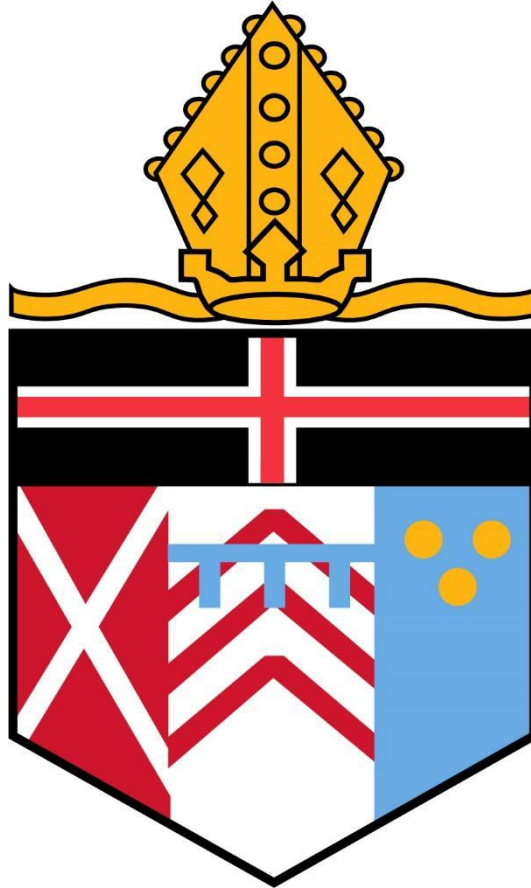


Blue Coat C.E. (Aided) Junior School



Worship Policy

Adopted: September 2025

To Review: September 2027

BLUE COAT C.E. (AIDED) JUNIOR SCHOOL

WORSHIP POLICY 2025 - 2027

1. Aims and Objectives

Worship in Blue Coat Church of England Junior School reflects both the Trust Deed and its Anglican Foundation. The school provides collective worship which reflects the traditions of the Church of England. At Blue Coat School, collective worship is regarded as an integral part of the corporate life of the school and as making a major contribution to the school's Christian ethos. Collective Worship is also a vital part of the educational process, anchoring our daily life in our core vision: "**With God all things are possible.**"

Our collective worship aims to provide opportunities for the school community to:

- **Celebrate and Nurture:** Express Christian beliefs and values (fostering **joy**), nurture the spiritual dimension, and celebrate achievements.
- **Reflect and Wonder:** Foster a sense of awe and wonder, encourage respect for God's world (promoting **courage** and advocacy), and explore prayer and reflection.
- **Grow and Connect:** Develop a sense of community, value each individual, understand the Church of England tradition, and appreciate symbolism.
- **Respect and Engage:** Promote respect for diverse beliefs, encourage active participation, and celebrate shared values with other faith communities, cultivating both **wisdom** and **courage** to address moral and social issues.

2. Teaching and Learning Styles

At Blue Coat School, there is an integral partnership between the content and conduct of school collective worship and the ethos of the school. The staff and pupils share together in worship in order to support the promotion of Christian values. This shared experience brings **joy** to our community as we praise God together.

Our worship allows children to see themselves as unique and special individuals. This understanding gives children the **courage** to relate to each other in a supportive and compassionate manner.

School collective worship takes place in a range of styles and settings. Children will experience whole-school, class, and year group acts of worship led by various members of staff and visitors. Guided by the **wisdom** of our Anglican heritage, our worship includes:

- Bible readings, drama, prayers, and hymns;
- Celebrations of the Church's festivals and designated time for deep reflection;
- Stories and prayers from other faiths, drawing on the depth and variety of human culture and faith.

The school is committed to providing acts of worship which encourage children to reflect upon the worth of people, objects, places, and events, both in contemporary life and from history. Through these varied styles,

we show our pupils that "**With God all things are possible**," inspiring them to become active global citizens and courageous advocates for change.

3. Legal Requirements / Right of Withdrawal

In accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988, Blue Coat Church of England Junior School provides a daily act of collective worship for all registered pupils. This daily act fulfils our legal obligations while giving practical expression to our belief that "**With God all things are possible**."

We recognise the **wisdom** of parents and respect the integrity of all families within our school community. Parents hold the legal right to withdraw their children from collective worship, either wholly or in part, on grounds of conscience.

- **Open Discussion:** We encourage parents who are considering withdrawal to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the request, so we can ensure a clear mutual understanding.
- **Alternative Care:** Any pupil who is withdrawn from collective worship will be safely supervised by a member of staff and provided with alternative, meaningful activities.
- **Respect and Inclusivity:** The school manages the withdrawal process with complete sensitivity. We ensure that the **joy** of belonging to our inclusive school community is maintained for every child, regardless of their participation in worship.

4. The Contribution of Collective Worship to Spiritual Development

Collective Worship at Blue Coat Junior School actively nurtures the spiritual journey of our pupils. It provides a daily anchor for our foundational vision: "**With God all things are possible**."

Collective Worship contributes directly to spiritual development by:

- Celebrating all that is good, expressing thankfulness, and welcoming the **joy** of being alive into our hearts;
- Providing an opportunity to search for meaning in daily experience, helping pupils develop the **wisdom** to navigate life's challenges;
- Stimulating a sense of awe and wonder at the beauty and scale of creation;
- Providing quiet time for reflection, personal prayer, and the exploration of inner space;
- Helping pupils value a non-materialistic dimension to life, giving them the **courage** to stand up for global justice as active global neighbours.

5. The Contribution of Collective Worship to Social, Moral and Cultural Development

Collective Worship at Blue Coat Junior School serves as a powerful vehicle for personal growth, character development, and social awareness. It grounds our community in the transformative belief that "**With God all things are possible**," inspiring our pupils to look outward and act with integrity.

Collective Worship contributes directly to Moral, Social, and Cultural development by:

- Promoting a deep understanding of the difference between right and wrong. This nurtures the **wisdom** our pupils need to make ethical choices and understand the consequences of their actions;
- Promoting respect for people and property. This fosters a safe, inclusive environment where every individual is valued as a unique child of God;
- Helping pupils appreciate how their actions affect others. This sparks the empathy needed to become active global neighbours and gives them the **courage** to challenge injustice;
- Providing the opportunity to celebrate together. This brings genuine **joy** to our shared achievements, school milestones, and community successes;
- Celebrating our own and others' religious and cultural traditions. This expands our pupils' horizons, prepares them for life in a diverse world, and enriches our collective understanding of global citizenship.

6. Special Educational Needs

Collective Worship at Blue Coat Junior School is totally inclusive. We ensure all ages and abilities are fully provided for in both the planning and delivery of our collective worship sessions.

Driven by our foundational vision, "**With God all things are possible,**" we design acts of worship that break down barriers and allow every unique individual to participate fully.

- **Accessible Delivery:** We use the **wisdom** of our teaching team to use varied learning styles, visual aids, drama, and interactive elements so that pupils with SEND can access the spiritual message.
- **Joyful Participation:** All children are given the **courage** and opportunity to contribute actively to worship, whether through leading prayers, sharing work, or joining in communal singing and reflection.
- **Inclusive Environment:** We adapt our worship spaces and resources to meet the sensory and physical needs of our pupils, ensuring that our whole-school community experiences worship as one unified family.

7. Assessment and Recording

The acts of worship will be evaluated by the Headteacher, co-ordinator, staff, and governors on a termly basis. This collaborative tracking gives us the **wisdom** to ensure our collective worship remains a vibrant, high-quality experience that reinforces our core belief that "**With God all things are possible.**"

Worship will be monitored to ensure that:

- Agreed and planned content is covered, allowing pupils to systematically build their understanding of Christian values;
- A variety of approaches and methodology are used, ensuring that our acts of worship bring genuine **joy** and remain accessible to all children;
- High standards and quality are maintained across all sessions;
- Worship is led by a variety of leaders, giving our pupils the **courage** to see different role models—and eventually take the lead themselves as active global neighbours.

8. Visiting Speakers and Community Links

Visitors bring fresh perspectives into the school. They can participate by:

- Leading the worship and sharing the **joy** of their faith with our pupils;
- Introducing their charity work to foster empathy and inspire our children to become proactive global neighbours;
- Providing a personal viewpoint on faith and life issues to deepen our pupils' spiritual **wisdom**;
- Linking the school closely to the local and wider community.

Visiting speakers are highly encouraged to lead worship when appropriate. To ensure alignment with our vision, "**With God all things are possible**," all speakers are made aware of our school policy, standard safeguarding procedures, and the specific content agreed upon with the Headteacher.

Visitors will understand the exact parameters of their visit. They will receive guidance on:

- The designated theme of the week;
- Their freedom with the format of the worship session;
- An invitation to attend a previous act of worship to understand our school ethos;
- A brief overview regarding the ages and backgrounds of our pupils;
- The exact duration of the worship slot;
- The equipment, technology, and resources available for them to use.

The school regularly visits All Saints Church for key milestones, including Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and our annual Leavers' Service. Children, staff, governors, and clergy collaborate together to prepare these services.

Demonstrating the **courage** to step out into the wider community, our Year 6 children also attend the special Leavers' Service at Durham Cathedral. There, they share worship with other Diocesan schools in an uplifting celebration led by the Durham Diocesan Board of Education.

9. Resources

Books, resource material, candles, a cross, prayer books, and hymn books are readily available to anyone leading worship. These resources are kept safely below the Worship table, ensuring that leaders have the tools to create a calm, sacred space that brings **joy** and reverence to our sessions.

We use these items with **wisdom**, ensuring they remain well-maintained and accessible to everyone. This standard kit gives staff, visitors, and pupils the **courage** to step up and lead our school community confidently, reinforcing our daily belief that "**With God all things are possible**."

Music and words may be copied in accordance with the Christian Copyright Licence, which is clearly displayed in the school office for reference

10. Equal Opportunities

Our school worship is about sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives. It provides a community space where we share common concerns and responsibilities, developing positive attitudes and life-long values.

Guided by our core vision, "**With God all things are possible**," our worship is fully inclusive. It is dedicated to affirming the unique quality and worth of each individual in God's sight. We celebrate every child equally, whatever their gender, ethnicity, or physical or mental ability.

- **Joy in Diversity:** We ensure our stories, reflections, and music reflect a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds, bringing **joy** through a shared sense of global belonging.
- **Wisdom through Inclusion:** We deliberately design our sessions so that every pupil can access and understand the messages, fostering the **wisdom** to appreciate differences.
- **Courage to Stand Equal:** We empower every child to see themselves as valued global neighbours, giving them the **courage** to speak out against discrimination and celebrate equality both in school and the wider world.

11. Time Allocation

The timing and organisation of collective worship can be flexible – it may take place at any time of the school day but it cannot be designated as teaching time. Collective worship is usually a single act of worship for all pupils although it can be an act of worship for separate groups. It always reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief and is wholly Christian in character.

12. Content and Components of Worship

12.1. Content of Worship

The children are expected to come into the hall quietly. Music is used to help create a reflective atmosphere. A candle is lit, and there may be other objects to act as a focus for the children. As the candle is lit, the children say together, "**Jesus is the light of the world.**"

Our balanced program embraces our core vision, "**With God all things are possible**," by offering diverse, engaging spiritual experiences. There will be times when the worship is quiet, contemplative, and serene, allowing pupils to develop the **wisdom** of stillness. At other times, it will involve loud music, laughter, and dance, filling the hall with genuine **joy**.

A balanced program provides a varied format of prayers, readings, songs, drama, and other activities. It draws on the wealth of liturgical material that is part of the Christian tradition of worship. The Bible is used as a foundational source book for inspiration and learning.

A clear end to the time for worship is indicated by the worship candle being extinguished. The leader says, '**Peace Be With You,**' and all respond, '**And Also With You.**' Any 'assembly' notices or announcements are kept strictly separate from the act of worship to protect the sacred nature of the time. Daily prayers are also said in classrooms at lunchtime.

12.2. Components of Worship

To ensure all children find an entry point into worship, we draw upon a rich variety of creative components. This variety gives them the **courage** to explore deep concepts of faith and global justice:

- **Story:** Rooted in Christianity and other faith traditions. Includes novels, storybooks, children's fiction, biographies, and true-life accounts of courageous advocates and global neighbours.
- **Music:** Traditional hymns, carols, chants, folksongs, and contemporary children's songs. Includes recorded music of all genres and live student performances used as a recital or accompaniment.
- **Drama and Dance:** Both prepared and improvised pieces that allow children to express big ideas physically and creatively.
- **Media:** Thoughtful integration of film, video, and radio clips to connect worship to the wider world.
- **Visual Arts:** Slides, pictures, paintings, and sculptures used to prompt awe and wonder.
- **Prayer:** Formal and traditional prayers (the Lord's Prayer, graces, collects, and Celtic prayers) alongside custom school or pupil-authored prayers.
- **Stillness:** Dedicated times for silence, meditation, reflection, and developing the vital skill of inwardness.
- **Pupil Involvement:** Actively encouraging pupils to take a lead role through musical performance, drama, role-play, and reading.

13. Organisation and Management

The Governors of Blue Coat School, in consultation with the Headteacher, hold overall responsibility for collective worship. Worship is strategically planned and co-ordinated by our Worship Co-ordinator, Mrs Grieve. It is led by a diverse range of individuals, including members of staff, students, clergy, and visiting leaders.

To ensure our acts of worship continually reflect our vision, "**With God all things are possible**," we have a dedicated Christian Character Committee. This group meets regularly to discuss the planning, resourcing, and development of worship, while evaluating its ongoing impact.

Worship takes place in school every day and in church on special occasions. Guided by our school values, the organisation follows these key principles:

- **Pupil Leadership:** Children are actively encouraged to lead and participate in worship. This builds the **courage** to lead prayers, perform drama or dance, or take complete responsibility for a whole worship session.
- **Clergy Partnerships:** The clergy of All Saints Church lead worship once a fortnight, embedding deep spiritual **wisdom** into our collective school life.
- **Ecumenical Connections:** Representatives of outside agencies and members of other churches are regularly invited to lead worship. This ensures a broad ecumenical approach that brings **joy** through a shared, inclusive faith experience.
- **Global Citizenship:** These diverse leadership voices inspire our children to look outward, strengthening their development as active global neighbours and courageous advocates.

14. Planning, Record Keeping, and Support

Plans are securely saved on the school Google Drive for each term. Our structured planning cycle includes long-term plans for the year, a detailed termly plan, and specific weekly plans. This systematic approach ensures we have the **wisdom** to provide a rich, cohesive spiritual journey for our pupils.

- **Curriculum & Calendar Links:** Themes are linked with the curriculum wherever possible. They carefully consider the church calendar, changing seasons, and key global events.
- **Evaluation Records:** Detailed records are kept of all acts of worship, alongside written comments to evaluate their impact and effectiveness.
- **Strategic Meetings:** The Worship Co-ordinator meets regularly with the Special Interest Governor for Worship and members of the clergy where appropriate to maintain high standards.
- **Community Feedback:** Valuation feedback is actively gathered from a range of voices, including pupils, staff, parents, and clergy, ensuring our worship continues to bring **joy** to the whole school community.
- **Accessible Reference:** Hard copies of planning sheets are held in a clear file on the Worship table for easy access by any leader.

15. Support and Professional Development

We believe that "**With God all things are possible,**" and we invest heavily in our team to ensure worship is delivered with confidence and excellence. Targeted training and professional development are provided for both staff and governors from a number of external partners, including:

- The Local Authority (LA)
- The Durham Diocese
- The National Society

This high-quality training equips our educators with the **courage** to lead inspiring sessions and embed deep Christian values across our school