



## ***Witley C. of E. Infant School***

*Learn, love and flourish together*

# **Collective Worship Policy**

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### **Our School Vision**

Learning is at the heart of our school life, enabling all to flourish together with God's love.

At Witley C of E Infant School we provide a nurturing, caring and safe Christian environment in which children can develop academically, physically, spiritually, personally and socially through teaching, encouragement and support, enabling them to flourish together.

In everything we do, our aim is to “encourage and help each other” 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Our inspiration for our vision is from Thessalonians, in the New Testament, which are letters written by Apostle Paul to the vulnerable people of Thessalonica encouraging them to keep their faith amid fear for their community and confusion about the timing of Jesus’s return.

The Bible verse suggests that Christians should proactively seek to lift, guide, support and encourage one another, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose living a Christian life.

## Our School Motto

‘Learn, love and flourish together’

Our six values of friendship, respect, joy, resilience, trust and confidence guide all that we do and our aim is for every child to feel nurtured, supported and safe.

As a school we support the rights of children and these rights are encompassed in UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and links are made between articles within the charter and themes for worship. This policy focuses on helping to realise Article 28 *All children have the right to a quality education* and Article 30 *All children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion – even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.*

Collective worship is the heartbeat of our school life. It offers our pupils and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our school’s Christian vision. It is an expression of our vision and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. We warmly invite all members of our school community to join our worship.

### Collective Worship and the Law

In England and Wales, all primary schools must legally provide a daily act of collective worship, and in church schools, this worship is a core part of the school's Christian distinctiveness. The act must be "wholly or mainly" of a broadly Christian character, meaning it reflects broad Christian traditions rather than a specific denomination. The school's governing body determines the character and content of the worship.

The aim of collective worship is to foster social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development by promoting values such as honesty, compassion, and respect.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance, parents who may wish to exercise this right should make an appointment to speak with the Headteacher.

## **Aims**

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- Celebrate -
  - Christian seasons and festivals
  - school values associated with our vision
  - Pupils' and adults' achievements
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centered on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed
- worship God on their own terms

Worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth
- enable participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today
- encourage participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage
- reflect the teachings of Jesus and a Trinitarian theology

## **Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring**

### Inclusive

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. At Witley Church of England Infant School pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all.

### Invitational

In our School, parents, pupils and adults can expect to encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Our Collective Worship provides the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity.

### Inspiring

We aim for our Collective Worship to be inspirational as well as formational and transformational: We strive to enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. Motivating pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions is a key objective of our Collective Worship. As a result of inspirational collective worship, we aim to inspire them to become courageous advocates of causes. Pupils and adults are encouraged to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

## **Planning, records and assessment**

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. The themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our school vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values.

Throughout their time at our school, children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside more traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song. Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate.

Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship. Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

Half termly plans are produced with themes and resources to be used. This also includes special services and input from other staff and visitors. Assessment of Collective Worship is carried out jointly by the Headteacher and all staff and children attending:

- Checking that practice matches aims and objectives
- Observation of children's attentiveness and level of interest
- Obtaining feedback from pupils via the pupil questionnaires
- Classroom feedback from children both written and verbal
- Comments from parents, visitors and governors
- Self-evaluation

### The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective Worship takes place in a variety of groupings, in the school hall, in classrooms, All Saints Church and on occasions outside. We follow the seasons of the Church year and within these significant festivals and other special days are observed, these always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service also feature in collective worship. Parents, Governors and members of the local community are especially welcome to attend

Key elements of worship will be included. Whenever worship takes place it is planned to promote participants' thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

During the academic year parents, Carers and families join us at Harvest, Christmas and Easter as well as Year group assemblies which take place in school and at All Saints Church.

Day	Assembly	Delivered by
Monday	Whole School Collective Worship	Revd Amy/Headteacher
Tuesday	Whole school Celebration Assembly Certificates awarded for being 'ready to learn' and 'living out' a school value	SLT and Class teachers
Wednesday	Whole school Collective Worship or Open the Book	Headteacher/SLT
Thursday	Class Collective Worship – reflection on OTB or School value	Class Teacher
Friday	Singing Assembly	Headteacher and class teacher

### Spirituality

"Mirror window doors" refers to a spiritual development framework used in Church of England schools for collective worship, where windows represent looking out to learn about the world's wonders and challenges, mirrors represent reflecting inward on one's own experiences and perspectives, and doors represent responding by acting on new insights and stepping into new possibilities. This model helps children to learn about life in all its fullness by engaging with spiritual ideas and then putting them into practice.



WINDOWS



MIRRORS



DOORS

## **Key Elements of worship**

At Witley there are times when worship will be quiet, contemplative and serene and others when laughter, music and dance will be appropriate forms of expression.

Atmosphere is all-important in creating the right foundation for Collective Worship. Quiet, orderly behaviour and respectful attitudes on entering, leaving and throughout the assembly are expected. Staff enhance the atmosphere by their presence and participation. A covered table with flowers /a cross /a Bible and a candle help to set the scene.

Music is played at the beginning and end of the assembly. One piece is selected each week appropriate to the theme. Pupils' attention is drawn to it each day and a simple explanation/ description may be given in the Hymn Practice.

Stories and talks are carefully chosen to fulfil the objectives of Collective Worship. Stories of a religious or secular nature may be used whilst personal anecdote from pupils, teachers and visitors is effective in expressing that which is important in our own lives. Particular emphasis is laid upon helping children to understand themselves better, to develop empathy and to face up to moral issues.

Songs are chosen from a wide variety of traditional and modern hymns and choruses. One or two are used at each assembly, relative to the theme and there is sometimes percussion accompaniment provided by the children. Some are learned by heart and actions are incorporated, whilst others are displayed on the overhead projector. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words; and they provide a real source of pleasure.

Prayer and reflection are the most personal part of an act of worship. Collective Worship in school provides opportunities for children to be taken to the threshold of prayer, and to cross it if they wish, in a way that respects the integrity of all present. Participation in prayer can never be imposed but we stress the need for stillness, reflection and respect for others.

Silence, written prayers, impromptu prayers, The Lord's Prayer, children's prayers and the school prayer may be used. A large candle is lit and provides a focus for pupils' thoughts.

Reflection and thinking time are given some direction by the leader in order to concentrate pupils' response.

Scripture sentences may be quoted from the Bible and, where appropriate, from sacred books and writings of other world faiths. Longer passages may be used as readings.

Presentation sets the tone within the act of worship. In keeping with the reverent atmosphere, use is also made of visual aids, artefacts, drama, demonstration and video.

## **Links with the Parish, Open the Book and others**

Clergy from All Saints Church will lead a whole school weekly, on a Monday. Where possible and appropriate the school will join with the Parish community to celebrate other religious festivals and services.

Our Open the Book team visit a few times every half term on a Wednesday, when our children join in and act out Bible stories embedding the meaning and messages in the stories.

The school will support activities involving other church schools in Witley and the surrounding area or in the diocese where we are able to come together to worship.

## **Leading Worship**

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church community. Pupils are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from our Collective Worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths. Occasionally outside speakers, such as representatives from charitable organisations, will lead worship.

### **The Role of Governors**

Governors determine, support, monitor and review school policies. They support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Foundation of the school is honoured and that the worship policy is firmly based upon the intentions set down in the Trust Deed.
- Ensuring the Collective Worship Policy is put into practice and monitored.
- Engaging an appropriate inspector to carry out Section 48 Inspection of a church school in line with the SIAMS timetable.
- Monitor the delivery of Collective Worship and this policy through Governor Visits.

### **The role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Managing the worship on a day to day basis.
- Ensuring that all legal requirements are complied with.
- Ensuring suitable resources are available
- To meet with the clergy to plan their effective involvement

### **The role of the Collective Worship leader**

The leader is responsible for:

- Writing the school policy
- Ensuring all staff are aware of and use the policy document
- Reviewing the policy on a regular basis
- Planning an overall balanced programme of worship for the year
- Drawing up worship rotas
- Involving colleagues, pupils and visitors in worship
- Advising on planning, ideas and resources
- Ensuring links are made between articles within the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child and worship themes and that these are shared with the children.
- Administering the budget for collective worship
- Monitoring and evaluating collective worship in all its forms
- Arranging INSET as appropriate
- Keeping up to date with new developments and publications
- Liaising with clergy, diocese and governing body on matters relating to collective worship

### **Measuring impact and success**

At Witley we measure the impact and success of collective worship by looking for the following to be evident:

- involvement, enjoyment, attention, and engagement of pupils
- the growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- positive responses to shared experiences
- contribution to individual and community sense of well being
- a sense of occasion and good order
- staff affirmation
- children articulating, understanding and living out our school values
- knowledge of key Christian texts

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring will occur regularly over each term using a proforma (Appendix 1)

Monitoring will be carried out by Revd Amy or any of our governors with the Headteacher if appropriate.

Elements of the Diocesan self-evaluation materials will be used as appropriate.

**Appendix 1****Collective Worship Monitoring Witley C of E infant School**

Date	Day	Name	
Name of staff Leading CW			
Adults present	Teachers	TAs	
Expected start time	Actual start time		Finish time

**Structure**

Greeting

Input

Reflection

Prayer and sending out

**Song**

Comments – inc. pupil voice