



**Northern Lights**  
LEARNING TRUST



**Ian Ramsey CE Academy**  
**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP Protocol**

**Review Date: Autumn Term 2023**

**Next Review Due: Autumn Term 2024**

**Person in Charge: Headteacher**

The quality of relationships between all members of school staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers, is the area that is most associated with the ethos of the schools in our Trust. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. In the Church schools in our Trust, we follow the teachings of:

**‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.**

**‘This is my commandment: love each other’ - John 15:17.**

In our schools we believe every pupil is an individual who is valued for who they are.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks including in our Church schools in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that both Christian and spiritual love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environments are created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the schools are organised and the policies are written and implemented.

## 1. Statement of Intent

At Ian Ramsey CE Academy, our Christian vision, **'Together to learn, to grow, to serve'**, shapes all we do. This is embodied in the words: 'Each of you should use whatever gifts you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms' (1 Peter 4:10).

Our vision reflects the idea that each of us, individually and collectively, have a role to play in using the gifts we have received to serve others because that is our role; when we play our specific role as part of the whole, we function together as the body of Christ.

The Academy's vision is underpinned by 5 core Christian values: **joy, hope, forgiveness, wisdom, and perseverance.**

The Church of England Education Office Guidance give the following definition of collective worship:

*'Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. In the Church school pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all.'*

'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). Through the delivery of collective worship, we aim to ensure our school community flourish by using the gifts we have been given to enable everyone to learn, to grow and to serve. It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge, and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity, and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

At Ian Ramsey CE Academy, collective worship is the heartbeat of school life and is the main platform for exploring our vision. It is well planned and of high quality so the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Themes are also reflected in discussion with pupils and, where appropriate, referenced in curriculum teaching to further contextualise its significance in our school life.

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 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 Ian Ramsey CE Academy, 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 an understanding of worship in an Anglican school through being invited to participate in, or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the teachings of the Bible. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy, and pain of the world, regionally, nationally, and globally will be important aspects of planned worships. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to learn 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

(and other faiths<sup>1</sup>) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.<sup>2</sup>

### **Church of England Guidance**

The Collective Worship policy at Ian Ramsey CE Academy draws on guidance from the Church of England<sup>3</sup>. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and to set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that Collective Worship remains a relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

## **2. Legal Requirements**

Collective Worship in community schools is grounded in the historical past and enshrined in educational law to be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'<sup>4</sup>. In Church schools, the requirement to reflect the Anglican status of the school as expressed in its trust deed liberates those leading collective worship to build on the rich, lived diversity of Anglican tradition and identity. In the same way as worship in churches is aspirational, constantly evolving and being reimagined, there is an expectation of a continuous, dynamic reimagining of what Collective Worship means in the Church school.

Worship at Ian Ramsey CE Academy should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

Section 48 of The Education Act (2005) state that it is the duty of the governing body, where a school has a religious character, to secure any denominational education given to pupils; and the content of the school's Collective Worship are inspected. Therefore, the Trustees and Local Governing Body have 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.

## **3. The Right of Withdrawal**

In Ian Ramsey CE Academy, there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve, which is reflected in the vision of our school. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this is made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

<sup>2</sup> 'To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God.' William Temple (1881-1894).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship>

<sup>4</sup> Education Reform Act 1988 section 7(1) and the corresponding section of the Education Act 1993

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 to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may 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 faith or denomination, the governors and headteacher 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 must comply.

#### **4. Guiding Principles**

Collective worship, as part of supporting the realisation of our vision, in Ian Ramsey CE Academy 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 presents 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.
- 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 are invited to plan and lead 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.

## 5. How Collective Worship is Organised

### Leadership

- Worship takes place each morning. Year group worships take place twice per week in the main halls led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Year.
- For year groups not in the halls, worship takes place in tutor groups led by form tutors.
- Each term, Anglican services in pastoral houses, named after four Northern Saints: Aidan, Bede, Cuthbert, and Hilda, will take place, led by a member of the local clergy.
- Guidance from the local clergy, the Academy Chaplain, and Joint Diocese of Durham and Newcastle provide support where needed.

### Planning

- Worship themes are planned based on the liturgical calendar and reflect the Christian values and the theologically rooted vision on which they are based.
- Year group worships will be planned by the relevant senior leader and Head of Year.
- Tutor worships are planned by a key group of staff who work collaboratively to develop worships that reflect not only the theme, but contextualise for pupils in the local, national, and global setting, while offering pupils the opportunity to reflect on different perspectives to deepen their own understanding and growth.
- Key themes are identified across the calendar where pupils develop a worship that will be delivered to all tutor groups and support pupils' participation in planning worship.
- Support documentation is produced each year to provide guidance on scripture with explicit links to each theme and/or Academy values.
- A range of material will be used, including websites, stories, artwork, music, and film clips.
- Tutor worships focus on enabling pupils and staff to discuss and reflect on faith in today's world using contemporary stimuli and 'Big Questions'.

### Organisation

- Collective worship involves members of the school coming together each day.
- Across the year, collective worship will take place in tutor groups, year groups and pastoral house groups.
- Collective worship will take place every morning. Whole year group worships start at 8.40am, once pupils have registered. Tutor worship begin at 8.45am, following the completion of any form business.
- Anglican services will take place in the afternoon before the end of term.
- Collective worship follows the four phases of worship: **Gathering, Engagement, Respond, Sending out.**
- Ritual and liturgical responses are used to structure worships.
- Throughout the week, pupils have to opportunity to reflect on the theme explored, collectively as a tutor groups, and personally. Pupils have the option of adding their reflections to their tutor group Collective Worship Journal.

## **6. Staff development and training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Training is offered as part of ECT programme, our new staff induction, and as part of bespoke support. In addition, our school chaplain is available to support all staff, pupils, parents, governors, and the community whom we serve, regardless of the faith or belief of those groups and individuals. We have links with our local clergy and diocese who offer CPD that can be accessed by all.

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring collective worship should be carried out by the headteacher, SLT, Heads of Year and the worship coordinator. Useful strategies for collecting the evidence might include:

- Checking that practice meets legal requirements and is in line with the school's aims and policy.
- Checking that practice matches planning.
- observing pupils' attentiveness and level of interest.
- Conducting occasional formal observations of collective worship and providing feedback.
- Seeking feedback from pupils, staff, parents, governors, and visitors.
- Observing the extent of the collective worship's influence on pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school day holding regular discussions with colleagues.

The information gathered via one or more of the strategies listed above needs to be analysed carefully to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the collective worship. The worship coordinator has a role to play, alongside the headteacher and governor(s).

## **8. Links to Religious Education Curriculum**

All pupils study Religious Education from Year 7-11 as a core subject within the school curriculum, where all pupils study full programme of RE leading to a GCSE in the subject. The RE syllabus is constructed by our own specialist staff and is, in its principles, in accordance with our trust deed. Ian Ramsey CE Academy is partners in the Stockton SACRE group.

A copy of the current Syllabus, which is under continuous review and development, is available on in the Academy website. RE and Collective Worship play a key role in developing the ethos of the academy with an enquiring, open and inclusive spirituality.

## **9. Disseminating the policy**

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents/carers, and to all pupils via pupil voice and worship ambassadors. This policy is available on our school website.

## **10. 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, RSE and PSHE.
- Staff recruitment, retention, and professional development

- Care, guidance, and support.
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Working in partnership with parents, carers, and guardians.
- Working with the wider community.

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