

# Working On Worship (5)



## Being Anglican

Being 'Anglican' means belonging to the worldwide communion of churches originally founded by the Church of England. The Anglican church is 'broad'; it retains practices similar to the Roman Catholic church out of which it grew, was influenced by the plainer, Bible-focused worship of the Reformation and today encompasses the catholic, liberal and evangelical wings of the Christian community.

As the 'established' church in England, the Anglican church has a specific role in national and civic life and in government. It also has a particular place in education. Historically the thousands of schools set up by the National Society (Church of England) and other Christian denominations in the early 1800's led the government to found its own Board schools. Church of England schools later became part of the national education system.



The 'Trust Deeds' of the original Anglican schools required provision of Religious Instruction and Worship, demonstrating a whole-hearted belief in the need for spiritual provision in the development of the whole child. Provision for Collective Worship was also made in the new Board schools set up by the government; in these worship was to be Christian but non-denominational. Church of England, Roman Catholic and Jewish schools all continued to offer worship in line with their original founding religion or denomination.

**Information on all aspects of Anglican church schools, including worship, can be found on the National Society website: [www.natsoc.org.uk/](http://www.natsoc.org.uk/).**

### Collective Worship in an Anglican School today

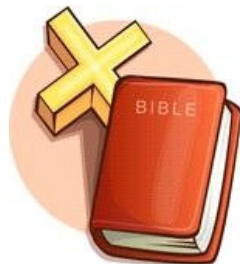
Collective Worship should offer all its pupils and staff, maybe in many different ways: **nurture, encouragement and challenge.**

For some pupils and staff too, the experience of worship will be tentative and exploratory. For those who have, or are developing, a Christian commitment, worship will be an

expression of their faith, a place where their deepest thoughts and emotions can be shared with God. For others, Christian Collective Worship may well remain an exploration of what worship means to others; however, it should still encourage awareness of a spiritual realm to life, nurture their own religious faith or simply provide an opportunity for quiet reflection in a busy day.



## What are the Trust Deeds?



Many church schools still have access to their Trust Deeds; these record the religious principles on which the school was founded. The expectation of most Trust Deeds in a C of E school (both VC and VA), is that pupils attend daily worship related to the established church i.e. the Church of England. This is why today's 'Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools', the denominational inspection, still expects worship in a C of E school to be both Christian and identifiably 'Anglican'.

## How Anglican do we need to be in a C of E school?

The extent to which any school reflects different aspects of Anglicanism will depend on the age and background of the pupils. It will also relate to it is the only school in its community or is a school amongst several where parents can opt for a church school.

While all C of E schools should reflect the basic ingredients of Anglicanism, it may help to think of developing an Anglican 'flavour', which comes through more strongly in some schools than others.



## What are the characteristics of worship in an Anglican church?



The acronym 'BLESSED' (**B**iblical, **L**iturgical, **E**ucharistic, **S**ymbolic, **S**easonal, **E**cumenical, **D**iverse) encapsulates key characteristics of Anglican worship. The acronym is unpacked below to help schools consider in what ways they already reflect Anglican tradition and which areas they might develop. For example, a school might discuss the use of liturgy (set words or forms of prayer) or the extent of their use of the Bible.

## What does the Statutory Inspection of Anglican schools look for?

The key question is: **What is the impact of Collective Worship?** The inspectors want to make sure all members of the school community are enriched by their opportunities for worship and that the impact on the school as a whole is positive. They will look for evidence of Anglican features and quality of relationships with the local Anglican church. They will hope to see an appropriate, sensitive and creative approach to worship which acknowledges its place at the heart of a Christian community and which is an area of school life which is tended rather than neglected.

# Some defining characteristics of Anglican Worship:

**B**iblical  
**L**iturgical  
**E**ucharistic  
**S**easonal  
**S**ymbolic  
**E**cumenical  
**D**iverse

Church of England schools may find it helpful to think about these characteristics in relation to their own school worship.

They demonstrate what an Anglican flavour to Collective Worship might mean and should enable heads, staff and governors to discuss this aspect of worship together.

In some schools certain 'flavours' will be stronger and more in evidence than in others, but a response to each should be considered.

*NB The Church of England is a member of the worldwide ANGLICAN church or communion; it is therefore sometimes termed the 'Anglican church', a title which also refers to its origins in England at the time of Henry VIII.*

<p><b>Biblical</b></p>	<p>Anglican churches use the Bible regularly in their services. Readings are usually governed by a lectionary, sequential readings of different parts of the Bible.</p> <p><i>How much is the Bible used in CW? Is attention paid to systematic development of children's knowledge and understanding of key stories and teachings from both Old and New Testaments.</i></p>
<p><b>Liturgical</b></p>	<p>Anglican services generally follow a set form of words or liturgy, so that words and actions become very familiar to worshippers. The Book of Common Prayer and the new Common Worship materials provide the authorised service outlines and words.</p> <p><i>Do children have experience of some set prayers which they know by heart? Is any form of ritual used e.g. liturgical greetings? Are any prayers from Common Worship used?</i></p>
<p><b>Eucharistic</b></p>	<p>The Eucharist or Holy Communion service is the central service for most Anglicans; it involves the sharing of bread and wine and the re-telling of the story of the Last Supper.</p> <p><i>Do children have the chance to take part in a Eucharist? Do they learn about it in some detail in RE and possibly have the chance to design their own Eucharist?</i></p>
<p><b>Seasonal</b></p>	<p>Like many Christians, Anglicans follow the Church's year, celebrating events in Jesus' life and church history in an annual round of festivals, seasons and saints' days.</p> <p><i>Does CW draw on and celebrate the main Christian festivals? Is there a feeling of passing through different seasons in choice of symbols, colours, different prayers and songs?</i></p>
<p><b>Symbolic</b></p>	<p>The main Christian symbols such as a cross, water, bread and wine will be seen in Anglican churches. Some use different colours to mark different seasons of the church's year.</p> <p><i>How familiar are children with the use of Christian symbols and colours? Are any used in CW? Which ones and do children recognise them?</i></p>
<p><b>Ecumenical</b></p>	<p>The Church of England has never seen itself as the only Christian church but as one among many. Anglicans are leaders in 'Churches Together' work.</p> <p><i>Do members of different Christian denominations visit to lead CW? Is there a small group to plan worship made up of members of different Christian denominations?</i></p>
<p><b>Diverse</b></p>	<p>The 'Broad' church tradition means schools may be linked with Anglican churches of many different kinds. Some will be full of incense, Taize chants, traditional choirs and bright robes. Others will use drama, dance, worship bands, flags and dvds.</p> <p><i>Do children meet people from different Christian denominations? Do they sing Christian songs from different parts of the world?</i></p>