

# Bubble based Collective Worship

## Guidance for Autumn Term 2020

### How can collective worship contribute to a recovery curriculum?

Supporting children's mental wellbeing during the return to school period will be a key priority for many of us. Collective worship is a highly valued part of the day in our church schools and can offer the following:

- help re-establish familiar and comforting routines for our pupils after lockdown,
  - remind about and reinforce the school's Christian vision and values that underpin the life of the school,
  - draw together our school communities in shared worship experiences, so reinforcing a sense of belonging for all,
  - enable us, in a sensitive and age appropriate way to handle some of the issues arising from lockdown, inspired by the message of hope within Christianity and the teaching of Jesus,
  - provide opportunities for corporate and personal prayer and thanksgiving
- with thanks from the Diocese of Leeds



### What does the DfE guidance state about collective worship?

With no change of legislation, the expectation is for worship to continue in the autumn term. However, there are two key lines in the DfE guidance (July 2020) about collective worship to bear in mind:

- *Groups should be kept apart, meaning that schools should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group.*
- *Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies.*

The Church of England education office confirms:

'This does not mean that assemblies or worship are not allowed but that singing, schools choirs and playing woodwind instruments in worship should not take place. Worship in large groups should be avoided but can still take place within bubble groups so long as social distancing and hygiene recommendations are followed.'

## How does this change our school's offer of collective worship?



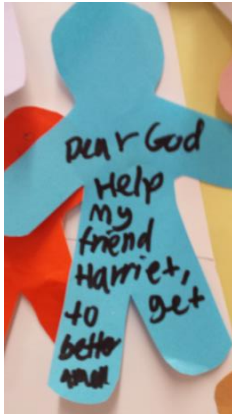
The main difference is that large groups such as the whole school community will no longer be able to meet together. Instead, each bubble will be self-contained. There is also an expectation from the Church of England Education Office that schools should be *innovative* and *creative* with how they approach collective worship from September. They also hope to provide additional guidance on this.

Collective worship should still remain a highly valued and set apart time in each school day but it will to some extent look different until the time social distancing is relaxed.

Because of the emphasis on supporting children's mental wellbeing, you may want to change the content of your worship to include materials to address the losses of routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom which children have experienced during the lockdown period.

## What are the key things to remember about collective worship?

It might be prudent to revisit with staff the main aims of collective worship, especially with those who will now be leading it without much previous experience.



The aim of collective worship in legislation is as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos and shared values
- To reinforce positive attitudes

Collective worship was designed to reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and concerned with reverence or veneration to a divine power of being. It was also to be related to the day to day life, aspirations and concerns of the school.

### Some other key things to note from statutory guidance:

- **The word 'opportunity'** – provision of an opportunity to worship God is part of law for ALL schools
- **The expectation that collective worship is for 'all pupils and adults'** – it is to involve the whole school community; no-one should be taken out of collective worship except by parents.
- **The understanding of collective worship as a place for spiritual growth** (Ofsted also sees it as a place for Spiritual Development) – it is an occasion with a purpose.
- **The words describing levels of engagement** - 'opportunity', 'experience' and 'appreciate'. Planning should take into account different backgrounds and ages.

- **The use of educational terms –encounter, enable, develop understanding –** we are in school, not church. Collective worship should add to a child’s education.
- **The reference to Anglican as well as Christian -** A Church of England school should reflect its Anglican foundation in the worship it provides.



**Worship should involve us and engage us; we are not to be observers only and worship is not a spectator sport. Its purpose is to bring us into an encounter with God.**

## What are the potential opportunities for worship in bubble groups?

Although whole school worship will be sadly missed, daily class or bubble worship is a brilliant opportunity for the following:

<b>Improving staff confidence</b>	Training for all teachers to enable them to understand and confidently lead worship themselves. A great chance to revisit the basics. Staff may also feel happier leading a smaller group.
<b>Pupil leadership</b>	Letting all children have the experience of regularly facilitating or leading worship in their class groups (see below)
<b>Creativity</b>	Trying out new ideas and getting creative with different styles including the use of meditation and stillness, finding alternatives to singing.
<b>Participation</b>	Class worship allows children to enter worship in a more intimate way, where many children feel more comfortable to interact and join in. Children will benefit from worship aimed at their developmental stage every day. Quiet reflection may be easier without the many distractions whole school worship brings.
<b>Using conference call technology</b>	Using live streaming and zoom calls. In those schools happy to do so this could provide a way of continuing to have occasional whole school worship together as these applications enable a single leader of worship to be visible to each class simultaneously via their interactive whiteboard.
<b>Strengthening your class identity</b>	Time to think and simply be with your classmates at a time when everyone else feels out of reach. Time together in worship can enhance the bonds of individuals and your identity as a whole class.
<b>Use of video</b>	Videos of collective worship can be recorded and used by staff or pupil groups. These shared videos will further enhance the sense of the collective.
<b>Expertise in Local churches</b>	Most church schools have close links with local churches. Many ministers of churches have become skilled at producing worship, either live or on video to support their congregations and would be happy to use these new capabilities to continue to lead worship in school.

## What opportunities are there for pupils to lead worship?

Class based worship is a great opportunity to increase the amount of pupil participation and leadership of worship. Teachers should prepare and lead most worship but all children should have the opportunity to prepare / lead worship if they wish to do so at the teacher's discretion.



Teachers should aim to withdraw their input gradually at the appropriate time - given the age, capacity and stage of development of the children. By the end of year 6, all elements of pupil leadership should be in place. Pupils should be able to develop all parts of worship independently with understanding when given a theme or a passage from the Bible. They are also able to choose their own response to a local or world events.


Handing over leadership to the children must never detract from worship being an enriching experience which includes the opportunity to worship God.

For further ideas and support - **Working on Worship 13 - Letting the children lead 2019** is available free at:

<https://www.cofesuffolk.org/schools/school-leaders/collective-worship/collective-worship-resources/>

## What are the potential challenges for worship in bubbles?

<b>Inexperience</b>	Worship led by staff or pupils who are inexperienced. Provide training for these teachers. Give worship a simple structure.
<b>Resources</b>	Worship doesn't have to be burdensome but it does need to be planned. Find ways of supporting each other with planning. Purchase resources (see resource list).
<b>Visitors</b>	Loss of visitors can be felt – especially by those school with active clergy support or Open the Book teams. Schools should still keep in touch with these visitors, and depending on experience and skill, some video or other technology may provide some connection.
<b>Space</b>	In the classroom it may feel like just another lesson. Over-running lessons may encroach on worship time. Staff leading will need to consider how to signify in their classroom space that worship is something special and different. Each classroom should have resources for a focal point and the idea of actively focussing in worship should be shared with the class.
<b>Feeling disconnected</b>	Many will feel the loss of the whole school community experience. Now is the time to strengthen your bonds as

	<p>a class group. Find ways of staying in touch with other bubbles remotely. Everyone considering the same Bible story or topic, although delivered in an age appropriate way, is another way to feel connected to others. It may also be beneficial to introduce additional elements that are shared to enhance this sense of the collective, for example, saying a shared weekly prayer for the week in each act of worship.</p>
<p><b>Loss of singing</b></p> 	<p>The <b>loss of singing</b> will be strongly felt by many. Singing has always been regarded as an enjoyable and uplifting activity which brings a whole community together. It also has a role in bringing all into an awareness of God's presence, or at least to consider the possibility of this happening.</p> <p>While singing together is not currently an option, music does bring a sense of a shared experience. A sense of community could be promoted by the same music playing around the building at the same time, perhaps enhanced by classroom doors being open.</p> <p>Teachers could try different techniques such as the use of stillness or different interactive prayers to ensure children have the opportunity to respond creatively.</p>

**For further ideas please explore the Working on Worship papers available from:**

<https://www.cofesuffolk.org/schools/school-leaders/collective-worship/collective-worship-resources/>

## What FREE resources will help me with planning?



- **Bigstart assemblies**  
13 free assemblies featuring 'Giants of Faith' with 3-5 min videos.  
<https://bigstartassemblies.org/free-assemblies/>

- **Worship Workshop**  
Great for model prayers, calls and responses.  
<https://www.worshipworkshop.org.uk/>



- **Prayers from the Church of England**  
Includes prayers for children  
[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/Prayer%20Book%20Digital%20Single%20Pages%202%20April\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/Prayer%20Book%20Digital%20Single%20Pages%202%20April_0.pdf)

- **Assemblies.org**  
Link to 'In life, everything changes, but God is unchanging.'

**ASSEMBLIES.ORG.UK**

School assemblies for every season for everyone

<https://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/2965/autumn-changes>



- **PrayerMate APP**  
Free APP. PrayerMate includes the option to subscribe to the Anglican "Collect for the Day" taken from Common Worship: Daily Services and Prayers.

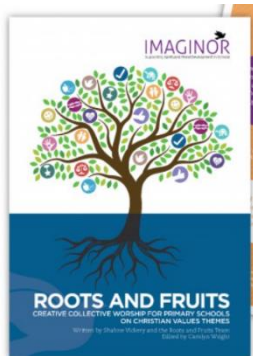
**Faith at Home/Oak Academy**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/faith-home>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/faith-home/i-am-school-leader>



## What PAID resources will help me with planning?



- **Roots and Fruits by Imaginor**  
Cost £55



Second volume available at cost of £50

<https://www.imaginer.co.uk/roots-fruits/>

- **Jack in the Box by Imaginor**

Interactive Christian assemblies on values themes for children in Early Years and Foundation Stage.

<https://www.imaginer.co.uk/shop/jack-box/>

£25





- **Oscar out of the box by Imaginor**

**Cost £28**

Innovative and interactive assemblies for Key Stage 1, promoting character education based on Christian values. Oscar the wise little owl accompanies everyone through the worship journey as they Learn, Reflect and Respond together.

- **Flippin' Praise**

**Cost £10**

Flippin' Praise uses a four-fold structure of Gathering, Engaging, Responding and Sending to plan school Collective Worship. <https://www.cofesuffolk.org/schools/school-leaders/collective-worship/collective-worship-resources/>



Every week, Picture News chooses a current news story to create as a focus for discussion. Its service provides an image, a thought-provoking question and a variety of teaching resources around this issue.

Cost: £130 per year

<https://www.picture-news.co.uk/>



Classroom Worship is an exciting digital resource designed to unite the whole school in Collective Worship, even though children will be worshipping in smaller bubbles or as individual classes. It can help engender a strong sense of community within your school, despite the continuation of physical distancing between bubbles. These once-a-week 15-minute sessions involve almost no preparation in advance and are differentiated for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Each act of Collective Worship will include an animated bible story, a reflection on the theme, an interactive prayer activity, an iSingPOP dance routine to learn

and practise, the Lord's Prayer. A free episode can be found at [www.isingpop.org/classroom-worship](http://www.isingpop.org/classroom-worship)