Collective Worship Policy

"We have God's World in our hands"

At Bawdsey, our children know that they have God's world in their hands. They look beyond their quiet peninsula home to understand and make an impact on the whole, diverse world. We want the children to be resilient, caring and courageous advocates, who know they are equal with others, and love to explore.

Adopted: October 2026

Approved by Governors: October 2026

Review date: October 2027

As a Christian school we endeavour and encourage everyone to believe that in joining together our individual skills, actions, thoughts and experiences, we can achieve our mission to sow faith, grow learning and inspire futures.

Rationale

Pupils, staff and parents of all faiths (or none) are welcome to worship which is an expression of our distinctive Christian vision. Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other and that collective worship is an educational entitlement for all. In worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live. This worship occurs at various times of day and with a mixture of grouping of pupils. Through regular acts of worship our school has the opportunity of offering thanksgiving and praise to God through a range of liturgical patterns.

We recognise that some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, some worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which no-one's integrity is compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves, and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the headteacher. Suitable arrangements will be made to accommodate these pupils.

Legal Requirements

In line with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20):

1. All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
2. The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
3. All acts of Collective Worship must be Christian in character
4. Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
5. The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but we may hold our act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the Church) on special occasions.
6. Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a special role in ensuring the Collective Worship is linked to the Trust Deeds.
7. The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure all arrangements for CW are secured.

Organisation (See Appendix 1)

Our Collective Worship plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year, celebrating festivals and Saints' days as appropriate. Each half-term explores a Christian value in a variety of ways, through story, song, prayer and reflection. 'Values for Life' or 'Roots and Fruits' are most

commonly used as the basis of these plans. Once per week, the worship will discuss a theme from the 'No Outsiders' programme, but children will be encouraged to reflect and provide a Christian response.
The Headteacher must ensure that leaders and visiting speakers receive copies of the plans. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the plans as a basis for developing their own short- term plans for individual acts of worship.

Pupils as well as adults engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of Collective Worship.

- We have one dedicated worship space in the hall.
- We foster links with the local parish Church, involving clergy in leading / joining us for collective worship and providing coherence with worship in church.
- We aim to visit the parish church at least four times per year as part of the Christian Calendar
- We aim for our Collective Worship to be creative and to inspire pupils into action

Individual acts of worship follow the pattern of GATHER, ENGAGE, RESPOND, SEND – this approach offers a pattern which both staff and children can use and is useful for evaluation as well.

Collective Worship usually takes place in the hall, which is set up by a group of Year 6 pupils. Two pupils remain in charge of the computer, including music and hymn words, whilst another two lead the school in lighting the candle, starting each worship and modelling the Grace when the worship is led by Clergy.

The Headteacher and other members of staff take turns to conduct Collective Worship alongside external visitors such as Reverend Cake.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music and candles, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point. We ask children to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully and if they wish, to participate in singing and prayers.

We use Friday assemblies as an opportunity to share children's work and to celebrate their successes including the school's recognition of being a 'Good Samaritan'. These are incorporated into an act of Collective Worship and play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school.

Resources

We have a three year programme covering Christian Values, each of which has its own set of plans and resources that can be used as a basis to plan from.

We have a number of books and artefacts which we aim to regularly update and improve. We also access short term plans from the internet, and each "value" has its own folder with photos, artefacts, quotes and stories which can form the basis of a worship session. We have a number of resources on the internet and computer to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. We aim to purchase additional resources to enhance the hall environment and create a more effective focal point for Collective Worship to take place.

Contribution to SMSC development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide opportunities in this area almost too numerous to mention in detail. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, celebrate success and good news, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Worship is an expression of our Christian vision and is a means of recognising and celebrating our associated values and achievements in their broadest sense. In Collective Worship, all participants are recognised for their personal achievement, both within school and in the community. Pupils and staff are awarded, in worship, with a range of rewards, thus placing achievement and effort in the Christian context of the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by keeping records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness – this is led daily by worship council in their journal, and at least once per year in a formal observation by the worship co-ordinator, foundation governor or visitor from the Diocese.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate. We also aim to:

- 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
- make Collective Worship appropriate for every pupil and staff member to attend
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils;
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community – in preparation, participation and leadership.

Appendix 1 – Organisation of Worship

Acts of worship regularly include key ritual aspects which serve as a means of enabling worship and signal the coming together of our community. Acts of worship, whether whole school in the hall, or within classrooms follow the below structure, using Flippin' Praise as the basis:

Gather	Entrance song/music, based on the theme Greetings are also signed. For example Leader - "Peace be with you" Response - "And also with you" Leader hands over to the worship team to "light the candle and begin our worship"
Engage	To be planned by worship leader that day. Value/theme/festival on Collective Worship termly overview. If hymn practice, time to be spent understanding the words and reflecting on their meaning and message.
Respond	Hymn
Send	Reflection and short prayer based on 'Engage' Candle extinguished Exit song/music, based on theme