



# Churchill Church of England Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

*To create a nurturing community in which we ignite curious minds,  
encourage generous hearts and embrace a changing world so our  
children can live life in all its fullness.*

Written by	Headteacher
Ratified by	Ethos Committee
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Signed – Chair of Governors	<i>Sally Furniss</i>
Signed – Headteacher	<i>Lorraine Woolven</i>

## **Collective Worship – Guidance**

‘Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Church of England Vision for Education

‘Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good’ Autumn 2016

### **Introduction**

As a Church school, we embrace the opportunity for collective worship as it enables our children and school team to have the opportunity to grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. It is the heartbeat of our school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, as individuals and together.

Our Christian vision is to create a nurturing community in which we ignite curious minds, encourage generous hearts and embrace a changing world so our children can live life in all its fullness.

This vision, alongside our three core Christian values and biblical underpinning shapes all we do:

***“Let all that you do be done in love.” (1 Corinthians 16:14)***



### **Policy Statement and Guiding Principles**

At Churchill Primary School collective worship aims to be **Inclusive, Invitational, and Inspiring** and offers children and adults the opportunity to experience worship and join in, **if they wish**.

We aim to make all of our worship **inclusive** by ensuring it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. We recognise that within our rich community we have many pupils and staff who come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey, during their time in our school. As a result, we ensure that through our collective worship we give our pupils the opportunity to think and ask questions. We seek to make space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. We take care that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

We recognise that our pupils bring their own experience to worship and actively encourage our pupils (through our school council and in future, pupil chaplains) to be involved in planning, leading and evaluating our worship.

We commit to our collective worship being consistently **invitational**. There is no compulsion to ‘do anything’. Rather, our worship is created to provide our pupils with the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those of no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity.

Pupils and adults are always only invited to pray if they wish to do so, and they are invited to pray in their own way, including the option to reflect.

At Churchill Primary School, pupils and adults can expect the worship they experience to be **inspirational**. We seek to enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. We hope to motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result of inspirational collective worship, we want our school community to be inspired to become courageous advocates of causes. School leaders share this poem, written by Saint Mother Teresa, as an underpinning of courageous advocacy.

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered;  
forgive them anyway.  
If you do good, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;  
do good anyway.  
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;  
succeed anyway.  
Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable;  
be honest and frank anyway.  
What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;  
build anyway.  
If you find serenity and happiness, there may be jealousy;  
be happy anyway.  
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;  
do good anyway.  
Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;  
give the world the best you've got anyway.  
You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;  
it was never between you and them anyway.

### **Legal Requirements**

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is not relevant. Worship in Churchill Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The governing body of the school have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

### **The right of withdrawal**

At Churchill Primary School there are some children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they are hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents/carers wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements.

At this meeting, it will be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent/carer would object to the child taking part

- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much.

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and headteacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply. (This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)

### **How Collective worship is organised**

We gather daily to worship and celebrate being together as a school community. In our acts of worship we reflect, individually and as a group, on the awe and wonder of the known and unknown world in which we live. Our collective worship is broadly but not exclusively Christian, consistent with our Christian foundation. There are occasions when other faiths are the focus during collective worship (for example festivals, holy days etc). A range of ministers from different denominations are invited to lead worship. As we are a Church of England school, we welcome the wider perspective provided by other Christian denominations.

As Church of England school, our collective worship:

- explores the school's vision and values. We reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.
- helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- enables pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals.
- enables pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

We use the bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and support pupils to become familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages. We also use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and provide opportunities to discover the value of stillness and peace. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

Worship takes place in different ways throughout the week. The current pattern of worship is as follows:

Monday – Open the Book service, led by the Church Community

Tuesday – 'Big Sing' themes developed and celebrated through the joy of music and song

Wednesday – Senior leadership led worship on the weekly values or biblical theme.

Thursday – Members of the school team lead a service based on our wider personal development curriculum.

Friday – Celebration service

Our Friday celebration service offers an opportunity to share children's achievements and to celebrate their successes. These play an important role in promoting the ethos of the school. During these services we recognise a citizen of the week. This special recognition offers pupils and adults an opportunity to share the values, attitudes and attributes of a member of the community and why they represent a special citizen in our community.

### **Growing Faith and Connections with other local churches**

We have strong links with both our local churches; St Mary's and St John's. Members of both church communities support the leadership of the school through their roles on the Governing Body as well as the continued growth of the Christian ethos of our school, through an active ethos committee. In addition to regular Church visits, we embrace the opportunity for Rector David Gent, Reverend of our local parish, to join us to lead services. Rector David not only leads services but also works closely with our school council to lead their own pupil led services. We also enjoy weekly 'Open the Book' services led by members of Church Community.

### **Planning**

Our collective worship themes are organised on a 3 year cycle following weekly themes for whole school services and based on the Old and New Testament stories. We use bible stories, poetry, fable and legend, world events to support our worship programme and to engage us all in reflection and consideration of the meaning of life. Music, art and photographs often illustrate difficult concepts in ways which words cannot. Foundation governors support the headteacher in the monitoring and updating of worship themes. We use a candle prayer to mark the start of our worship. We frequently use the school prayer to end worship.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We are developing our monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of: the purpose and focus; hymns sung; prayers and bible connections. Surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness is a developing part of our practice. The coordinator and others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship to ensure it fulfils the aims of this policy. Members of the Governing Body, including the Foundation governors, regularly join our worship and are taking a fuller role in the monitoring and evaluation process.

### **Conclusion**

Worship is an important part of our school day, and we want children to feel secure and relaxed during this special time. Through worship we offer pupils an opportunity to worship God, consider spiritual and moral issues and explore their own beliefs. Worship develops and promotes a common ethos of shared values and positive attitudes.