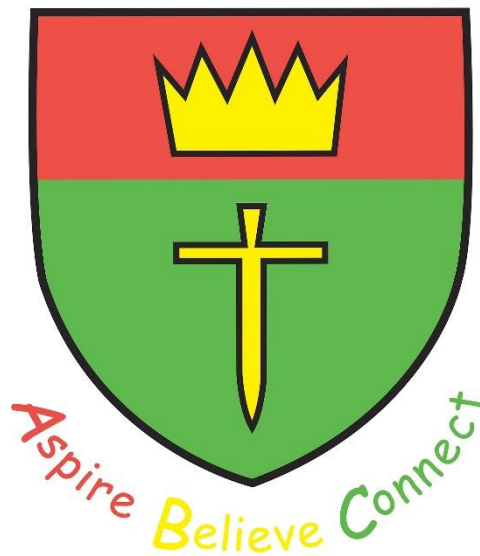


St Oswald's CE VA Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

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Collective Worship Policy:

Principles and Implementation

Agreed by governors: March 2026

Implementation date: March 2026

Review date: March 2029

Vision, Ethos and Values



Background

Our Vision, Ethos and Values Statement is an easy-to-understand model of how we aim to live at St Oswald's.

Vision

Our school vision is 'God has a plan' ([Jeremiah 29:11](#)). At St Oswald's, we believe that God has a wonderful plan for us all and we seek to discover that plan on a daily basis, weaving this into our school values and all aspects of school.

Ethos

Sitting below love lies our school's ethos: *Aspire, Believe, Connect*. As easy as A, B, C, this statement is easy to remember and most importantly represents what we want our children to do in every aspect of their education and lives.

Core Christian Values

The mission statement is underpinned by seven core Christian values that each link to one aspect of *Aspire, Believe, Connect*. As children aspire to be the best they can be in every way, they will grow in wisdom. In order to believe in themselves and develop their own beliefs about the world around them, our children are taught about the importance of trust and strength on their journey. We also believe in the values of peace and friendship in helping us to connect with those around us. Binding together all of these and very much at the heart of our values - and indeed the Christian gospel/Jesus' teaching - is love ([John 3:16](#); [Mark 12:31](#)).

Planning

Themes

We believe that God has a great plan for us all ([Jeremiah 29:11](#)). The collective worship themes in St Oswald's are planned in line with the school vision, ethos and values primarily by the collective worship coordinator, but also in consultation with other stakeholders in the school, including the Christian Council. With each weekly theme, there will be a link to at least one of the core Christian values of our school. The context of each week is crucial; this is sometimes determined by the time of year (theme fitting around the calendar context) or can alternatively be a way of making a given Bible story relevant and purposeful to the children of St Oswald's (contextualising the theme). Themes are decided upon on a termly basis rather than a yearly basis so that the impact of worship in one term can be responded to in the following term, which is in line with learning and teaching at St Oswald's.

Scripture

We believe in the importance and power of scripture ([Ephesians 6:17](#)). All scripture is chosen in line with weekly themes. Scripture drives our learning and teaching within worship, and as a thriving and diverse worshipping community, we look to understand the Bible in both its original context and how it can be applied

to life in modern day Britain. The weekly scripture reference is displayed in the main hall and all classrooms alongside weekly themes, with these boards being updated on a weekly basis. Whilst initially a resource for RE, the big frieze is used in worship to help make the Bible accessible for all stakeholders.

Whole-school Worship

Whole-school worship sessions are planned by different members of the school community in line with the weekly theme and scripture. Senior leaders, other staff members, the Christian Council and other children are all involved in the planning of whole-school worship sessions. These plans are made available to all staff in advance of the worship session itself.

Weekly Worship Sessions

Whole-school Worship

Every Monday morning, the leader for the weekly theme (made clear on the termly worship plan) introduces the theme of the week to the whole school and relates this to the school's Vision, Ethos and Values Statement. All staff attend and take an active role within these sessions, interacting with children on their level by sitting with them. Being present in worship from the start of the week also helps staff in planning and delivering the rest of the week's content and gives them an opportunity to develop their own spirituality.

Praise through Music Worship Sessions

We are enthusiastic musical worshippers at St Oswald's ([Psalm 150: 1-5](#)). Worship through music happens in two different ways, depending upon the time of year. For most of the year, particularly when important events on the church calendar are approaching, such as Harvest, Christingle, Christmas and Easter, then children are brought together for whole-school singing in preparation for those upcoming church services. Additionally, music workshops are run by class teachers. These workshops give children the opportunity to engage with worship themes and the Bible through music in a variety of ways other than simply singing, such as through composition, digital music, playing instruments and writing parodies. All of these tasks will be tied closely in with the school's vision, ethos and values and crucially the relevant core Christian value for that time of year.

Weekly Challenges

Children across the school complete worship challenges in response to whole-school worship sessions and in line with weekly themes. Tasks are set for the children by selected members of staff across school. Children then complete these tasks in their own classes the following day in worship sessions that are led by class teachers. Challenge evidence is recorded by staff and shared with the weekly worship leader, who may then share this with the school community on a Friday or consider these challenges for the weekly 'Worshipper of the Week' award.

Agents of Change Worship

We believe that Jesus taught us all to show our love to others through action (1 John 3:18) and agents of change worship sessions allow us to do this. These sessions allow our children to connect with the wider community and to make a positive difference around causes that they feel passionately about, with perhaps the greatest example of this being the 2025/26 #saveourchurch campaign. Equally, we learn about Christian agents of change from the past who have had a positive impact on the world, such as through the 'Agents of Hope' book provided by the Church of England in December 2025.

Praise and Celebration Worship

Fellowship is integral to us all at St Oswald's, believing that God will be present when we gather (Matthew 18:20). Every Friday morning, we celebrate the achievements of children both in and out of school. All children and staff are present at these sessions, with parents and carers being invited along each week, too. Each meeting begins and ends with a time of worship, during which the weekly theme will be revisited and children may be given the opportunity to share challenge evidence, reflections and pieces of music that they have worked on across the week. The St Oswald's worshipping community is at its strongest numerically on a Friday morning and staff, parents and carers are encouraged to take an active part through carefully prepared all-age worship, planned and delivered by the collective worship coordinator.

Evidencing Collective Worship Work

Evidence from collective worship sessions is now kept electronically. Each week, staff will add one example of a weekly challenge and one example of a reflection. Examples of work completed in praise through music sessions, photographs taken

during sessions and any further work will also be added on a termly basis. This work is not to be marked, as this is not a means of assessment, but rather a portfolio of evidence demonstrating and celebrating children's engagement in and enjoyment of collective worship sessions. Children's spiritual development can be tracked using these records.

Displays

The main collective worship displays are in the hall. These are updated on a termly basis and are in line with worship themes. Each display includes the verse of the week for the relevant theme that the board depicts and shows children's reflections and work from worship sessions. The first display on entrance to the school introduces visitors immediately to what our school is all about, with our Vision, Ethos and Values Statement at the very heart of this board, just as it is at the heart of our school, with members of the Christian Council shown.

Worship Tables

The central worship table can be found in the hall, whilst each classroom also has a worship table. The cloths on all these tables will be changed regularly according to the liturgical colours in line with the Church of England calendar. A Bible, candle and cross will also be on each table, with any further elements linking to the weekly theme welcome. Worship tables should be visible for children, staff and visitors alike to see and be brought to the front of a room when practically possible to do so in order to heighten importance and draw attention to them.

Church Services

There are four main church services across the year, providing regular opportunities for us to gather together the wider worshipping community ([Matthew 18:20](#)). These are: Harvest Festival, Christingle Service, Christmas Nativity & Singalong and Easter. These are prepared by the collective worship co-ordinator and each of these will involve children from across the whole school. Relevant aspects of the Ethos and Values Statement feed directly into these services through the strategic planning of worship themes around the Christian calendar. Parents and carers are invited along to each of these services. The children themselves hold each of these services together, planning and writing their own parts. Further services and events at the church, such as around Pentecost and music concerts for the whole school community, are also added to the annual services, due to how much all stakeholders thoroughly enjoy the time we share together at church.

Home Learning

At St Oswald's, we provide opportunities for pupils to complete talk homework linked to collective worship themes. Equally, we encourage parents and carers to become agents of change themselves alongside their children.

Role of the Co-ordinator

There is a named co-ordinator responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of collective worship throughout the school. Their role is to:

- provide support, advice and resources to members of staff;
- monitor the delivery of collective worship sessions;
- attend relevant training and support staff through the delivery of training sessions;
- set the new worship themes prior to the beginning of each new term;
- communicate rationale of worship themes clearly to the Headteacher in order to aid delivery of whole-school worship sessions.

The Christian Council

The Christian Council is a small group of KS2 children, selected at the beginning of the year and distinct from the School Council (there is no overlap of personnel between the two councils). The Christian Council meet on a regular basis, completing the following duties:

- championing the Christian ethos of the school;
- understanding and discussing the person of Jesus Christ;
- working alongside other Christians, including members of the church, staff and governors;
- planning acts of worship;
- delivering/leading acts of worship;
- showing love in action;
- leading the school in new initiatives.

Monitoring

Collective worship sessions are monitored by the co-ordinator, governors and the Christian Council. Learning walks during worship sessions provide an opportunity for a flavour of worship sessions to be established across the school. Collective worship digital evidence is also monitored, both by the collective worship co-ordinator and those who work alongside him.

Collective Worship non-negotiables

These are set by the collective worship co-ordinator and are to be adhered to by all who lead worship sessions.

1.	COLLECTIVE WORSHIP THEME - Updated collective worship theme for the week to be displayed in the room where worship is taking place (unless the act of worship is happening outside, in which case this should be told verbally to the children).
2.	COLLECTIVE WORSHIP TABLES - Collective worship tables to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the correct colour cloth on according to the liturgical calendar;- electronic candle;- Bible (open at the scripture of the week);- cross;- any other items relevant to the individual class or to a specific week's worship theme.
3.	POSITION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP TABLE - Collective worship tables can be placed anywhere in the classroom for the week, but should be brought to a place where all children can see it during acts of collective worship (such as the front of the classroom).
4.	DIMMED LIGHTS - Lights to be dimmed for all acts of collective worship.
5.	CANDLES - Electronic candles to be turned on at the start of all acts of worship and then turned off at the end.
6.	GREETING - All acts of worship to begin with a greeting.
7.	MUSIC - Music can be used at the start, middle or end of acts of worship, or throughout. This music should be distinctly Christian.
8.	SCRIPTURE - Christian scripture to be referred to in all acts of worship, whether this be the scripture for the week aligned to the theme or something different (for instance, a passage suggested in the weekly Picture News collective worship slide).
9.	PRAYER/REFLECTION - All acts of worship to include a prayer or a time of personal reflection around the content of the worship. The school prayer is to be encouraged, along with prayers suggested by Picture News or provided by the individual leading worship for a given week.
10.	DISMISSAL - All acts of worship to end with a dismissal, signifying the time for the candle to be turned off, the lights to be undimmed and the worship table (if moved) to be taken back to its usual position in the classroom.

Educational Visits and Visitors in School

Visitors from all walks of life will come into the school across the year and deliver worship sessions to the children. These visits are strategically planned in line with worship themes across the year. Worship visits to places outside of school are encouraged in order to challenge children's views that worship only happens within four walls, in a church or inside school. Our agents of change worship sessions provide a further opportunity for visitors to be invited into school and visits to

be arranged. When it is not possible for visitors to attend school, then Google Meet sessions or pre-recorded videos are arranged.

Equal Opportunities

Collective worship at St Oswald's is both distinctly Christian and wholly inclusive. Every child is entitled to be taught collective worship regardless of their age, culture, gender, background or special need or disability. Collective worship develops a balanced view of the multi-cultural society which we live in without compromising the faith, non-faith or cultural background of any pupil. We begin prayers with the invitation, "Feel free to pray or reflect however you feel comfortable" as an example of how we are fully inclusive of all different beliefs, religious and non-religious.

Role of Stakeholders in Policy

All stakeholders have a role to play in our policy. Governors have a responsibility to support and uphold our school's Vision, Ethos and Values Statement and collective worship. There is a named foundation governor responsible for monitoring the impact of collective worship upon our school community and supporting in its delivery. Children and staff are empowered in leading and being active participants in all collective worship sessions, whilst parents are encouraged to join our worship across the year. Parents have equally taken the lead on becoming agents of change, such as through the 2025/26 #saveourchurch priority.