



*This policy has been written and agreed by the head teacher, the clergy at Christ Church and the Governing Body, who have responsibility for worship at the school.*

#### Our vision

This is the agreed vision statement of Christ Church School:



## Christ Church School, Hampstead

A village school in London inspiring *life in all its fullness*

*Jesus, The Good Shepherd, promises 'life in all its fullness'. (JOHN 10:10)*

At Christ Church we believe every child and adult in our school should be able both to experience life in all its fullness now and to aspire to life in all its fullness in the future.

We all seek to inspire life in all its fullness for all in the school through:

- ensuring a **safe, welcoming and inclusive environment** for children and adults, where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute and flourish;
- the pursuit of **academic excellence** in all areas, with a determined desire for each child to make the best possible progress as a result of high aspirations, hard work and the development of a personal love for learning alongside the highest-quality teaching and support;
- offering the widest possible **breadth of curriculum** both within school and through extra-curricular activities, enriched by the vast range of opportunities locally and across London;
- **creativity and positivity** in all we do, mixing innovation with tradition;
- planned and spontaneous opportunities for **spiritual development** through reflection, discussion and harnessing curiosity, as well as the provision, at the heart of our school life, of daily opportunities for prayer and worship;
- the development and modelling of **strong, positive and loving relationships**, with peers, amongst the school community and in the wider community;
- the promotion of **respect and compassion for ourselves and for all others**, by cultivating positive emotional and physical well-being, by celebrating the diversity within and outside our school and by encouraging all of us to be empowered global citizens, guided at all times by the example of Christ's compassion alongside the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- engendering a **sense of community and responsibility** for others and for our local and global environment and enjoying working together towards our common goals and expecting and valuing contributions from all.

Our vision comes to life through the school's five shared Christian values of **compassion, creativity, courage, simplicity and community**.

Our vision is for all in our school to experience *life in all its fullness* and we believe that a key part of this is the spiritual development of children and adults through reflection, discussion and harnessing curiosity, as well as through our prayer and collective worship. (See also our Spirituality document.)

## Our worship

Our collective worship is at the heart of our school. The Christian character of our school is reflected in our regular worship and in the signs and symbols that are seen around our school; these include willow crosses made by children in all spaces around our school including in our entrance and a crucifix and banners representing our Christian vision and values in our Hall.

We believe that it is important to come together as a whole school to celebrate, discuss, share and think and also to praise, worship and pray together. In our school we have decided to continue to use the term 'assembly' to describe when we come together to worship each day. We believe that our assemblies, including our daily act of collective worship, engender a vital feeling of togetherness, enable all staff and children to hear and work towards the same aims and ideas and bring the community together in Christian worship. Our collective worship is one of the key ways in which we share and promote our school's Christian vision and values and encourage children and adults in our school community to bring these to life in our school and wider community.

Our act of collective worship is a very important part of the day at Christ Church. There are usually four elements to each act of worship:

- **gathering** - where we come together in the hall and church, preparing for worship through silence or listening to a music or reflecting on a question or image.
- **engagement** – where we engage with, discuss and think about an idea or story, based in Biblical text or teaching. This may include drama, story-telling, music, images, questions, talking to each other or other methods of capturing the imagination of the children and adults.
- **reflection or response** – a period of silence, reflection and/or prayer, where children and adults are invited to think about what they have heard or learnt and to join in prayer if they wish to.
- **sending out** – where everyone is dismissed from the hall or church, again to music, with a message to take out with them for the rest of the day and beyond. There is an expectation that adults in our school will refer back and make links to our collective worship themes or messages at other times and across the curriculum where relevant.

All of our worship is Christian, worshipping God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, following the traditions of the Church of England. Information about other faiths and beliefs is sometimes included in our assemblies.

We always try to sing a hymn as part of our act of worship as we believe this is an important part of praising God. We pray together every day as part of each act of collective worship: sometimes the Lord's Prayer or the school prayer, or prayers are led by a member of staff, a child or a member of the clergy. Prayers are also said at the end of the day in each class and before lunch (written and led by children), sometimes with reference to our school Prayer Book.

Our assemblies take many forms and are led by different people and groups, including classes and groups of children, different members of staff and clergy from Christ Church. The school invites other people to lead and contribute to our assemblies, including ministers from other churches and faiths. These arrangements are made with the approval of the head teacher and clergy at Christ Church and with the understanding that the collective worship element of the assembly will always follow the traditions of the Church of England.

Assemblies may include music, dance, drama, discussion, questions, Bible stories, other stories, poetry, facts, pictures and many other stimuli to introduce new ideas and to get everyone involved and thinking. We try to make our assemblies as interactive, inclusive and inspiring as possible and make sure that both children of all ages and staff members are engaged and have something to reflect on.

All staff are expected to attend collective worship and, if necessary, to discuss and agree any occasional or regular alternative arrangements with the head teacher beforehand. Parents are invited to attend selected assemblies, especially when their children are involved. Governors are also welcome to attend.

The head teacher is in charge of organising the collective worship arrangements and theme for each term, in collaboration with the clergy at Christ Church. The term's collective worship plan is shared with all staff and the theme and content of collective worship is part of each term's head teacher's report to governors.

The school's act of worship regularly takes place in Church, often linked with the Church's festivals. The head teacher and clergy also organise termly **services** in Christ Church for the whole school community to mark key points in the school and Christian calendar. As in our collective worship in school, children play important roles in these services singing, reading and sharing their writing and prayers.

Many families worship at Christ Church each week but there are three 'children in church' Sunday services in Christ Church each term where children play key roles in the service (readers, servers, school choir sings) and to which all families are especially invited and provide an opportunity for children and family members to experience and participate in the Eucharist.

The school's assemblies and acts of collective worship are monitored in the first instance by the head teacher, who reports to the clergy at Christ Church and the Governing Body. Children's views of our worship are sought in our annual pupil consultations. A Diocesan Worship and RE Inspection (SIAMS) takes place within a five-yearly cycle.

This policy will be reviewed by the full Governing Body every three years, or earlier if there is a change of head teacher at the school or priest at Christ Church.

Reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in March 2022