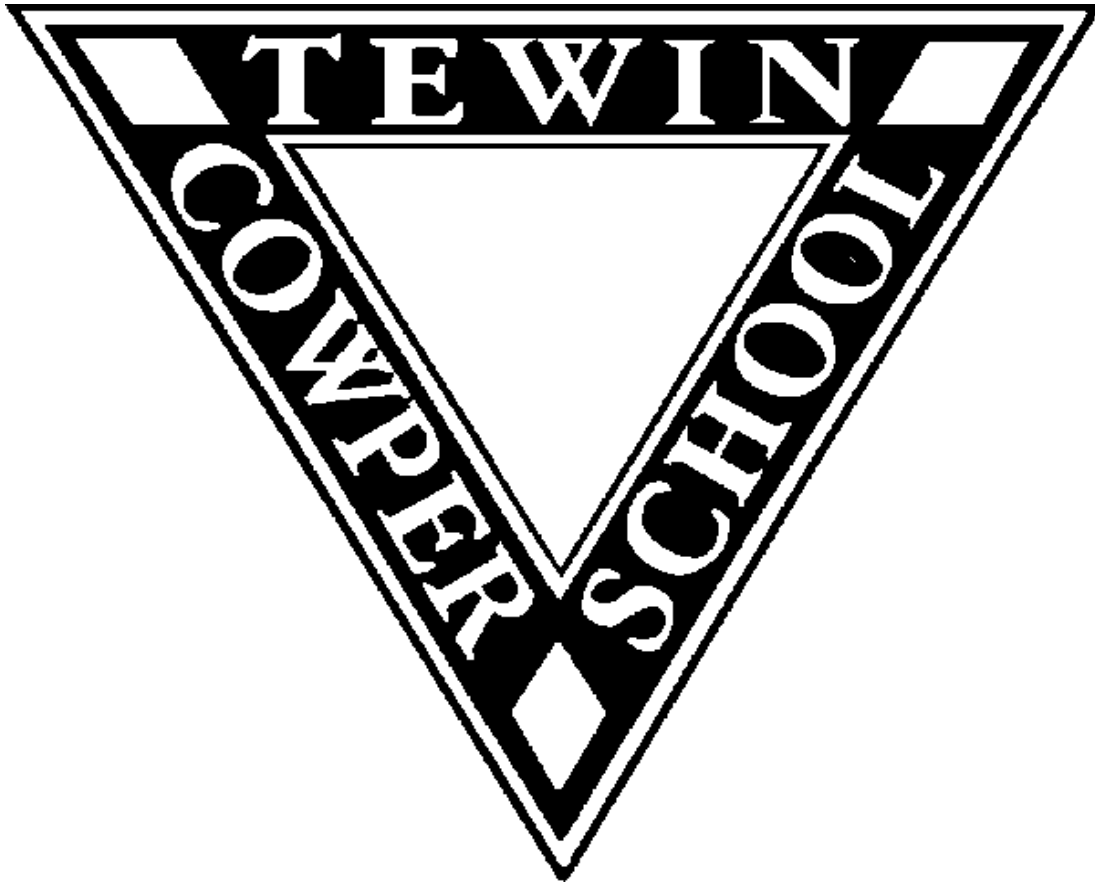


The Lord, the God of Jacob will teach us His ways so that we may walk in His paths.
Micah 4:2



Collective Worship Policy

Reviewed by staff: Spring 2025
Approved by Governors: Spring 2025
Next Review Date: Spring 2027

V4

Our Vision

Our vision and aims are inspired by the story of Jacob's dream in the bible (Genesis 28:10-22). In his dream, Jacob saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending. God told him in the dream that He would always be with him on his journey, if he trusted him. God promises to be with us on our journeys just as he was with Jacob: 'The Lord, the God of Jacob, will reach us His ways so that we may walk in His paths'. Micah 4:2

We value each child as a unique individual, building on the experiences they bring to their journey. We aim to connect children's lives with our Christian values through exploration, discussion, discovery and reflection so that they know how to make good choices in their lives and continue on their journey as successful, caring citizens of God's World. We believe Collective Worship of our school community is a central part of our school life, and a place where staff and children can reflect on their own spiritual and life journeys as we reflect on our Christian values and the wisdom of the Christian tradition.

Policy Statement

As a Church school, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos where children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. It is the heartbeat of our school life – a time to gather together, reaffirm our vision and associated values and celebrate the central role that each pupil and adult have to play in our community.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

The Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of

Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.

- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises, but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).¹ Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will 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. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship (e.g. gather, engage, respond, send). We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>

In Tewin Cowper we aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster links with St Peter's Church, involving the Reverend Susannah Underwood in leading collective worship weekly in school. All of the children and staff visit church at least six times per year as part of the Christian calendar. Every one of these services is led by a class so that each year group from Year 1 to Year 6 gets the chance to lead whole school worship. Year 6 also have a special service at St Peter's for themselves and their parents in their final week of the summer term, where they are presented with a bible and offered a blessing.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At Tewin Cowper, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to Tewin Cowper, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Planning

Planning for Collective Worship is led by the Headteacher and is undertaken in consultation with the school's adult community. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year and allow space for reflection on current events as they occur. The headteacher ensures that leaders and visiting speakers receive copies of the long-term plans. Individuals and groups are responsible for using the plans as a basis for developing their own short-term plans for individual acts of worship.

Organisation

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups. Where collective worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering.

The headteacher and other members of staff together with groups of children take turns to conduct Collective Worship. The local vicar, Reverend Susannah Underwood takes Collective

Worship in school once a week.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point e.g the Collective Worship table has a cloth that changes colour with the liturgical season and includes a cross and bible. We light three candles at the beginning of each Collective Worship in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our Christian values are displayed in the hall.

Governors are also welcome to attend acts of worship at any time. Parents are invited into school to Collective Worship when it is the chance for their child's class to lead worship that term.

Resources

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We have a collection of CDs which are used to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. Those leading worship also access professional development opportunities.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. We intend to make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead it before asking them to submit short term plans. The coordinator and others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The headteacher as Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years. The named governor for Collective Worship monitoring is Susannah Underwood.