

ARCHBISHOP BLANCH SCHOOL



Archbishop Blanch
— SCHOOL —

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

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**Community, Compassion, Forgiveness,
Friendship, Thanksgiving, Trust**

ARCHBISHOP BLANCH SCHOOL

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

This policy should be taken and used as part of Archbishop Blanch Church of England School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our Vision Statement and Instrument of Government aims.

As a Church of England School, we accept and respect all members of our community as unique children of God, precious in His sight and of infinite worth.

At Archbishop Blanch Church of England High School we aim to follow these Christian values in our lives together:

Community, Compassion, Forgiveness, Friendship, Thanksgiving and Trust.

This policy is implemented within the spirit of the school's Vision Statement:

As a Christian School, we strive for all to reach their full potential both academically and spiritually, making for a compassionate, forgiving, hardworking and trusting community. We aim to 'not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth' (1 John 3:18), as we serve not only each other but the wider community through our service to charitable causes.

The ethos of Archbishop Blanch School, embracing all that we stand for, is reflected in and expressed through Collective Worship; it derives from the traditions of the Anglican Church and this largely finds expression in the cycle of the Church's liturgical year.

Collective Worship plays an important part in the life of Archbishop Blanch, it is an integral part of the day when members of the school community meet together in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and where all present are given the opportunity to reflect and worship God.

Collective Worship provides the opportunity for students to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered.

At Archbishop Blanch we provide a daily act of Collective Worship for all students. Students are expected to attend all acts of Collective Worship. Having chosen a faith school for their child, it is expected that all students will support our various acts of worship which ensure that all faiths are nurtured and celebrated. However, we recognize that parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship on religious grounds; the school expects that withdrawal will only take place following discussion between parents and the Headteacher; if this is the case parents should contact the school to make an appointment with the Headteacher.

Aims and Guiding Principles

Worship at Archbishop Blanch should:

- ensure that our six Christian values of Community, Compassion, Forgiveness, Friendship, Thanksgiving and Trust play a pivotal role in our lives together.
 - Offer well-ordered and thoughtful praise to God which offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
 - Be woven through the life of the school, allowing pupils and adults to explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues.
 - provide an opportunity for students and adults to praise and reach out to God.
 - enable students and staff to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to respect all individuals as children of God.
 - heighten feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness and mystery.
 - Provide members of the school community the opportunity to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
 - share the central teachings of Jesus Christ and the Christian Church at an appropriate level.
 - explore and reinforce the Christian values of the school community, such as love, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace – a community where each individual really does matter.
 - Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others, a recognition of the vulnerability of self and of others
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 - provide an opportunity to approach God with a variety of forms of prayer; these might include praise, seeking forgiveness and asking on behalf of self and others.
 - Celebrate and give thanks for the achievements, talents and gifts within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.
 - Promote community cohesion
 - Provide opportunities to explore Big Questions about self, identity and belonging
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- foster respect and care for God's creation by a positive attitude to environmental issues.
 - provide enjoyable and memorable experiences of worship.
 - contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each pupil.
 - provide students with a strong foundation on which to build a vibrant and lifelong relationship with God.

At Archbishop Blanch School, we understand that our students' approach to worship will be at differing levels of commitment. Therefore, we aim through Collective Worship and our Religious Studies curriculum to:

"Nurture those of the faith, support those of other faiths and challenge those of no faith." [*Lord Robert Runcie*]

Our aim is to develop and share the school's Christian ethos, recognising that this should not be taken for granted, but worked at through worship and daily life.

Management of Collective Worship

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the Church of England foundation of the school is honoured and that the Collective Worship Policy is firmly based upon the values and vision of the school. There is a link governor for Collective Worship.

The Collective Worship Co-ordinator has responsibility for managing the Collective Worship on a day to day basis. They should also act in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues in terms of providing materials for form prayers/reflections.

What we offer

YEAR GROUP COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

These contain prayers, teaching and reflection. They are led by adults within the school community, often assisted by pupils; these can also be led by carefully selected members of the wider Faith community. Pupils participate in these main acts of worship once a week and often include the opportunity for hymns.

Form Worship

These contain prayers and teaching. These are led by the Form Worship Monitors, guided by form tutors. These take place daily when there is not year group collective worship. A yearly calendar which outlines the Weekly Worship Themes is published to all staff along with full form time resources for form tutors to follow. The weekly theme is shared in the school bulletin and the school website.

PRAYER

The Multi-Worship space has been recently been moved to the centre of the school and blessed by Bishop John and is always available for prayer. Pupils and staff are free to take advantage of this facility whenever they wish to. There are always opportunities for pupils and staff to make prayer requests. Each form has a Worship Monitor who oversees the coordination of a form Worship Book, in which students share and make requests for prayer. All formal exams begin with a prayer.

The school shall provide facilities for Muslim students to pray within school at the required time and respects the needs of other faiths on request. During worship, mention is made of all major world religions and students from other faiths are encouraged to lead services.

The school's Worship Committee [which includes the Headteacher, Head of Religious Studies, Chaplain, governor, other staff and Sixth Form Worship Co-ordinators] shall meet at regular intervals during the year to plan festival celebrations, to evaluate and make plans to evaluate and improve the school community's experience of Collective Worship,

The Worship Committee shall be given an annual budget to purchase resources, elements for Eucharists and photocopying.

Whole School Communion Services

There are several opportunities throughout the year for the school community to come together collectively as a whole and these are often linked to the church calendar; the annual Carol Service is held in the Anglican Cathedral. Year 7 have a Communion service to mark the beginning of their time at Archbishop Blanch. Services are also held for Year 11 and Year 13 to celebrate and

give thanks for their time at Archbishop Blanch School. Pupils lead the prayers and read the lessons and deliver a reflection tied to the theme of the service.

PROVISION FOR STAFF

Staff briefings always start with a prayer, delivered by varying members of the community. Staff are invited and encouraged to take part in all acts of collective worship.

PROVISION

The rhythm of daily worship allows pupils and adults to step away from the target-driven culture of much of education, creating a space for an encounter with faith in God. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on larger questions of meaning and purpose.

All acts of Collective Worship are in accordance with the guidance issued in circular 1/94 which states that worship should be of a “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”. By broadly Christian in this school we mean that pupils will have the opportunity to explore:

- The Trinitarian nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- The nature of human beings as those made in the image of God, beloved children of God, part of his creation.
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity’s relationship with God;

- The central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion, charity and service;
- The Bible
- The place of scripture, tradition, and historical theological exploration as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus, and as a source of inspiration and guidance;
- Prayer, and its importance;
- The symbols of Christianity;
- The Church calendar and the cycle of the Church year.

Stories and other material from another faith may be used from time to time where these might effectively illustrate Christian values and support the development of respect for self and other people.

We acknowledge and welcome a large number of students and staff from other Christian groups. The Anglican tradition has a firm commitment to ecumenism, and this finds expression at Archbishop Blanch School through members of other Christian traditions leading worship and bringing to it the richness of their experience.

We value the religious experiences that students and staff of other faiths bring to Archbishop Blanch community. The values and heritage of those faiths are celebrated in our worship at appropriate times. Archbishop Blanch School pledges itself to be a place where students and staff of all races and religions will find safety and respect for themselves, their families and their traditions.

All acts of Collective Worship at Archbishop Blanch School take into account the pupils’ ages, aptitudes and backgrounds, and reflect and celebrate the Christian faith foundation **of the school**. We strive for inclusivity in our worship, and we only ever invite participation.

The school recognises that there is a difference between acts of collective worship and the assembly of pupils. On some occasions, assembly may precede or follow an act of Collective Worship. When this happens the transition from assembly to worship will be marked in some

suitable way e.g. the lighting of a candle or reflecting on an image on the screen, moments of silence and reflection etc.

Inclusive, Invitational, and Inspiring

Inclusive: 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. Many pupils and staff at Archbishop Blanch 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 should be given the opportunity to think and ask questions.

There should be space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. It is an expectation that care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

Collective worship will not be 'done to' but will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion requires pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship. Although part of a national legislative framework, collective worship in the Church school grows out of the local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds

Invitational: Parents, pupils and adults can expect to encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There should be no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship should 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. The metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' captures this idea. The warmth of the fire derives from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at its heart. There is no value to an encounter with a watered down, lowest common denominator version of faith. Importantly the door is open, all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable. Pupils and adults should always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and should be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer should always be accompanied by the option to reflect.

Inspiring: Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter at Archbishop Blanch to be inspirational. Worship should be formational and transformational: it should enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It should motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result of inspirational collective worship, they should be inspired to become courageous advocates of causes. It should encourage them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

PLANNING, RECORDING AND EVALUATION

Collective Worship will be planned, delivered, resourced, monitored and evaluated throughout the year. The content and methodology of Collective Worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning. Furthermore, the school seeks to involve pupils in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of worship and has structures in place to see this happens.

Themes of the week are published and distributed at the start of the new academic year and a reminder is included in the weekly bulletin. It is expected that those leading worship that week will relate their worship to this theme.

We endeavour to make themes broad enough to allow all those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective. This will mean by the end of the week that pupils will have had the opportunity to reflect on the theme from a variety of viewpoints. This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that worship leaders may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

RESOURCES

The school provides each form with resources sourced by the Collective Worship Coordinator to support, encourage and inspire student led acts of Collective Worship. There is an annual audit of resources at the start of the new academic year where new items are introduced and missing items replaced. The school has an allocated budget to update and develop these resources.

DEVELOPING STAFF EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE

Parents, pupils and adults are entitled to be led in worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a Church school context and by those who are professional in their approach to working with pupils and adults from all faiths and none. Therefore, it is our priority to build up the expertise of staff, pupils and other adults in facilitating collective worship in Church schools. To do this we ensure the following.

- Our Collective Worship Coordinator has access to regular training, primarily through local diocesan education teams.
- Pupil worship leaders are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of worship.
- Worship leaders have access to high quality and current resources.
- The governing body should have robust systems in place to monitor the impact of worship effectively; this monitoring will include and meaningfully involve pupil voice. Those facilitating worship should have the opportunity to receive feedback and to hear the outcome of evaluation.
- Those from outside agencies and church groups invited into the school to facilitate worship should be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and the school's vision.
 - The Collective Worship Coordinator delivers CPD on delivering worship and the nature of spirituality; examples of best practice are shared amongst staff.