



# St Margaret's Lee

Church of England School Diocese of Southwark

## Collective Worship Policy

Date of last review and future reviews	Updates / changes since last review	Chair of Governors
March 2026	Adapted to reflect guidance from SDBE and changes to structure of the week	Grace Harding

At St Margaret's Lee, we are committed to offering high-quality collective worship, which we see as central to fostering a strong sense of community and to expressing the school's Christian vision, *Kind Hearts, Wise Minds*.

Collective worship is the unique heartbeat of the school: a time that is welcoming, inclusive, and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality, while seeking to meet the needs of all. Worship is *collective* in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to one another and, for some, to God. Many pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds, as well as of no faith background. Moreover, pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school.

### Collective worship is inclusive.

It is a space for consent and dissent: to participate or to stand back; to engage or to reflect. Care is taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship does not assume faith in all those participating, listening, or watching. Collective worship is not 'done to' pupils; leaders recognise that pupils bring their own experiences, beliefs, and questions to worship. Inclusion also requires meaningful pupil involvement in the planning, leading, and evaluation of worship.

### Collective worship is invitational.

There is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship provides an opportunity to engage, while allowing those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to participate with integrity.

This approach can be described as **warm fires and open doors**. The warmth of the fire comes from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at the heart of worship. The door remains open: all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far from the fire as they feel comfortable.

Pupils and adults are always invited to pray if they wish, and are encouraged to pray in their own way. Prayer is consistently accompanied by the option to reflect. Singing also forms an integral part of worship, with a wide range of songs drawn from different cultures, reflecting the diversity of our school community.

### Collective worship is inspiring.

Pupils and adults can expect worship in a Church school to be inspirational. It enables them to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. We aim for worship to motivate pupils and adults into action, to think differently, and to reflect on their own behaviour and that of the wider community. As a result of inspirational worship, pupils should be encouraged to become courageous advocates for causes they care about and to think deeply about their faith, beliefs, and/or philosophical convictions.

We recognise that some may feel uncomfortable entering into collective worship and respect the right of withdrawal for those who wish to exercise this option. We would always encourage dialogue with the Headteacher as a first course of action.

### Aims and Objectives of Collective Worship

Collective worship aims to:

- Explore the school's vision and how it underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, it reflects on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness, and reconciliation, while developing



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virtues such as resilience, determination, and creativity that contribute to character development and academic progress.

- Help pupils and adults appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world through encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible, and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer opportunities, without compulsion, for all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship, and reflection.
- Enable pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, including through music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, and the varied liturgical traditions of Anglican worship and festivals.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading, and evaluation of collective worship, leading to improved practice.

The rhythm of daily worship allows pupils and adults to step away from the target-driven culture of much of education, creating space for encounter with faith and reflection on larger questions of meaning and purpose. Collective worship provides a shared language of symbols, signs, words, and actions that the community can draw upon in times of joy and grief. This shared experience fosters fellowship and cohesion within the school community, offering opportunities to gather, reflect, and support one another in both celebration and challenge.

Throughout the year, we mark key seasons of the Church calendar, including Advent, Lent, and Easter, through services held at St Margaret's Lee Church, as well as the annual Leavers' Service. Regular prayer and worship are encountered as a normal part of school life, providing rhythm, stillness, and continuity for the community.

Parents, pupils, and adults can expect worship to follow a recognisable structure focused on a central theme or idea. This supports clarity, age-appropriateness, and meaningful engagement, rather than worship becoming a performance. Worship may include a welcome or prayer, a Bible passage or story, and opportunities for discussion, reflection, prayer, silence, or music. Pupils and adults are encouraged to share and discuss these experiences within school, at home, and in the wider community.

## Organisation of Collective Worship

Collective worship generally takes place daily:

- **Monday 10:10–10:30am** – Whole school worship led by Reverend Manuela
- **Tuesday–Thursday 9:10–9:30am** – Whole school worship led by a school leader and school worship team
- **Friday 3:00–3:20pm** – Whole school celebration of achievement led by the Headteacher

This structure may vary when visitors are present.

## Developing Staff Expertise and Knowledge: Confidence Through Professionalism

Parents, pupils, and adults are entitled to be led in worship by those who have a secure understanding of collective worship in a Church school context and who demonstrate professionalism in working with pupils and adults of all faiths and none. To ensure this, we:

- Provide worship leaders, including clergy, with access to regular training, primarily through the SDBE.
- Support, encourage, and resource pupil worship leaders to contribute meaningful acts of worship.
- Ensure worship leaders have access to high-quality, up-to-date resources.
- Maintain robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship, including meaningful pupil voice.
- Ensure worship leaders receive feedback and are informed of evaluation outcomes.
- Brief and support visitors and external agencies to ensure worship aligns with the school's context and vision.
- Ensure the Headteacher has overall responsibility for collective worship, with appropriate policy and practice in place and publicly available.