

# St Dominic CofE Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

Policy owner	CEO
Policy approved by	Vision & Values Committee
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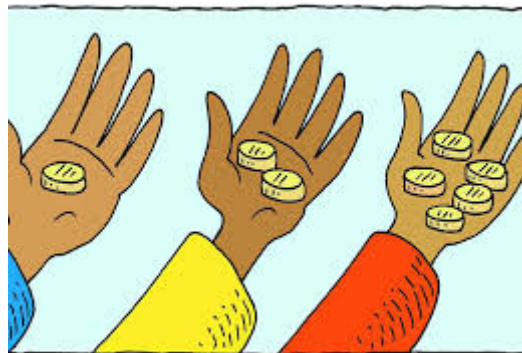
# Our School Vision

'Bring It!'

*Matthew 25:14-30*

# Our School Values

Courage, Creativity and Friendship



A master gives three servants a different amount of talents (coins) and asks them to use them wisely before he goes off travelling. Some use them well and double their original amount. Their master is pleased and he rewards them with more. One buries his only talent, thinking he's keeping it safe and doing the right thing - but the master is angry as he's done nothing with it and passed up the chance of making it grow.

**Whatever you bring, we will nurture it!**

## **Policy for Collective Worship**

### **St Dominic C of E Primary School Church of England School**

Date of update: January 2026

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our 'Bring It!' vision requires us to ensure our pupils are excited by and fully engaged in their learning and school experience more widely. We support them to use their talents to create positive school memories with their friends that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Our aim is to inspire a lifetime of adventure.

Bible link: Matthew 25:14–30, the Parable of The Talents.

Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

### **Policy Statement**

In St Dominic C of E Primary School, worship is central to the life of the school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different, and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At St Dominic C of E Primary School collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish. Through collective worship, pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being

invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

## **Legal Requirements**

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils. This takes place first thing in the morning and sets the tone for the day ahead. Worship in St Dominic C of E Primary School is distinctly Christian and reflects Anglican traditions.

The Governing body of St Dominic C of E Primary school has the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

## **The Right of Withdrawal**

In St Dominic C of E Primary School, there are significant numbers of children whose families hold a non-religious world view. Others have their own faith. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the commitment is made clear on induction, and it unity they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of St Dominic, it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that our distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher/RE Lead to discuss their

concerns and requirements. It will be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school will comply.

## **Guiding Principles**

Collective worship in St Dominic C of E Primary School aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality

whilst contributing to the communal journey.

- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

### **Links to other policies and documentation**

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Spirituality
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included on the school website.

### **Procedures and practice**

Collective worship is planned on a two-year rolling programme based around our three Christian values. These have been explicitly planned to link with special times in the Christian calendar. The three core values that have been

identified as underpinning our school vision are Courage, Creativity and Friendship. These three values are explored in collective worship regularly.

### **Inclusive**

Children at St Dominic C of E School come from a variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds. Great care is taken to ensure that all children feel valued and special. It is acknowledged that this daily act of worship is the only collective religious experience most of them will have. It is essential to make it as interesting, stimulating, thought provoking and impactful as possible. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey. Pupils are given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There is space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider.

### **Invitational**

Worship provides 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 are invited to pray if they wish to do so.

### **Inspiring**

Worship enables pupils and adults to ask big questions about who they are and why they do what we do. The aim of collective worship is to motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. To support this, the children have reflective spaces in their classrooms. This provides all children with the opportunity to respond to the collective worship in different age-appropriate ways. Parents and carers are informed regularly in the newsletter about the current value being explored in assemblies and a home school values sheet is placed within each child's home/school diary so that the value can be explored at home. When appropriate, children are encouraged to e-mail photographs of themselves displaying a particular Christian value at home and we encourage the children and adults in school to identify others living out our Christian values, which is then celebrated in school. This is to ensure that collective worship is always having an impact and is transformational.

### **Planning for Collective Worship**

Collective worship is planned every week by the Head of School/Lead Teacher/RE Lead. Each school day has a collective act of worship held every afternoon. It creates an atmosphere of sharing, discussion, reflection, and celebration and sets the tone for the days ahead. The spirituality logos are used in worship so that the children can see when they are exploring in, out and up. Children can apply to be a Worship Leader every year. These children have many different roles including setting up the worship, planning worship, leading worship, carrying out evaluations and helping to set up prayer spaces.

## **Gathering**

At the start of collective worship, pupils enter the worship space quietly to some music. The music played covers many different genres and traditions so that pupils are introduced to music they may not otherwise be familiar with. Candles are lit once everyone is gathered. The greeting is recited together.

## **Engaging**

The theme for the day is then introduced. This could be by Google slides, story, role play or video clip. Participation and involvement of the children is encouraged through reading the story, participating in drama and leading the worship sessions. Within worship a hymn is usually sung.

## **Responding**

Opportunities are provided for the children to discuss with a partner and to reflect individually on what they have just heard. A peaceful time for private reflection can be a rare occurrence in a busy school day so it is cherished and forms an important part of the worship.

## **Sending**

The children often leave with a challenge or something to think about. Prayers are read, often with the help of pupils. Music is listened to again at the end.

Flexibility is an essential part of collective worship. There is always flexibility to respond to local, national and global events when necessary. Sometimes it may be appropriate to hold collective worship in classrooms so that discussions can take place. The work of individuals and agencies in the wider community and in different parts of the world are explored and celebrated. In this way tolerance of those with different beliefs and cultures is actively promoted.

## Weekly Plan for Collective Worship

Monday	Big Start Collective worship: Stories from The Bible.
Tuesday	Weekly focus worship: Class Based.
Wednesday	Singing Worship
Thursday	Picture News
Friday	Celebration Worship

In addition, we meet half termly with our Trust online for a values based collective worship led by our Flourishing Lead and also meet with the Diocese for their online worship.

Collective worship is planned to link to Character Education, British Values and Community Impact. Collective worship is strongly embedded in school life, contributing to the overall ethos of the school by impacting on all areas of community life.

### Church/School Links

The children have many opportunities to visit St Dommick's parish Church during the school year. School services are often held at the Church at key Christian festivals.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluation by the Trust Flourishing Lead provide feedback to the Worship Lead, Head teacher, Clergy and the Governors about the current Collective Worship being provided at St Dominic C of E Primary School. Children's interest levels and attentiveness are observed whilst pupils and visitors also provide useful feedback after attending worship. These records always help to inform future planning. Junior worship leaders also carry out evaluations by the children.

## **Special Needs and Equal Opportunities**

The staff and Governors are committed to ensuring that every child will derive benefit from Collective worship whatever their ability, gender, ethnicity or creed. In this way, every attempt is made to ensure that materials used are appropriate to a range of ages, abilities, aptitudes and interests.

## **Health and Safety**

All religious artefacts and candles are handled respectfully and safely. All relevant risk assessments are carried out in line with our Health and Safety policy. Any visitors to Worship are met by the Head teacher first and follow our Visitors Policy.

## **Parental and carer involvement**

Parents/carers are kept up to date with the Christian value we are focusing on through the school newsletter, topic leaflets and the school website. Parents are invited regularly to share our special festival assemblies in school and in the Church.

## **Governor involvement**

Governors visit the school regularly, paying particular attention to worship and children's behaviour. The pupils' opinions of Collective Worship are considered when planning worship and they are also discussed annually in pupil conferencing by the RE Governor.