Policy	Collective Worship Policy
Adopted by	Governing Board - August 2026
To be reviewed by	August 2027

This document is based on a model policy from the Diocese

'You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Shine your light before all that they may see your works and then praise your Father in heaven.'

Matthew 5v14-16

Introduction

At Heathlands, our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision Helping Everyone Shine their Light and the associated values we derive from them Trust, Respect, Enjoyment, Courage, Kindness. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship at Heathlands is not simply a statutory duty. The Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God.
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues.
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs.
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- 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.
- 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.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).[1] Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

At Heathlands C of E Primary school, we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster close links with St Mary's Church, involving the Reverend Heather and the Open Book group, in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and Heathlands and visit at least four times per year as part of the Christian calendar. We hold regular Prayer Spaces that involve our school and the wider community, as well as a Year 6 'Retreat' focusing on transition.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At Heathlands, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise

[1] https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf

that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavor to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to Heathlands Church of England Primary school, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice

Leadership

Worship is led, in the main, by a member of the Teaching team. Visitors can include Reverend Heather, the Open book group. This is overseen by the Worship Lead.

The Worship Council

Since we believe worship to be the activity of the whole school community, we actively promote appropriate pupil leadership as well as invitational participation.

The Worship Council at Heathlands are a group of pupils from across the school who support collective worship and spirituality in a range of ways.

The Worship Council meet regularly. The Worship Council have developed close links with St Mary's Church and have regular opportunities to participate within additional religious services, such as Harvest and Easter, as well as working in conjunction with members of the Diocese.

The Worship Council gives the children of Heathlands a voice in how worship is carried out at school and ensures it has a positive impact on everyone. The Council meet regularly to discuss what is going well with our worship as well as what could be improved. In order to ensure the views of the EYFS children are heard, the class teachers and members of the Worship Council have regular conversations with the children and ensure their views are shared appropriately.

In school, they nurture a prayer tree as a reflective space and are currently in discussions over the creation of both outdoor and indoor permanent prayer and reflection spaces.

Collective Worship Planning and Organisation

Our Worship Leader ensures that an annual plan of themes using our Christian Values, and linked Bible stories is made available to staff and the Worship Council. The content is carefully considered to ensure relevance and suitability for all ages. A half termly rota including a range of themes, special occasions and events will be followed, although this is flexible to allow the inclusion of any current and topical issues.

Our Core Values are introduced at the start of each half term and this will form the basis of our collective worship for the half term.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Theme	Helping everyone Shine their light	Trust	Respect	Enjoyment	Courage	Kindness

Mondays:

10.10am – A whole school Act of Worship led by the Headteacher. Each Act of Worship allows time for reflection and invitational prayer.

Tuesdays:

Class Act of Worship 10.10am – these are an opportunity for children to further respond and reflect on Monday's act of worship. They will be specific to the class and will enable pupil involvement. Children will have time to reflect and respond, as well as sharing prayers written by themselves.

Wednesdays:

Whole School Act of Worship 10.10am – led by a member of the teaching time or visitor.

Thursdays:

Class Act of Worship 10.10am – these are an opportunity for children to further respond and reflect on Wednesday's act of worship. They will be specific to the class and will enable pupil involvement. Children will have time to reflect and respond, as well as sharing prayers written by themselves.

Fridays:

Whole-school Act of Worship 10.10am – ommunity driven – these include a 'Celebration' allowing time for reflection and prayer. These are enjoyed by everyone and celebrate God's diverse gifts to every member of our pupil community.

Alternate Provision

Where possible, an alternate provision Act of Worship is led by one of our teaching staff. This is a much smaller Act of Worship within a classroom, which allows us to meet the needs of the children appropriately.

Each Act of Worship will contain the following elements:

- A welcome to the school community, using a combination of a liturgical greeting, lighting of a candle, with music or with a visual display. A visual focus (e.g. a lit candle, an image or some other element that allows children to focus on the worship element) This element of the Act of Worship is to awaken the children.

- Engagement of the pupils and staff by sharing the core message. This may be through song / hymn, bible reading, drama, a quiz, pupil activity etc… All material is presented in an appealing way and where possible will make use of visual aids and artefacts to help children remember the message. This is followed by an opportunity to respond and reflect upon this message and the impact that it has on their lives today. This may be through prayer, quiet reflection, activity, poem, song or discussion.
- The use of 'windows, mirrors and doors' develops our sense of spirituality, supporting those involved to 'look out' (windows), 'look within (mirrors) and 'look ahead' (doors).
- We conclude our Collective Worship by 'Sending' out. We close our worship through one or more of the following elements – a final message, Bible verse, a challenge, song, prayer, music, liturgy, blowing out of the candle. The messages in our Collective Worship are followed up on in classes or in further acts of Collective Worship. It is this part which defines the gathering as an Act of Worship rather than an assembly.

As a school community, we enjoy our acts of worship. We are proud to be members of St Mary's Church, and we appreciate opportunities to come together to worship God and to celebrate our achievements.

We also aim to ensure children experience elements of the Anglican tradition. Special services are held in the local church and local clergy are invited into school to lead worship. Through our structured approach to running whole-school worship children begin to have an understanding of Anglican prayer and the liturgy. In order to further develop the connection between worship in school and that of the Church of England we use the cycle of liturgical colours on our Worship table at the front of the hall.

Purple	Advent and from Ash Wednesday to the day before Palm Sunday.
White or Gold	Christmas Day to Candlemas (early February), Easter Day to the Eve of Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, All Saints' Day (1st November).
Red	Holy Week, Feast of Pentecost, between All Saints' Day and the First Sunday of Advent
Green	The day after Candlemas (early February) to Shrove Tuesday. The day after Pentecost (mid to late May) to All Saints' Day (1st November)

Within our worship we recognise, affirm and celebrate:

- Our school's core Christian values: *Trust, Respect, Enjoyment, Courage and Kindness*
- Our school's vision: *Helping Everyone to Shine their light*
- To develop understanding of the theological underpinning: *You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Shine your light before all that they may see your works and then praise your Father in heaven.'* Matthew 5v14-16
- An appreciation of our world
- The highest achievement of which we are capable
- A recognition of the interdependence of human beings – especially those in need
- Our belief in God as Creator, Jesus and the Holy Spirit

Major Christian Festivals such as Ash Wednesday, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost/Whitsun, Harvest and Christmas are celebrated in Acts of Worship which are held as school-based services. Families and members of the local congregation are often invited to join us for these special services.

All teaching staff attend our Acts of worship.

Children's spiritual awareness is nurtured further through the offering of prayer at the beginning of lunch times and at the end of the day.

Heathlands C of E Primary school also recognises the need to teach children about significant festivals from other world religions and will do this throughout the year in class teaching and through acts of worship.

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Visitors to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship – such as Reverend Heather, and the Open book group. Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. The Collective Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices of our Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. 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, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed annually through discussions with pupils and staff through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship by the Worship Lead and the Senior Team.

Collective Worship is monitored by the Senior Team and the Foundation Governor at least termly.

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. As appropriate. an alternate act of Collective Worship will be led in a small group by one of our teachers.

Implementation of Policy

The Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed at least every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.