in worship
- Develop a sense of community and shared values
- Consider the needs of others and to foster charitable works
- Celebrate the highest achievements of the human spirit
- Celebrate achievements of members of the school in every aspect of school life
- Foster a thought provoking atmosphere allowing for spiritual reflection and response
- Make regular use of local church buildings for worship

Other opportunities that worship can offer are:

- Celebrating the beliefs and cultures of others particular those represented in our school
- Celebrate of achievements of members of the school community
- Reinforce school expectations, good behavior and school routines
- Share local school and community information



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Management of worship

Ultimately the responsibility for collective worship lies with the Principal and the Chair of Trustees. However, the role of planning, resourcing, managing and evaluating worship had been delegated to the Faculty Leader for RE. In addition, all teachers in a church school are 'spiritual leaders' and have a responsibility to help pupils develop spiritual awareness.

Within the Academy, the Leader of Pupil Engagement and House Leaders, manage collective worship during Assembly time providing opportunities for staff and pupils to lead and share worship focused on the weekly themes and Academy RESPECT ethos and values.

Resourcing worship

Worship should be adequately resourced to ensure that it is regarded as an important part of school life. Pupils are encouraged and provided opportunities to plan acts of worship (whole school, year group, key stage or House group), so that they have ownership of it. A calendar of themes and responsibilities is produced and held within the Academy each year.

Worship themes and current practice

The worship themes for each week are based around a number of resources, including Anglican Lectionary, themes based on the schools Christian values and liaison with the Diocese of Lichfield.

Approved and signed off by

Principal

Chair of Trustees



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Appendix 1

Guidance for schools and academies on the right to withdrawal from Religious Education and Collective Worship March 2017

Collective Worship

The **1944 Education Act** gave the right to withdraw from RE or collective worship to parents who wished their children to receive different form of RE or worship. This right is also confirmed in section 71 of the **School Standards and Framework Act 1998**. In the case of collective worship, the government guidance document is **Circular 1/94: religious Education and Collective Worship**.

Collective worship in all Church of England schools and academies should honour the school's trust deed and Christian foundations. Worship is central to school life, offering an opportunity for the whole school community to explore the distinctive beliefs and narrative that underpins the school's Anglican foundations and distinctive Christian character. Worship in partnership with the staff and the local parish church.

Our Church of England schools should strive to ensure they are consistently excellent, distinctive and inclusive and that the whole curriculum is underpinned by Christian values. Religious education is an important part of the curriculum in all Church of England schools and academies. Its nature, objectives and content should be shared with parents each term to ensure that parents are able recognize that RE is of educational value to all pupils, whatever their belief background. In the same way, collective worship should lie at the heart of school life, proclaiming its distinctive character and faith in a way that is relevant, inclusive and that leads each pupil a little further in their spiritual journey. In this way, the likelihood for parental request for withdrawal should be reduced. However, when they are made they must be handled accordingly to the legal guidance, while there is scope for a little realism and adaptability in order to ensure the best for every pupil.

In many of our schools within the Diocese of Lichfield, there is a large percentage of Children whose families are members of another faith. It is the purpose and the duty of every church school to be distinctive as a Church of England School. In each school, it is part of the mission of the church to welcome those of other faiths and no faith. In most cases, parents will have chosen the school for their child, making specific choice of the



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school because of the ethos and education it offers. In a small number of cases, parents of other faiths will have been offered a place at a church school because no other school has a place for their child within reasonable catchment area. The right to withdraw from collective worship should be at the investigation of the parents or pupils above the age of 16.

The right of withdrawal from collective worship

The right to withdrawal from collective worship would normally be exercised through the physical withdrawal of the pupil from the place where the act of worship is taking place. Indeed the school could insist that this is the way the right is to be implemented. If, however, both the parent and the school agree that the pupil should be allowed to remain physically present during the collective worship but not take part in it, nothing in the law prevents this.

Experience suggests that, to avoid misunderstanding, a Principal will find it helpful to establish with any parent wanting to exercise the right to withdrawal:

- The element of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The practical implication of withdrawals: and
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much.

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship accordingly to a particular faith or denomination, the Trustees and Principal will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school; and
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with overall purpose of the school curriculum as set out in **Section 1 of the 1988 Education Act (Circular 1/94)**