

# Collective Worship Policy

**‘We believe in inspirational teaching that encourages every child to gain confidence and strive for personal success.’**

## **Our school is here**

- *To provide high quality education for children of the local community in accordance with Christian principles*
- *To further the links between the school and the local community*
- *To teach respect for individuals and an understanding of the beliefs and cultures of others, as well as Christian values and beliefs*

## **Aim**

As a church school we want our children to have the opportunity to learn to worship and to grow in their understanding of God and themselves. Collective worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. We believe that we are all made in the image of God and that worship should form an integral part of our lives.

We believe that at its heart collective worship should provide an opportunity for children and staff to come together to learn, reflect and pray, sing, share and communicate their feelings with one another and with God.

## **As a school, rooted in the teachings, values and spiritual life of the Church of England, we aim to:**

- Provide an opportunity for children to praise and reach out to God through our Lord Jesus
- Highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension of life through the experiences of vibrant worship
- Provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery, music and silence and reflection
- Provide an opportunity to celebrate Christian festivals

## **1 Collective Worship**

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- Heighten awareness of life's ultimate questions and realities of life and to provide a good opportunity to reflect upon these in their search for meaning and fulfilment
- Enable all children to appreciate their worth and value to God and to the community
- Respect the integrity of each person as a child of God
- Enable children to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation and prayer
- Celebrate gifts, talents and achievement
- Reaffirm, strengthen and practice our key Christian values
- Foster a feeling of community and belonging in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings, joys and sorrows
- Take time to offer moments of forgiveness and thanksgiving in our collective worship
- Provide an opportunity to bring God in prayer personal needs and those of others.
- Encourage responsibility to care for God's creation by a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues
- Foster awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy in a spiritual journey
- Provide memorable and enjoyable experiences

## 1. Introduction

Christian worship underpins all that we do as a school. It gives us the opportunity to celebrate faith as well as encouraging our pupils to think about their place in the world, through Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. We will not shy away from our responsibilities in enabling children to think deeply about God, themselves, the world in which they live and the place that faith has in our society.

## 2. Legal Status of Collective Worship

The School Standards and Framework Act of 1998, states that the three main legal requirements for collective worship are:

1. Collective worship in a Church of England School should be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship in a community school, that it *should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character* does **not** apply in a church school, where it should be **clearly Christian**.
2. The school must provide an act of collective worship for **all** children **every day**.

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3. The act of collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school , KS or class unit

Parents may withdraw their children from collective worship on religious grounds. This right of withdrawal does not extend to assemblies.

It is illegal for staff to withdraw children from collective worship (for interventions, music lessons, booster groups etc.)

Teachers have the right to withdraw from worship. However, worship is an important part of the ethos of the school which teachers must be willing and able to uphold.

Collective worship **cannot** be used as part of a teacher's PPA.

### 3. Definitions

The school recognises that there is a difference between acts of collective worship and assembly. On some occasions assembly may proceed or follow an act of worship. When this happens the transition from assembly to worship will be marked in some suitable way e.g. the lighting of a candle or reflecting on an image, or a moment of silence and reflection etc.

**School assembly** – can be a gathering of the school community; it is often used to celebrate and focus on the life and values of the community itself and is without specific religious content.

**Collective worship** – can be a gathering of a 'collection' of people of diverse religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment. In our context it refers to a service of distinctively Christian worship, which is educational and inclusive in its nature, rather than being a gathering of believers. Opportunities should be provided for children to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ without losing sight of either the different starting points of each of the children, or the need for the act of collective worship to take account of the developmental ages of the children.

### 4. Elements of worship

At Cropredy School collective worship aims to focus on the following main areas:

- Spirituality – enabling children to express themselves through relevant and appropriate means
- Inclusiveness - allowing different levels of response, retaining open-ness and integrity
- Education – providing context, background and input to religious education and allowing children to participate and contribute themselves, thus making collective worship a valuable learning experience
- A sense of occasion – using atmosphere, resources and approaches to create a mood of reflection, meditation and spirituality; and above all, making the experience both meaningful and enjoyable.

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Spiritual development is encouraged through the daily opportunities for children to:

- Experience times of mental and physical stillness
- Feel comfortable being quiet and still
- Be 'alone' amongst a larger group
- Experience a sense of community
- Letting go of distractions to concentrate and focus their thoughts
- Think about the theme and contribute proactively to the worship
- Be receptive to their own thoughts and those of others
- Engage on the quest for discovery and learning, through worship and prayer
- Think about self-worth, self-knowledge and self-identity

## **5. Church Links**

Cropredy School is part of the Shires' Edge Benefice (Cropredy, Mollington, Wardington, Claydon, Little and Great Bourton) and actively encourages strong links with these parishes.

The vicar leads collective worship in school on a regular basis and supports school events.

The vicar creates a termly prayer station in school as well as an annual 'Prayer Space' event.

The school aims to participate in at least one whole school church service per term. These may include Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

**Liturgical colours** – one way of making a connection between the worship in school and that of the church is to use the cycle of church colours.

The liturgical colours are:

**Purple** – Advent and from Ash Wednesday to the day before Palm Sunday

**White** – Christmas Day to Candlemas, Easter Day to the Eve of Pentecost

**Red** – Holy Week, Feast of Pentecost, between All Saints Day and the First Sunday of Advent

**Green** - Day after Candlemas to Shrove Tuesday, day after Pentecost to the eve of All Saints' Day

## **6. Organisation**

The whole school, including members of staff, meet together three times a week for collective worship.

The whole school say a prayer before lunch and finish the school day with the school prayer.

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**Lunchtime prayer:**

*Thank you for the world so sweet,*

*Thank you for the food we eat,*

*Thank you for the birds that sing,*

*Thank you God for everything.*

*Amen*

**End of the day:**

*Lord, keep us safe this night,*

*Secure from all our fears.*

*May angels guard us while we sleep,*

*'Til morning light appears.*

*Amen.*

Various people assist the headteacher with leading collective worship, including the vicar, other members of the clergy, staff members, children and visitors.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
HT/Vicar/Visitor	Hymn practise	Staff/visitor	Class worship	Class led/ HT

Parents are invited to attend sharing assemblies; these reflect the achievements and learning of the pupils. The assembly offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward pupils for their achievements both in and out of school and promotes the community spirit of the school.

Parents are also invited to attend worship on special occasions, such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. This promotes cohesion within the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements and spiritual understanding of our children.

Governors are welcome to attend our worship at any time

**7. Planning**

Collective worship is planned around the school values, which provides the structure

Themes chosen are broad enough to allow all those leading worship to approach the themes from their own perspective. This will mean that by the end of the term, children will have had the opportunity to reflect on the theme from a variety of viewpoints.

This is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local and national events.

The head teacher distributes the collective worship timetable and rota at the start of each term.

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Planning and feedback are collected by the headteacher.

## **8. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

Each person leading worship is asked to plan their act of collective worship following the school format.

We seek to encourage children to voice their views and the school council regularly seeks the views of their class mates and reports to the headteacher.

Formal evaluation of collective worship will take place annually.

This document is a working document. Therefore it is open to change and restructure as and when appropriate.

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the SLT and the Foundation Governors on behalf of the Governing Body.

## **9. Inclusion**

If there are any children whose parents exercise their right to withdraw them from worship, alternative activities will be provided in consultation with the children's parents.

Agreed – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Updated – April 2018

Review – April 2019

Hilary Stevens – Headteacher

Andy Bird – Chair of Governors

