PORTER CROFT
Church of England Primary Academy

Collective Worship Policy
Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy: **Headteacher**
Nominated Member of Governing Body Responsible for the policy: **Full Governors**
Date written: **November 2026** **Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body :** **16 November 2026** **Date of next review:** **November 2027**
This policy will be reviewed every year, and following any concerns and / or updates to National and Local guidance or procedures

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Collective Worship Policy

Context and philosophy:
Porter Croft is a Church of England Primary Academy that is rich in social, ethnic, and cultural diversity. We have a large community of Muslim families, and families of all faiths or no faith are warmly welcomed. The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.
At the heart of our academy is our school vision:
"Together we are Porter Croft: As God's children, we live in love, celebrate diversity, and grow in wisdom.

- *Respecting ourselves.*
- *Respecting others.*
- *Respecting the environment..*"

Rooted in the theological concept of Koinonia (Christian fellowship), collective worship provides the vital daily opportunity for our community to actively live out this vision together. As God's unique and loved children, we use our daily worship to translate His love into action by explicitly reinforcing our core commitments to respecting ourselves, respecting others, and respecting the environment.
Consequently, collective worship encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, promoting Christian values through the shared experiences it offers all pupils. Because we celebrate our diverse community and seek to nurture every individual to grow in depth, wisdom, and their full, God-given potential, we ensure that our collective worship is always inclusive, invitational, and reflective of our whole school family.

Legal Requirements
As a school, Porter Croft is required to provide a daily act of collective worship for all registered pupils in accordance with our Academy Funding Agreement and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body, in consultation with the Head teacher, to discharge this requirement.

As a Church of England Primary Academy, our daily acts of collective worship must be conducted in accordance with the Trust Deeds of the school. Worship must be distinctly Christian in character and reflect the beliefs, practices, and traditions of the Church of England.

<u>The law states:</u>
Daily Participation: All registered pupils must take part in an act of collective worship every day unless they have been formally withdrawn by their parents.
Timing: Collective worship may take place at any time during the school day.

Flexibility of Groupings: Worship does not need to involve the whole school at once; it can take place within any existing school group, such as classes, year groups, or Key Stages.

Appropriate Delivery: The content of all acts of collective worship must take into account the age, aptitude, and family backgrounds of our pupils.

Context and philosophy:
Porter Croft is a Church of England Primary Academy which is rich in social, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Families of all faiths or no faith are warmly welcomed, including our large community of Muslim families. The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, promoting Christian values through the experiences it offers all its pupils. The school deeply values and celebrates its

diversity, aiming to provide collective worship that is inclusive, invitational, and reflective of our whole community.

Purpose and Aims

In 1994, a government circular was issued to clarify the law on collective worship. Fulfilling this non-statutory advice alongside our school ethos, we ensure there are regular opportunities for pupils to:

- Worship God and explore their own personal beliefs.
- Consider spiritual and moral issues while reinforcing positive attitudes.
- Encourage broad participation and response across all age groups.
- Promote community and shared school values.

Through collective worship at Porter Croft, we also intend to:

- Develop respect and understanding of the self and of others.
- Create a sense of belonging and connecting to the world.
- Develop empathy and community with others.
- Provide security within which pupils can safely share their values and beliefs.
- Provide opportunities to question, reflect, and support pupils in combating prejudice.
- Encourage an appreciation of the intangible (e.g., beauty, truth, love, goodness) as well as for mystery, paradox, and ambiguity.

Practice and Implementation

At Porter Croft Church of England Primary Academy, collective worship provides a regular opportunity for our school community to gather, share, reflect, and explore personal beliefs, issues of identity, and questions of meaning and purpose.

Each week, a core value is introduced and deeply explored. In this way, collective worship makes a vital contribution to promoting pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development, serving as a powerful vehicle for supporting inclusion and building community cohesion. We achieve this by:

- Encouraging a sense of awe, wonder, and open enquiry.
- Exploring moral values and understanding their direct impact on individuals.
- Exploring key events that influence individuals, families, the school, and the wider global community.
- Reflecting on emotions, feelings, and personal beliefs.
- Discussing cultural identity, helping children appreciate, value, and understand diverse cultures.
- Actively promoting acceptance and deep mutual respect.

In accordance with our school's trust deeds and Christian ethos, our acts of collective worship are distinctly Christian in character, reflecting the rich traditions of Christian belief. However, in line with our vision to celebrate diversity, this does not restrict our focus exclusively to Christianity across a week, term, or year. It is our practice to draw on material from a wide range of spiritual, religious, and secular contexts, using traditional songs and prayers in ways that uphold the integrity of all children and their families. Our ultimate aim is to create a hospitable environment where every single child can meaningfully participate.

Pupils are consistently encouraged to explore ideas arising from the stimulus material presented by staff and visitors, and they are invited to reflect on them from their own perspectives. There is never any intention to impose religious ideas or beliefs. Instead, worship focuses on universal themes and questions that are relevant to all lives, irrespective of background.

The Structure of Worship and Prayer

Porter Croft follows a clear, four-part structure: Gather, Engage, Respond, Send. This provides a clear, reflective rhythm to help pupils explore faith, values, and community life.

- Gather (We Welcome): We bring the community together purposefully, using visual anchors (such as lighting a candle or playing music) to create a distinct, reflective atmosphere.

- Engage (We Listen): We explore a central theme, Bible story, or school value through a variety of engaging methods like drama, storytelling, or media, ensuring content is accessible to all.
- Respond (We Reflect): We provide dedicated space for pupils to process what they have heard through quiet reflection, prayer, or song.
- Send (We Live): We close by giving pupils a thought, challenge, or message to take away, explicitly linking worship back to translating love into action in their daily lives.

Spirituality and Reflection: Windows, Mirrors, and Doors
To structure reflection briefly and purposefully in most assemblies, we look at themes through three distinct lenses:

- Windows (Looking Out): Giving pupils an opportunity to look at the world, to wonder, and to grow an awareness of life, awe, and the experiences of others.
- Mirrors (Looking In): Giving pupils a moment to look inside themselves, and at others to reflect on feelings, choices, actions, and personal beliefs.
- Doors (Looking Ahead): Giving pupils a creative space to consider how they will act out what they have learned—moving forward to transform their thoughts into meaningful everyday actions.

Prayer, Integrity, and Pupil Leadership
Invitational Prayer: Children for whom it is appropriate are invited to turn their quiet reflections into a personal prayer. When traditional prayers are used to support reflection—such as The Lord's Prayer, our School Prayer or selections from our school prayer book—they are always grounded respectfully in the faith tradition from which they originate.

Preserving Integrity: The language used by staff will always protect the integrity of both the individual child and the faith tradition. Words used to invite reflection or prayer include:

"Let's make this a quiet time for thinking our own thoughts or, if you want to, talking to God about…"
"Here are some words that Christians/Muslims/people of faith use. If you know them, you might like to join in…"

"Listen carefully to these words. Perhaps there is one word or idea that you would like to remember and take with you today."

Class-Led Collaborative Worship (The Half-Termly Project): Each half-term, children from one class work with the Collective Worship Coordinator to plan, deliver, and assess an act of whole-school worship. To cater fully to our diverse school community, these sessions are based on a relevant theme from the Church calendar, a multicultural religious celebration, or a significant non-religious event. This ensures high pupil agency and a deeply inclusive worship experience. These are linked to our school Christian values and also the values of other religions and worldviews

Class-Led Whole-School Prayers: To further foster active pupil leadership, every class takes turns creating and sharing a prayer for the wider school community, following a rota managed by the Collective Worship Coordinator. These prayers are explicitly linked to our core school values. Following these sessions, formal feedback is gathered from both class teachers and pupils to evaluate the impact and meaning of the prayer.

Daily Classroom Reflections: In addition to whole-school gatherings, class-led prayers are occasionally used at key moments. This offers regular opportunities for quiet reflection, pause, and gratitude within the smaller classroom community.

Weekly Pattern of Collective Worship
<u>Monday: Whole School Worship (Led by Head teacher)</u>
Focus: Introducing the Christian Value of the week/term. This is a communal start to the week, using examples of Christianity in action, stories, music, and central themes including Faith & Worldviews.
<u>Tuesday: Whole School Worship (Led by Teachers)</u>

Focus: Deepening the weekly theme through age-appropriate discussion. This connects our core values to global events, justice, diverse religious festivals (such as Eid, Diwali, or Pesach), or moral issues, ensuring our worship is deeply reflective of our school's cultural diversity.

Wednesday: Singing Assembly
Focus: Exploring our school values and faith themes through a carefully selected repertoire of traditional Christian hymns, contemporary worship music, and multicultural songs of celebration. This brings the school together to express community cohesion, gratitude, and joy collectively, ensuring that the integrity of all faith backgrounds is preserved through the shared experience of music.

Thursday: Classroom Collective Worship & Reflection
Focus: Led by Class Teachers. This is a highly inclusive, conversational space where pupils reflect on the weekly values-driven theme to support their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. To fulfil the daily statutory requirement for collective worship, these sessions open with a distinct moment of reverence—such as lighting a classroom reflection candle—allowing children of all faiths and none to safely share their unique perspectives and experience spiritual flourishing.

Friday: Celebration and Thanksgiving Assembly
Focus: Fulfilling our collective worship requirement through a community celebration of pupil achievements, concluding with a shared moment of gratitude and reflection on the week's learning and values. This finishes with a class prayer linked to the value of the week, written and read by pupils on a rota. Parents and carers are warmly invited to attend.

Diocesan Seasonal Themes: Lights for Schools

Collective Worship at Porter Croft actively engages with the Diocese of Sheffield's 'Lights for Schools' framework. To support our pupils in living out our vision as "God's children", we follow the seasonal resources provided by the diocese every half term. This includes exploring key Christian themes across the school year, such as:

- Creationtide (Autumn 1)
- Season of Faith / *Shine Your Light Fortnight* (Autumn 2)
- Advent & Christmas (Autumn 2)
- Epiphany & Candlemas (Spring 1)
- Lent & Easter (Spring 2)
- Thy Kingdom Come (Summer 1/2)

These focus periods ensure our daily acts of worship remain varied, standardise our connection to the wider Church calendar, and empower our children to be "lights for Christ" in their local community.

External Visitors and Community Partnerships

To further enrich our collective worship, celebrate our diverse community, and strengthen local partnerships, Porter Croft welcomes a variety of external contributors and the pupil worship committee on a regular rotation:

'Take a Look at the Book': We partner with a small 'Take a look at the Book team, who regularly visit the school to bring Bible stories to life. Through structured, dramatic storytelling, our pupils are invited to actively act alongside the team, helping the whole school engage with Christian narratives in a creative and interactive way.

Clergy and Faith Leaders: Local clergy and community faith leaders regularly lead acts of worship. They offer spiritual leadership, deepen our understanding of Church of England traditions, and provide a visible link between the academy and the wider parish and global church communities.

Half-Termly Pupil-Led Worship Rotation: In addition to staff-led sessions, the Collective Worship Coordinator manages a formal, half-termly rota for pupil-led collective worship. This rotation gives groups of pupils a regular platform to independently or collaboratively share themes, values, and reflections with the entire school community, fostering deep leadership skills and peer-to-peer inspiration.

Community Extension and Extra-Curricular Enrichment: Family Faith and Fun

To extend our school vision of *Koinonia* and celebrate our diverse community beyond the formal school day, Porter Croft offers voluntary enrichment opportunities for our families:

Family Faith and Fun: This multi-faith group meets on a half-termly basis to explore our core Christian values in active, inclusive ways. Sessions include some off-site experiential learning (such as at the local bouldering wall) and on-site gatherings co-led by local church leaders and parents.

Bible Babble: Managed on a half-termly basis by a local church community worker (and former school parent), *Bible Babble* provides an informal, conversational space for parents and community members of all faiths or no faith. It offers a relaxed platform to chat, ask questions, and explore the Bible together, fully upholding our commitment to being inclusive and reflective of our diverse neighbourhood.

Oversight and Safety: While this voluntary group sits outside the daily statutory requirement for collective worship, it operates under full school oversight. The Head teacher ensures rigorous risk assessments and safeguarding compliance for all off-site visits and external leaders. The Collective Worship Coordinator periodically reviews the themes to ensure they preserve the inclusive, invitational integrity of our whole school family.

Parental Right to Withdrawal

At Porter Croft, we expect all pupils to attend collective worship. However, we respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from collective worship on grounds of conscience.

The Request: Parents wishing to exercise this right must make a formal request in writing to the Head teacher.
Prior Discussion: We invite parents to discuss their request with the Head teacher to understand how collective worship is structured at Porter Croft. Because our worship is inclusive, invitational, and reflective, it is designed to celebrate our diverse community and be accessible to children of all faiths and none, without any element of indoctrination or presupposition of faith.

Supervision: The school will provide safe, alternative supervision for any pupil who is formally withdrawn during the act of worship.

Monitoring and evaluation

To ensure our collective worship remains impactful, inclusive, and fully compliant, a robust monitoring and evaluation cycle is implemented throughout the academic year.

Monitoring Methods

Pupil Worship Committee: A diverse group of pupils meet monthly to review recent worship sessions, offering valuable pupil voice and peer feedback.

Annual Review & Action Plan: Every July, all monitoring and evaluation data is analysed to adapt the following year's worship calendar. This ensures our worship themes remain responsive to shifting global events and the evolving demographic profile of our school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

<u>The Governing Body is responsible for:</u>
Reviewing policy on a periodic rotation in close partnership and consultation with the Head teacher.

<u>The Head teacher is responsible for:</u>

Designing the curriculum framework by planning and overseeing the long-term calendar of themes, values, and faith celebrations.

Securing daily provision by ensuring that acts of collective worship occur every school day at an appropriate time and in a meaningful format.

Managing parental withdrawals by arranging safe, alternative supervision and maintaining a supportive dialogue with families who exercise this legal right.

Enforcing safety and safeguarding compliance by overseeing rigorous risk assessments for all off-site activities (such as Family Faith and Fun) and vetting external visitors and leaders.

The Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for:
Supporting operational delivery by assisting the Head teacher with the implementation, resourcing, and scheduling of the worship calendar.

Driving pupil agency by co-planning, coordinating, and co-delivering pupil-led collective worship sessions in direct partnership with the Student Worship Committee.

Protecting policy integrity by continuously reviewing worship content to ensure it honours and preserves the inclusive, invitational, and multi-faith character of our diverse community.

Class Teachers are responsible for:
Cultivating mutual respect during communal gatherings, actively protecting the personal background and faith integrity of every child.

The Worship Committee are responsible for:
Helping to plan, deliver, and evaluate half-termly pupil-led collective worship and school-wide prayers, ensuring they are rooted in our core school values.

Liaising actively with the School Council and Eco Council to translate our school vision into practical action. By aligning worship themes with global events, charity, and environmental stewardship, the worship committee encourage the school community to live out our commitment to respecting ourselves, respecting others, and respecting the environment.

Evaluating impact by gathering peer-to-peer feedback following pupil-led assemblies to inform future planning.

Policy Review and Approval
This policy works alongside, and should be read in conjunction with, the school's RE Policy, Spirituality Policy, SMSC Policy, and the 2026 Theological Rationale.

Date of Policy: Autumn 2026
Review Date: Autumn 2027