

The Minster Nursery and Infant School – Collective Worship Policy 2025

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision, 'Let all that you do be done in love' *1 Corinthians 16:14* is central to all that we do. Collective worship is a core part of the way that we live out our vision and teach our children to love themselves, love others, love learning and love the world which our loving God created for us. Our core values: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, forbearance, gentleness and self-control *Galatians 5:22-23* are made explicit within the themes of worship and are a focus within our weekly celebration worship. Together our vision and values are central to every thought, decision and action made. This policy has been developed being mindful of these factors to ensure they develop and sustain all aspects of school life at The Minster Nursery and Infant School.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to outline the contribution that Collective Worship makes in strengthening and supporting the Christian Distinctiveness of our school. It sets out the aims, principles and strategies used in worship at The Minster Nursery & Infant School and has been developed being mindful of our schools aim to provide an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.

Aims & objectives

As a Church Of England Voluntary Aided School our daily act of collective worship reflects the traditions of the Church of England, developing understanding of Anglican traditions and practice. We regard collective worship as an important and valued time for children and staff to share together and it is an inclusive time enhancing the spirituality of all present as well as it sets the tone for the rest of the day. Our central aims of Collective worship (as detailed in the Southwark Diocesan policy statement *Collective Worship In Church Of England Schools-June 2016*) are to:

- *sing, pray and give praise and thanksgiving to God*
- *reflect on the attributes of God and on the teachings of Jesus Christ*
- *listen to and learn from The Holy Bible*
- *promote and affirm Christian Values*
- *celebrate special times in the Christian Calendar*
- *share each other's joy and challenges*
- *foster respect and unity*
- *deepen spiritual awareness and reflection*

Legal Requirements

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that collective worship must be on a daily basis for all registered pupils. The religious foundation of The Minster Nursery & Infant School and the daily Act of Collective Worship is delivered in accordance with the principles and practice of the Church of England; although in accordance with modern ecumenical good practice it may reflect and draw upon non-Anglican (Christian) traditions.

The Act of Collective Worship in The Minster Nursery & Infant School is the responsibility of the Governing Body in consultation with the Head teacher and the policy for collective worship has been drawn up in consultation with the teaching staff and with the approval of the Governing Body.

Organisation

Worship is seen as a special occasion, when members of the school community come together to celebrate and worship God. We expect children and staff to behave in an appropriate way and we ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and songs, giving time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and light a candle to act as a focal point for the attention of all.

The content of our collective worship is based on Christian teachings and values, with the Bible at the centre and we follow the liturgical order of 'gather, engage, respond and send.' We conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way, ensuring that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the children.

Services marking special occasions and events in the church year are held at The Croydon Minster, to mark Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the Leavers' Service. Parents and other family and friends join with the children on these occasions. We also invite parents to class collective worship and encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work

together to support the achievements of our children. We welcome governors' attendance at our collective worship at any time.

Structure

Collective worship is delivered through a daily act of worship. This is timetabled to last for 15 – 20 minutes (KS1) and 10 minutes (EYFS), though on occasions this may be altered, for example when a visiting speaker is invited. We aim to have a variety of groupings (Key stage, class groups and whole school) so that worship is personalised and appropriate to the age of the children.

Acts of worship for KS1 are organised on a timetable as follows:

Week 1:

Monday Introduction of weekly theme Head teacher

Tuesday Theme of praise through singing and hymns. During the singing of songs we also aim to ensure that the children understand the vocabulary used where it is not self-evident. Led by Assistant Head teacher

Wednesday Clergy from The Croydon Minster lead the act of worship reflecting and complimenting the weekly theme.

Thursday Space Makers (In class) - Spirituality focus

Friday Weekly celebration of children who have lived out *The Fruits of the Spirit* the Christian Values that underpin the fabric of our school. Celebration of birthdays and attendance. Led by rotation of staff

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) follow a similar structure with the introduction of a theme, musical and celebration but they also hold a weekly class collective worship. The children in the Nursery have their own daily collective worship, with prayers, stories, songs and moments for reflection.

Centrality of Prayer

Prayer and praise are very much part of what we do within the life of our school. A variety of prayers are used, some of which are written by the children. The Lord's Prayer is introduced by the clergy from the Croydon Minster in KS1 and prayer features in the daily classroom routine at the end of the day. Each class has a quiet/reflective space where children can pray and reflect.

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development

Acts of collective worship will aim to:

- nurture reflection, meditation and prayer;
- provide pupils with opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives through music, images and words.
- provide a sense of occasion that separates them from the rest of the school day;
- foster an appreciation of the natural created world and our shared responsibilities for maintaining it;
- develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community.

Inclusive

Our understanding of Christianity is that it is an inclusive faith which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels. Thus we welcome children and staff of all faiths. Through their Christian character our acts of collective worship will:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, life styles and faiths which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe;
- be appropriate for every child to attend;
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the children;
- foster active roles of children, parents and members of the local community - in preparation, participation and leadership.

Planning

The collective worship programme is drawn up by the leadership team in conjunction with the clergy from the Minster Church. Planning for the school's collective worship is done termly in advance and a copy is given to each member of staff, to the clergy and kept for reference in the collective worship file. The termly plans also allow for different members of the senior staff to lead the worship and build on the chosen theme without unnecessary repetition.

When planning collective worship staff consider the following:

- that it is inclusive, appropriate and relevant to the children;
- conducive to building a relationship with God;
- inspiring, in that it creates feelings and senses from which worship can arise e.g. awe and wonder, a sense of beauty, awareness of thankfulness, feelings of compassion, peace, sadness or joy;
- spiritual, by creating a special atmosphere and time for stillness and reflection;
- that there is a sense of a special occasion created by the attitude of the people leading the worship and the participants joining together.

The Understanding Christianity Project

Our Collective Worship Themes are linked with the core concepts from 'The Understanding Christianity Project.'

The following core concepts are explored in the Understanding Christianity approach, as part of the 'big story' of salvation, as understood within Christianity:

- **God** - Fundamental to Christian belief is the existence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- **Creation** - Christians believe the universe and human life are God's good creation. Humans are made in the image of God.
- **Fall** - Humans have a tendency to go their own way rather than keep their place in relation to their creator. This attitude is called sin, and Genesis 3 gives an account of this rebellion, popularly called 'the Fall'. This describes a catastrophic separation between God and humans, between humans and each other, and between humans and the environment. This idea that humans are 'fallen' and in need of rescue (or salvation) sets out the root cause of many problems for humanity.
- **People of God** - The Old Testament tells the story of God's plan to reverse the impact of the Fall, to save humanity. It involves choosing a people who will model a restored relationship with God, who will attract all other people back to God. The Bible narrative includes the ups and downs of this plan, including the message of the prophets who tried to persuade people to stick with God. The plan appears to end in failure with the people of God exiled, and then returning, awaiting a 'messiah' – a rescuer.
- **Incarnation** - The New Testament presents Jesus as the answer: the Messiah and Saviour, who will repair the effects of sin and the Fall and offer a way for humans to be at one with God again. Incarnation means that Jesus is God in the flesh, and that, in Jesus, God came to live amongst humans.
- **Gospel** - Christians believe Jesus' incarnation is 'good news' for all people. ('Gospel' means 'good news'.) His life, teaching and ministry embody what it is like to be one of the People of God, what it means to live in relationship with God. Jesus' example and teaching emphasise loving one's neighbour – particularly the weak and vulnerable – as part of loving God.
- **Salvation** - Jesus' death and resurrection effect the rescue or salvation of humans. He opens the way back to God. Christians believe that through Jesus, sin is dealt with, forgiveness offered, and the relationship between God and humans is restored.
- **Kingdom of God** - This does not mean that no one sins any more! The Bible talks in terms of God's 'Kingdom' having begun in human hearts through Jesus. The idea of the 'Kingdom of God' reflects God's ideal for human life in the world – a vision of life lived in the way God intended for human beings. Christians look forward to a time when God's rule is fulfilled at some future point, in a restored, transformed heaven and earth. Meanwhile, they seek to live this attractive life as in God's Kingdom, following Jesus' example, inspired and empowered by God's Spirit.

Through these concepts, pupils encounter a range of biblical texts, placed within a wider theological context. They consider the nature of God and what it means for Christians to be in relationship with the Creator. They explore Christian understanding of the relationship between God and his people in the Old Testament, and make sense of messianic expectations and Christian belief in their fulfilment in Jesus. Our hymns and songs of worship are discussed to support our children's religious literacy and understanding of the Christian meaning in different genres of text.

Minster Lights

The Children's Faith Group, 'the Minster Lights' meet regularly with the Assistant Head teacher to plan and discuss matters around faith and collective worship. The Children's Faith Group meet with visitors, to share the vision and distinctive Christian ethos of the school and they also plan and lead collective worships.

Resources

A variety of multi-media resources are used to support collective worship including the use of sound system, laptop and projector as well as books, artefacts, props and music. Staff are aware and model appropriate ways of handling, displaying and storing religious artefacts. Visiting speakers are sometimes used to contribute to collective worship providing us with the flexibility to respond to national and local events, all will be met beforehand and briefed on the schools' requirements.

Withdrawal

This is an important part of our school day and as collective worship is central to our school ethos we hope that everyone will feel able to participate. However, in accordance with the DfE Circular 1/94 (31st January 1994), parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship. We would appreciate it if parents would discuss this with the Head teacher prior to making the decision.

Monitoring and review

The Head Teacher, school leaders, governors and clergy all work to monitor collective worship through:

- observing collective worship;
- collecting and looking at feedback monitoring sheets from both staff and children;
- using findings to review the provision made in collective worship.

The Collective Worship Policy will be reviewed every two years unless there are any changes in the legal requirements for collective worship or new guidance needs to be taken into account.