

Collective Worship Policy

2026-2027



'Every person is an individual
and also part of a community' 1
Corinthians 12:12-27

Introduction

In Church of England schools, daily Collective Worship is seen as the unique heartbeat of the school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God and spirituality, both as individuals and together.

Collective Worship is central to Escrick C of E Primary School as it strengthens and supports the Christian distinctiveness and spiritual development of our school and reaffirms our vision and core values. It celebrates our place in the community and is an essential component of an education that enables all pupils and adults to flourish.

Our Vision

We are all an important piece of the Escrick jigsaw and together we grow and learn. The Christian values of Wisdom and Joy underpin our Ethos and we value and respect everyone allowing us all to make a difference to the world.

'Every person is an individual and also part of a community' 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

At Escrick CE Primary School, our Religious Education curriculum is firmly rooted in our Christian vision and values. Our school is committed to providing a nurturing and inclusive environment where children can flourish academically, emotionally and spiritually. Religious Education has a core and central place within our curriculum and all our school values: Friendship, Learning, Opportunity, Unique, Respect, Resilience, Included, Solve Problems and Happy help each child to flourish. Our curriculum celebrates diversity and promotes respect for all individuals, encouraging children to develop empathy, kindness and a strong sense of community.

Through a rich and diverse curriculum, we celebrate the uniqueness of each child, promoting curiosity, creativity and critical thinking while nurturing their faith and encouraging them to explore their place in the world. We believe that everyone in our school is an important piece of the Escrick Jigsaw and together we grow and learn. The Christian values of Wisdom and Joy underpin our ethos, and we value and respect everyone allowing us to make a difference to the world.

Inclusive and Invitational

Inclusive

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. At Escrick, pupils and their families can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. We acknowledge that there are pupils and staff in our school that will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background.

Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils will be given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There will be space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. Collective worship will not be 'done to' but will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community.

It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion welcomes pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship. Although part of a national legislative framework, Collective Worship at Escrick

grows out of the local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds.

Invitational

Worship at Escrick is invitational. Worship will allow the freedom for those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and will be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer will always be accompanied by the option to reflect.

Intent

Collective Worship at Escrick C of E Primary School is important to us as a school community. It aims to enable pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Our shared understanding of opportunities to encourage spiritual development draws upon the work of Liz Mills, who uses the concept of a ring doughnut to explain Spirituality. The Doughnut represents the Whole Child. The outer ring is the tangible (Mind and Body), the hole represents the intangible (Spirit) but if there was no hole it wouldn't be a doughnut. This, for us, remains perhaps the best definition of spiritual development; it is the exploration and development of that hole in our centre that makes us whole.

Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present and still, which are often linked to invitations to pray and reflect. Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space to hear the Christian story. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service, through reflection on Bible verses and our school values.

Legal Requirements

The law requires the Headteacher and Governing Body of every school to provide a daily act of Collective Worship. Collective Worship is regarded as an essential part of the development of the whole child and as such is recognised by staff and governors as an important part of daily learning. We expect all children to attend but any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education reform Act. The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from Collective Worship.

Planning and Organisation

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship in our school either as a whole school or in classes. The structure of Collective Worship varies across the week but always follows the "Gather, Engage, Respond, Send" pattern.

Collective Worship follows our school vision and values and is structured around:

- Bible stories
- Big ideas
- School values
- Religious events and special days
- Special events in the life of the school and wider community

Collective Worship is led by different staff within the school, including the Headteacher. It is also led by clergy and visitors from our local church and community.

Children are encouraged to be involved in leading Collective Worship. This will take the form of preparing the hall for worship, sharing prayers and songs and leading worship on an issue for which they would like to raise awareness.

Gather, Engage, Respond and Send

Gather

Purpose: To create a welcoming and focused atmosphere.

As pupils and staff enter the hall they are encouraged to be still. Three candles will be lit to symbolise the Trinity and the presence of God.

Engage

Purpose: To share the message and content of the act of worship often through a story, reading, discussion and/or singing

A lesson about a spiritual or moral theme will be shared with pupils and staff in a way that is engaging to all.

Respond

Purpose: To provide opportunities to reflect, discuss, or creatively respond to the message.

Pupils and adults will be invited to respond to the message in a variety of ways across the week: prayers, singing, writing reflections, drawing, or participating in a group discussion.

Send

Purpose: To inspire the school community to consider how to integrate the message or moral in their own lives.

Collective Worship will end with a prayer or reflection on the theme of the day/ week.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As a school, we regularly evaluate our approach to Collective Worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors. We also welcome the parents' contributions through surveys, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. All leaders of Collective Worship are asked to reflect on their own practice.