

# Kirkoswald CE Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy April 2026

**Inclusive** ❖ **Invitational** ❖ **Inspiring**

## 1. Background: Collective Worship Legislation and Guidance

All maintained schools must provide daily Collective Worship for all registered pupils and promote their spiritual, moral and cultural development.

In community schools, Collective Worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.<sup>1</sup>

In Church schools, the requirement is instead to reflect the Anglican status of the school as expressed in its trust deed. This means that every act of Collective Worship at Kirkoswald CE School is distinctively Christian.

Best practice in delivering Collective Worship<sup>2</sup> requires it to be:

- **Inclusive:** so that is accessible and meaningful to all, whatever their faith or none.
- **Invitational:** so that there is no compulsion to 'do anything' just a warm offer to be present and engage with integrity.
- **Inspiring:** so that it motivates pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and wider community's behaviour and actions.

## 2. Collective Worship and Vision:

Collective Worship is a special time of each day at Kirkoswald CE School. It is the time when we gather together, pause and reflect as a whole school.

Collective Worship is an expression of our Vision and contributes significantly to the flourishing of all. It offers pupils the chance to Explore, Dream, Discover and reflect on how they can 'be the best that they can be'. They explore our values of friendship, forgiveness and trust as and reflect on concepts and values such as love, working together, developing pupils as leaders, giving pupils the chance to make themselves heard, celebrating success and letting our light shine. It enables pupils and adults to develop spiritually, emotionally and socially, asking, reflecting on and answering big questions about meaning and our responsibilities as part of a global community including, *'Who am I?' 'Why am I here?' 'How then shall I live?'*

## 2. Invitational Worship and Spiritual Development:

Our word 'Worship' comes from an Old English word meaning to acknowledge or attribute worth. If we choose to worship, we are acknowledging how and why God is worthy of praise and thanks. It is a personal experience which depends on an individual's attitude. Worship which is directed by, or insisted upon, by someone else is not, in fact, worship.

At our school, worship is **invitational**. All are **offered** the chance to worship daily, including through prayer and through song but it is not expected. Collective Worship does not pre-suppose shared beliefs or convictions. It does not seek a uniform response from pupils or adults.

Through our Religious Education (RE) curriculum, our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum and termly Crew Days, we support pupils in developing their own personal convictions. Our school offers pupils a safe space in which to explore their feelings, thoughts and beliefs.

Every day, all members of our school community are taken to the threshold of worship. Whether or not to cross it is for the **individual to decide**.

### **3. How Collective Worship is made special:**

We take the time to make our Collective Worship time special every day by:

- Creating an atmosphere which is conducive to worship and/or reflection (through use of music, a visual focus, artefacts and stories).
- Careful and intentional timetabling so that Collective Worship time is not disrupted by other activities occurring on the school site and occurs at a time when pupils are most responsive.
- Ensuring every member of the school family is present.
- Choosing themes and content which are appropriate to our school context, reflect our vision and are pitched appropriately for those present.
- **Inspiring** each member of our school community to reflect on their own behaviours and how they might make a change for their own sake or for the sake of others.

### **4. Aims of Collective Worship:**

We aim to make every act of Collective Worship meaningful, engaging and relevant to those present, whether they **choose to** worship or not. As a Church of England school, our worship is predominantly Christian in nature.

However, at this school, we ensure that **everyone, whatever their faith or none, can take part with integrity**. For example, a Bible story illustrating Jesus' teachings (on loving one another, on caring for the vulnerable, on generosity or any other theme) will regularly be shared. The message of that Christian story is unpacked and made relevant to everyone in attendance so that **all** may be **inspired** by it.

Collective Worship sessions offer rich opportunities for teaching and encouraging reflection. At this school, we have the following aims for acts of Collective Worship:

- To offer pupil-centred sessions which either reflect pupils' experiences or appropriately expand and broaden them (content).
- To provide variety (in terms of content, the ways in which pupils are encouraged to interact, the use of music etc) to appeal to the preferences of **as many pupils as possible**.
- To afford pupils and adults space to **reflect on the spiritual, acknowledging the capacity of our pupils to seek meaning beyond the material and physical**.
- To allow **time to respond** to social and moral issues and the questions which relate to life as a global citizen.
- To provoke in those present a sense of **meaning, wonder, joy and celebration or thanksgiving**.
- To enable pupils and adults to explore the use of **silence for stillness reflection, meditation, exploring inner thoughts and feelings and, as appropriate, prayer**.
- To **heighten pupils' awareness** of questions relating to the ultimate mysteries of life and to explore the responses that have been made to these questions by people of faith.
- To develop an understanding of how the teachings of Jesus and the Bible are relevant to each of us, **whatever our personal convictions**.
- To provide **opportunities for pupils and staff** to explore and celebrate the Christian values on which the school is based.

- To enable the school community to explore a range of forms of worship and recognise the rich traditions of the Anglican church (locally, nationally and around the world) and in the Cumbrian context, those of our Methodist, Salvation Army and United Reformed Church Ecumenical Partners.
- To develop an understanding of the Christian belief in a God of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## 5. Use of Music

The use of music at Kirkoswald CE School is very important. We use music which reflects our school's vision. Music plays an important part in developing our pupils as **respectful and loving global citizens, and in helping them develop spiritually**. We introduce our pupils to a diverse range of musical styles and genres to help them find the music which is most helpful to them for reflection or worship. We also represent (through video) a diverse make-up of cultures and backgrounds to help our pupils to make sense of the rich global musical community and how music is used in worship across the globe.

Music is chosen carefully to avoid asking pupils to declare a faith in God they may not have. Some of our music contains elements which are confessional (they declare a faith in God or desire to worship). However, where such songs are used, we explain what the lyrics mean to Christians in order that pupils (and staff) may decide, for themselves, whether to sing them. We take the time to explain that some songs, sung by Christians, involve the artists singing to God. However, the words of such songs lend themselves to our school family choosing to sing to whomever they wish – God, a family member, a friend.

Some worship songs used are great for music-based learning opportunities (regardless of whether the lyrics are reflective of pupils' beliefs) and, as such, have great worth as a teaching tool. An example is, *Our God is a Great Big God*. Whether or not pupils agree with the sentiment of the lyrics, they can benefit greatly from the opportunity for teaching rhythm (semi-breve, minim, crochet, quaver). By using worship songs for more than just their lyrics, they are made **invitational** and relevant to all.

## 6. Organisation

An act of Collective Worship takes place daily<sup>1</sup> and usually lasts 20 minutes. On the vast majority of occasions, the whole school are together.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Nature of Worship</b>	<b>Leader</b>
Monday	9.05	Whole School: Theme for the week	Headteacher or Pupils
Tuesday	9:05	Whole School: Theme for the week	Class Teacher
Wednesday	10:15	Whole School: Theme for the week	External Visior(s) (Niscu/Open The Book)
Thursday	9.05	Whole School: Singing	Class Teacher
Friday	15:00	Whole school celebration	Class Teacher and Pupils

Visitors play an important part in the life of our school and regularly contribute to acts of worship. We invite members of charitable organisations who offer their expertise to the school (For example NISCU, members of the local church community, the NSPCC, Open The Book) to lead us in worship. At Harvest Festival time, Christmas, Easter and to say 'goodbye' to our Year 6 Leavers, the whole school, and our family and community, visits the church for an act of worship led jointly by the pupils and the church.

## 7. Content

We follow a values-based yearly plan for Collective Worship, driven by our school vision: Explore, Dream, Discover: be the best that you can be. Our values are Friendship, Forgiveness and Trust and we look to

make links with core Christian values each half term. Pupils are involved in all worship and are encouraged to input in an age-appropriate way.

## **Annual Collective Worship Plan**

Structure Overview

Daily worship (10–15 mins)

Suggested weekly pattern:

Monday – Vision & Value focus

Tuesday – Bible story

Wednesday – Reflection / discussion / visitor

Thursday – Singing / Community / Prayer / spirituality

Friday – Celebration (achievements, awards)

### **AUTUMN TERM**

Autumn 1: New Beginnings

**Big Question:** How can we be the best we can be?

**Focus Value:** Trust

**Key Themes:** Starting again, Belonging to a community, Trusting ourselves, others, and God

**Bible Links:** Creation (Genesis 1) Noah (trusting God)

**Vision Link:** Explore – new experiences

**Activities:** Create class “promise trees” Trust games and discussions

Autumn 2: Light in the Darkness

**Big Question:** How can we bring light to others?

**Focus Value:** Friendship

**Key Themes:** Kindness, Being a good friend, Supporting others

**Bible Links:** The Good Samaritan, Jesus as the Light of the World

**Festival Focus:** Harvest (sharing) Advent & Christmas

**Vision Link:** Dream – hope and aspiration

## **SPRING TERM**

Spring 1: Courage and Perseverance

**Big Question:** How do we keep going when things are hard?

**Focus Value:** Trust (revisited)

**Key Themes:** Resilience, Inner strength, Faith during challenges

**Bible Links:** David and Goliath, Jesus calming the storm

**Vision Link:** Discover – finding inner strength

Spring 2: Forgiveness and Love

**Big Question:** Why is it important to forgive?

**Focus Value:** Forgiveness

**Key Themes:** Saying sorry, Letting go, Compassion

**Bible Links:** The Prodigal Son, Jesus forgiving others

**Festival Focus:** Lent, Easter

**Vision Link:** Be the best you can be – growing as a person

## **SUMMER TERM**

Summer 1: Respect and Responsibility

**Big Question:** How can we care for our world and each other?

**Focus Value:** Friendship (community)

**Key Themes:** Stewardship, Respect for others, Responsibility

**Bible Links:** Creation care, The Feeding of the 5000

**Vision Link:** Explore & Discover – understanding our world

Summer 2: Celebration and Reflection

**Big Question:** What have we discovered this year?

**Focus Value:** Trust & Gratitude

**Key Themes:** Achievement, Moving on, Thankfulness

**Bible Links:** Parable of the talents

**Festival Focus:** Pentecost, Leavers' celebrations

**Vision Link:** Dream – looking ahead

### **Key Elements in Every Worship**

Gathering: candle, music, reflection moment

Engagement: story, drama, images, discussion

Response: prayer, silence, action

Sending: thought for the day. Challenge for children. Reflection

### **Inclusive & Rural Community Links**

Link worship to: Local farming cycles (Harvest, seasons), Village life and community events, Local church involvement (vicar visits, services)

### **Our Vision**

Explore: Ask questions, encourage curiosity

Dream: Inspire hope and aspiration

Discover: Reflect on personal growth

Be the best you can be: Celebrate character and effort

### **Evaluation & Impact**

Pupil voice (what did they learn/feel?)

Reflection

Links to behaviour and attitudes

Staff observations

## **8. Training**

Any leader of worship (pupil or adult) at this school has access to training to support them in their role. In particular, through training, we ensure a consistent approach to the use of **inclusive** and **invitational** language in all sessions. Whole school training and support is available through the local diocese and staff are able to access CPD.

## **9. Visitors**

Visitors play an important part in the life of our school and regularly contribute to acts of Collective Worship. We are very grateful to those people in our local community who give their time to lead worship in our school. Pupils benefit greatly from the varied experiences they provide.

## 10. Evaluation of Collective Worship

The effectiveness and impact of Collective Worship is monitored annually. Monitoring involves the whole school community. It is led by governors who join us for acts of Collective Worship/meet with members of staff/conduct pupil voice exercises/parental questionnaires.

The views of pupils are fed back to The Headteacher and other staff, and their views inform future planning.

## 11. Right of Withdrawal

Given the **inclusive** and **invitational** nature of our acts of Collective Worship outlined above, we hope that every parent or carer would wish their child to take part in this special part of the school day. However, parents do have the legal right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. There is no requirement to explain or give reasons for a request of withdrawal. However, if this is something you are considering for your child, you are warmly encouraged to contact the Headteacher, who will be happy to answer any questions you may have. We will, of course, supervise any pupil withdrawn from Collective Worship and keep him or her safe. However, please be aware that we are unable to provide alternative teaching.

## 12. Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## 13. References

<sup>1</sup>[Education Reform Act 1988, section 7\(1\); DfE Circular 1/94 \(1994\).](#)

<sup>2</sup>[Collective Worship in Church of England Schools Guidance Document: Inclusive Invitational Inspiring.](#)

<b>Date ratified:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Signature of Chair of DBE:</b>	
<b>Review date:</b>	<b>April 2027</b>