# Sarum St Paul's Church of England (VA) Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

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| Policy Written: | October 2018 |
| Policy Reviewed: | October 2026 |
| Next Review Date: | October 2029 (unless changes to curriculum or policy) |

**Key Personnel:**

| **Role** | **Name** |
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| **Headteacher** | Hannah Easthope |
| **Collective Worship Lead** | Hannah Easthope |

## Our Vision

At Sarum St Paul's Church of England Primary School, our vision of "Rooted in Love, Growing Together", inspired by St Paul's prayer to the Christians in Ephesus (Ephesians 3:17–18), shapes every aspect of school life. Rooted and grounded in love, we seek to ensure that all members of our community are able to grow and flourish. Our values of Love, Community, Courage and Growth guide our relationships, inform our decision-making and underpin the policies and practices through which we serve our whole school community.

**Introduction and Rationale**

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school, collective worship is central to our Christian character and to the daily life of our school. It provides a distinctive opportunity for children and adults to gather, encounter Christian teaching, reflect on questions of meaning and purpose and consider how our vision and values shape the way we live together.

Collective worship is an expression of our Christian foundation, rather than simply a school assembly or a lesson in religious education. It is inclusive, invitational and inspiring, respecting the integrity of pupils and adults from different faith backgrounds and those with no religious faith.

**Aims of Collective Worship**

- Make our vision, "Rooted in Love, Growing Together", and our values of Love, Community, Courage and Growth meaningful in everyday school life.
- Offer opportunities to encounter the teachings of Jesus, stories from the Bible and an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Provide opportunities for prayer, reflection, stillness, wonder, gratitude and spiritual growth, without requiring any individual to profess Christian belief.
- Enable pupils to explore big questions, make connections with their own experiences and consider how beliefs and values influence choices and relationships.
- Develop understanding of Anglican worship, the Christian year and the diversity of Christian traditions.
- Celebrate the contributions and achievements of individuals and communities and encourage responsibility for others and the world.
- Give children increasing opportunities to contribute to, lead and evaluate worship.

**Our Vision and Values in Worship**

Our vision is rooted in Ephesians 3:17–18 and the belief that love provides the foundation from which individuals and communities can flourish. Worship helps pupils explore this biblical inspiration and consider what it means in their relationships, learning and wider lives.

- Love – recognising the dignity and worth of every person, showing compassion and care and learning from Jesus' example.
- Community – understanding belonging, friendship, service and our responsibility to support one another.
- Courage – exploring how people act with hope, conviction and kindness when faced with difficulty or injustice.
- Growth – recognising that we can learn, change, persevere and flourish spiritually, personally and together.

Worship themes may explore people who embody these values, significant events, Bible passages, Christian festivals and issues that matter to our school community. The values are revisited and connected explicitly to the choices pupils and adults make.

**Spirituality and Reflection**

We seek to nurture spirituality by creating space to notice, question, reflect and respond. Worship provides moments of awe and wonder, opportunities to consider ourselves and our relationships with others, and

time to reflect on experiences that may point beyond the everyday. Children are encouraged to explore their own thoughts and beliefs, with no expectation that all responses will be the same.

Reflection may include silence, music, images, stories, discussion, prayer and the use of whole class and individual reflection journals. These journals offer pupils a way to revisit themes, express personal responses and recognise how their understanding develops over time. Responses are valued rather than judged for their religious content.

**Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring Worship**

Collective worship is planned to be accessible and meaningful for all pupils, taking account of age, additional needs, religious background and personal experience. Christian prayer and worship are offered as invitations: pupils may participate, listen or reflect respectfully. No child or adult is required to pray, sing words of faith or express beliefs they do not hold.

Worship should be welcoming, engaging and thoughtfully presented, using language and resources that children can understand. We make reasonable adaptations so that pupils with SEND can access and contribute to worship.

**Organisation and Pattern of Worship**

A daily act of collective worship is provided. Whole-school and class worship complement one another and may be adapted for significant events in the school, Church or wider world. The current weekly pattern is:

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| **Monday** | Leadership whole-school worship, introducing or developing a theme linked to Christian teaching and our vision and values. |
| **Tuesday** | Singing worship, using music and songs as opportunities for shared reflection and celebration. |
| **Wednesday** | Whole-school worship led fortnightly by a member of St Paul's Church, including the Rector or Children and Families Minister. Picture News is also used to explore current events and encourage reflection through our Christian vision and values. |
| **Thursday** | Class worship responding to the whole-school worship theme, providing opportunities for discussion, prayer, reflection and personal response. |
| **Friday** | Whole-school celebration worship, recognising achievement, community and the values in action. |

The precise timetable and leadership arrangements may change during the year. Staff ensure that worship remains distinct from notices, awards or other assembly business, even when these form part of a wider gathering. Additional worship may take place in church and at significant points in the Christian calendar.

**The Shape of Worship**

Our shared approach provides a recognisable rhythm while allowing flexibility and creativity. Worship commonly follows the Gather, Engage, Respond and Send structure, giving opportunities to respond through reflection or prayer and encouraged to further explore the themes and put learning into action. Opening and closing words help mark worship as a special time. A candle or other focal point may be used where appropriate and safe.

Leaders select age-appropriate Bible stories, questions, images, music, prayers and opportunities for participation. Themes are connected to pupils' experiences and to the school's Christian vision, rather than being presented as isolated messages.

**Planning and Leadership**

The Headteacher, who is also the Collective Worship Lead, has overall responsibility for ensuring that collective worship reflects the school's foundation and vision. Staff leading class worship build on shared themes while responding to the needs and interests of their pupils.

Pupils are encouraged to contribute ideas, read, lead prayers or reflections, ask questions and take increasing responsibility for aspects of worship. Visitors, including representatives of the local church, may enrich worship and are briefed on the school's vision, safeguarding expectations and inclusive approach.

**Partnership with the Church and Community**

We value our relationship with St Paul's Church and the wider Christian community. Worship offers opportunities to experience Anglican traditions, including prayer, Bible reading, the Church year and worship in a church setting. Our school also welcomes opportunities to reflect on local, national and global events through the lens of our Christian values.

**Legal Requirements and Right of Withdrawal**

The school provides a daily act of collective worship in accordance with the legal requirements applying to maintained schools and its Church of England foundation and trust deed. Collective worship is distinct from the curriculum subject of religious education.

Parents and carers have the legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship, in whole or in part. Requests should be made to the Headteacher, who will discuss arrangements sensitively and ensure appropriate supervision without requiring parents to explain or justify their beliefs. The school also recognises the applicable legal provisions concerning teachers' participation in collective worship.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Development**

The quality and impact of worship are reviewed through pupil voice, staff reflection, consideration of worship planning and journals, observations and governor monitoring. Evaluation considers whether worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring, whether pupils can explain links to the Christian vision and values, and how opportunities for spiritual reflection and pupil leadership are developing.

Findings inform future themes, professional development and school improvement priorities. Governors, including those responsible for monitoring Christian distinctiveness, provide support and challenge and consider how worship contributes to the school's vision and flourishing of the whole community.

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or school practice changes. It should be read alongside the school's vision and values, Religious Education Policy, SEND and Inclusion Policy and relevant safeguarding arrangements.