



Leigh St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Date of Policy: September 2026

Date of Review: September 2028

Approved by: Governing Body

Collective Worship Lead: Sarah Watson

Headteacher: Sarah Watson

Our Theologically Rooted Christian Vision

Our collective worship is rooted in and gives expression to our school's theologically rooted Christian vision:

"As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so continue to live in him. Keep your roots deep in him and have your lives built on him. Be strong in the faith, just as you were taught. And always be thankful."

Colossians 2:6–7

At Leigh St Mary's Church of England Primary School, our vision is to be a flourishing Christian community where every child is inspired to learn, believes in their potential and achieves all they are called to be.

Rooted in the love and grace of God, revealed through Jesus Christ, we seek to ensure that every member of our school family is "rooted and built up in Him", growing in faith, wisdom and character.

Guided by our Christian values of Friendship, Respect, Honesty, Perseverance, Kindness and Love, we seek to nurture a community where love shapes relationships, everyone is valued and each person knows that they belong.

Through our motto, Inspire, Believe, Achieve, we strive to enable every child and adult to flourish spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally and to make a positive difference in God's world.

1. Statement of Intent

At Leigh St Mary's, collective worship is the daily heartbeat of our school. It is not simply a statutory requirement but a precious time when our school family gathers together, pauses from the busyness of daily life and creates space to encounter faith, reflect, pray, sing, question, celebrate and consider how we might live.

This reflects Manchester Diocese guidance, which describes collective worship as an opportunity to gather as a community, give thanks, be still, explore big questions, encounter the teachings of Jesus, affirm Christian values and celebrate significant events within the Christian year.

Collective worship is one of the principal ways in which our Christian vision is explored and lived. Through worship, pupils and adults are encouraged to consider what being "rooted and built up in Him" means for their relationship with God, themselves, other people and the wider world.

Our aim is for worship to create a RIPPLE. Something encountered during worship should have the potential to travel beyond the moment itself: shaping thinking, relationships, choices and actions.

We want children and adults to leave worship asking:

What have I encountered? What does this mean for me? What might I now do differently?

2. Aims of Collective Worship

Through collective worship we aim to:

- provide daily opportunities for pupils and adults to gather as a Christian community and explore our theologically rooted vision;
- provide inclusive and invitational opportunities to encounter and worship God;
- deepen understanding of Jesus Christ, Christian belief and biblical teaching;

- explore and live out our Christian values of Friendship, Respect, Honesty, Perseverance, Kindness and Love;
 - create opportunities for prayer, stillness, reflection, awe and wonder;
 - enable pupils and adults to consider spiritual, moral and ethical questions;
 - develop understanding of Anglican traditions, prayer, liturgy and the Christian year;
 - enable pupils to develop their own spiritual understanding and respond with integrity;
 - encourage children to consider the needs of others and develop compassion, justice and responsibility;
 - develop pupil leadership and ownership of worship;
 - strengthen relationships between school, home, parish and the wider community;
 - celebrate achievement, service and the contribution of every member of our school family;
 - inspire pupils and adults to put our Christian vision and values into action.
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3. The RIPPLE Approach to Collective Worship

RIPPLE provides the overarching journey for collective worship at Leigh St Mary's.

Rather than exploring a Christian value through isolated acts of worship, each half term takes pupils and adults on a progressive spiritual journey. The diocesan RIPPLE planning materials move from Mirror – looking in, through Window – looking out, to Door – going out, enabling reflection to lead towards response and action.

R – Recognise: *Mirror – looking in*

We begin by exploring and recognising the Christian value.

Children encounter relevant Scripture and biblical stories and consider questions such as: What does this Christian value mean? What does Jesus teach about it? How would we recognise it?

This provides the theological roots from which subsequent reflection grows.

I – I / Me: *Mirror – looking in*

Pupils and adults consider the value personally.

They reflect upon questions such as: What does this value mean to me? How do I demonstrate it? Is it a strength of mine? When do I find it difficult?

This creates opportunities for self-reflection, spiritual development and personal growth.

P – People: *Window – looking out*

Attention moves from ourselves towards other people.

Children consider examples within the Bible, history, their own lives and the wider world. They recognise people who demonstrate the value and consider what they can learn from them.

P – Partner: *Window – looking out*

Children begin to consider how understanding might lead to action.

They ask: *How can we support others through this value? How could we act to improve the lives of others? Who could we work with or learn from?*

This stage provides important opportunities to explore courageous advocacy, justice, compassion, service and responsibility. These questions are explicitly built into the Manchester Diocese RIPPLE planning model.

L – Lead: *Door – going out*

Pupils consider their own responsibility to model the value.

They explore Jesus as a role model and consider how they themselves can influence others positively.

Pupil leadership, including **Team Worship**, is particularly important at this stage as children increasingly recognise that leadership within a Christian community is about service to others.

E – Equip: *Door – going out*

Finally, pupils are challenged to respond.

The central questions become:

What will I do differently?

What can I teach others?

How can I equip others?

The RIPPLE reflection journal captures this particularly powerfully through its final question:

“When I walk out of the door, what will I do differently?”

This is central to our understanding of effective collective worship. Worship should provide opportunities for spiritual encounter and reflection, but it should also have the potential to **change attitudes, choices, relationships and actions**.

4. Our Christian Values and the School Year

Our six Christian values provide the principal half-termly themes for collective worship:

Friendship – Respect – Honesty – Perseverance – Kindness – Love

The positioning of values within the year is purposeful and reflects the rhythm of school life and, where appropriate, the Christian calendar.

For example, Friendship is explored as pupils return following the summer break and rebuild relationships within their classes and wider school family. Perseverance is particularly meaningful when pupils are encountering challenges and statutory assessments. Kindness connects with our Lenten focus, including our 40 Acts of Kindness, through which reflection becomes practical action.

The values are explored through Scripture and the example of Jesus so that children understand their Christian theological foundations rather than seeing them simply as desirable behaviours.

5. Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring Worship

In accordance with Church of England and Manchester Diocese guidance, collective worship at Leigh St Mary's will be inclusive, invitational and inspiring.

Inclusive: We recognise that our pupils, staff and families come from Christian, other religious and non-religious backgrounds. Worship is distinctly Christian while being accessible and welcoming to everyone. Language does not assume that everyone present holds the same beliefs.

Invitational: Nobody is compelled to pray, sing or make a declaration of faith. Children and adults are invited to participate and are given freedom to respond with integrity. Language such as *"I am going to pray; if you would like to make this prayer your own, you may say Amen"* supports this approach. This invitational form is also modelled within the diocesan planning guidance.

Inspiring: Worship should engage hearts and minds. Through stories, Scripture, music, prayer, discussion, imagery, silence, drama, questioning and reflection, we seek to inspire pupils and adults to consider deeper questions and how they might live differently.

6. Anglican Character and the Christian Year

Collective worship reflects our identity as a Church of England school.

The Bible is central to worship and pupils encounter a broad range of Scripture, including the teachings and stories of Jesus. Pupils become familiar with the Lord's Prayer, a range of Christian prayers, psalms, responses and simple Anglican liturgy. Manchester Diocese recommends these elements alongside observing the cycle of the Anglican year and its major festivals.

Throughout the year we recognise and celebrate significant seasons and festivals including Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost, as appropriate.

Worship is enriched through music, singing, prayer, silence, story, drama, visual imagery, artefacts and opportunities for reflection.

7. Partnership with St Mary the Virgin Parish Church

Our relationship with St Mary the Virgin Parish Church is central to our worshipping life.

We value the growing relationship with Vicar Jonathan, who contributes to worship within school, and we work closely with Reverend Richard, Deborah Catchatoor, Foundation Governor, Sandra Morris, and colleagues from Manchester Diocese.

At significant points within the Christian year, the school family gathers at St Mary the Virgin Parish Church. Children, including Team Worship, contribute to and lead aspects of worship at events such as Harvest, Christingle and Mothering Sunday.

These experiences enable pupils to encounter Anglican worship within an authentic church setting and strengthen the relationship between school, church, home and community. The Diocese identifies this partnership as particularly valuable in creating spaces where children can explore faith, spirituality and their own beliefs.

8. Organisation of Daily Collective Worship

An act of collective worship takes place every school day and may involve the whole school, classes, phases or other groupings. This reflects the statutory expectations set out in the diocesan guidance.

Our worship pattern includes whole-school worship, class worship, pupil-led worship, clergy and visitor-led worship and Friday Celebration Worship.

Class worship is led by teachers and makes purposeful use of Picture News. This provides opportunities to engage with topical local, national and global issues, encouraging children to discuss big questions, hear different perspectives and connect our Christian vision and values with the wider world.

Friday Celebration Worship provides an opportunity for the school family to gather and celebrate achievements, effort, character, service and the ways in which pupils have lived out our school values. Celebration remains rooted within worship and our Christian vision rather than being simply an awards assembly.

Where notices or administrative information are required, a clear distinction is maintained between these and the act of collective worship, as recommended within diocesan guidance.

9. The Structure of an Individual Act of Worship

Within the wider RIPPLE journey, individual acts of worship normally follow a recognisable Anglican pattern:

Gather → Engage → Respond → Send

We **Gather** as a community and intentionally mark worship as a special part of the school day.

We **Engage** with Scripture, story, Christian teaching, a value or a big question.

We **Respond** through reflection, prayer, singing, silence, discussion or another appropriate response.

We are **Sent** from worship with a thought, challenge or invitation which connects worship with how we live.

This structure is consistent with Manchester Diocese guidance, which recommends Gathering, Engaging, Responding and Sending as an effective framework for worship.

A candle, music, images, Bible, cross or other appropriate focal point may be used to create a sense of occasion and distinguish worship from other school gatherings.

10. Spiritual Development

Collective worship provides significant opportunities for the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults.

Through our RIPPLE journey we deliberately create opportunities for Mirror, Window and Door experiences: looking inward at ourselves, looking outward towards others and the world, and considering how our reflection might lead us to step through the door and act.

Pupils and adults are encouraged to experience stillness, wonder, questioning, prayer and reflection; consider meaning, purpose, identity and belonging; reflect upon their own behaviour and relationships; encounter forgiveness, hope, love and compassion;

recognise the contribution and needs of others; and consider their responsibility to make a positive difference.

Our RIPPLE Reflection Journals/Class Floorbooks provide opportunities to capture children's thinking, questions and responses over time. The journal deliberately progresses from recognising the value and its biblical basis to considering other people, action, role modelling and ultimately what pupils will do differently.

11. Pupil Leadership – Team Worship

Pupil voice and leadership are important features of collective worship at Leigh St Mary's.

Team Worship works alongside the Collective Worship Lead to develop worship across school. Pupils contribute to planning, delivery, reflection and evaluation and increasingly lead worship independently or collaboratively.

Team Worship also takes an active role in church services and significant celebrations within the Christian year.

This helps pupils recognise that worship is something they contribute to rather than simply receive. It develops confidence and leadership while enabling children to influence the spiritual life of their school.

12. Planning

The Collective Worship Lead oversees long-term planning in consultation with the Headteacher, clergy, staff and pupils as appropriate.

Planning takes account of our theologically rooted Christian vision, six Christian values, RIPPLE progression, biblical teaching, the Christian liturgical year, significant national and global events, the needs of our school community and opportunities arising through parish and diocesan partnerships.

The Manchester Diocese RIPPLE planning template supports the development of a coherent half-term journey, with Scripture and biblical stories underpinning each stage and weekly reflection questions encouraging increasing depth.

Those leading worship are supported with appropriate planning and resources. Visitors are made aware of our Christian vision, the inclusive and invitational nature of worship and the theme within the current RIPPLE journey.

13. Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact

We recognise that the quality of collective worship is determined not simply by whether worship has taken place, but by the impact it has upon pupils and adults.

The Collective Worship Lead, Headteacher, governors and Team Worship contribute to monitoring and evaluation. The Diocese recommends regular observation and record keeping involving governors, staff and pupils, with particular attention to preparation, content and delivery.

Monitoring will include worship observations, pupil voice, staff voice, Team Worship feedback, governor monitoring, review of planning, RIPPLE Reflection Journals/Class Floorbooks and consideration of how pupils understand and live out the school vision and values.

Evaluation asks whether worship successfully gathers and engages the community, provides genuine opportunities to respond, and sends pupils and adults out with something capable of changing their thoughts, feelings or behaviour. These principles closely reflect the Diocese's own monitoring framework.

In particular, we will ask pupils:

What did this worship make you think about?

What have you learned about God, Jesus or our Christian values?

Did anything make you wonder or ask a question?

Can you remember a worship that changed something you thought or did?

How has worship helped you make a difference to somebody else?

This enables us to evaluate the **ripple**, rather than simply the event.

14. Legal Requirements and Right of Withdrawal

Leigh St Mary's seeks to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20). All registered pupils take part in a daily act of collective worship unless withdrawn by their parents. Worship is consistent with the school's Church of England foundation and is broadly and mainly Christian in character. It takes account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds. Responsibility for its provision rests with the Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship and are not required to provide a reason. Parents considering withdrawal are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher so that the nature of worship can be fully understood. Where withdrawal is requested, appropriate arrangements will be made to safeguard and

supervise the pupil. Manchester Diocese recommends that any formal withdrawal arrangement is reviewed periodically.

15. Inclusion and Equality

Collective worship is for the whole school family.

We are committed to ensuring that worship is accessible regardless of pupils' faith or worldview, race, sex, disability, SEND, cultural background or individual need.

Reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate so that pupils can participate meaningfully. No pupil or adult is required to pray, sing or express a belief they do not hold.

Our aim is to create a space characterised by Christian hospitality, where everyone is welcomed and respected and where each person has the freedom to engage and respond with integrity.

16. Resources and Professional Development

Collective worship is appropriately resourced and has a budget distinct from Religious Education, in line with diocesan recommendations.

Resources include Bibles, crosses, candles and worship focal points; music and songs; visual and practical resources; RIPPLE planning and reflection materials; Picture News resources; and appropriate liturgical and seasonal resources.

The Collective Worship Lead and other members of staff access professional development through Manchester Diocese and other appropriate providers. Learning from training is shared with the wider staff team.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body, in consultation with the Headteacher, has overall responsibility for ensuring that collective worship meets statutory requirements and reflects the Christian foundation and vision of Leigh St Mary's.

The Headteacher and Collective Worship Lead oversee the quality, planning, development and evaluation of collective worship.

Staff support worship, model respectful participation and contribute to class and whole-school worship.

Team Worship contributes to planning, leading and evaluating worship and represents pupil voice.

Clergy and parish partners, particularly St Mary the Virgin Parish Church, enrich the worshipping life of the school.

18. Review

This policy will be reviewed every **two years**, or earlier where changes to legislation, Church of England or Manchester Diocese guidance make this necessary.

The policy should be read alongside the school's:

Theologically Rooted Christian Vision; Spiritual Development Policy; Religious Education Policy; Positive Behaviour Policy; Equality Policy; and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Our Aspiration

At Leigh St Mary's, we want collective worship to create a RIPPLE that travels beyond the act of worship itself.

We want pupils and adults to Recognise Christian teaching and values, consider what these mean for I – me, look towards other People, Partner with others to make a difference, Lead through their own example and be Equipped to put their learning, faith and values into action.

In doing so, collective worship helps our whole school family to become increasingly:

Rooted in faith, growing in love.

And, as we leave worship, we return to the question at the heart of RIPPLE:

"When I walk out of the door, what will I do differently?"

