

Woodham Walter C of E Primary School



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



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'As a family we grow, learn and flourish together'

Our Vision

At Woodham Walter Church of England Primary School, our welcoming Christian community creates independent, resilient and articulate lifelong learners, who have the confidence to achieve personal excellence for themselves and for the Glory of God. As a family we grow, learn and flourish together.

Just like a garden needs sunshine, water, and care to grow, we need to support each other to learn and flourish in our school community. Here at Woodham Walter, we believe in knowing one another, valuing each other, and celebrating our achievements. In adopting the Bible verse "I have come that you may have life in all its fullness", pupils and staff are called to a full life in mind, body, heart and spirit. Life in all its fullness is about living a varied and full life full of learning, growing, helping, reward, joy, excitement and caring for each other. It resonates deeply with our aspirations for our pupils to experience "life to the full" during their time at Woodham Walter and beyond.

To achieve our school vision, we have a steadfast commitment to our core values of ***kindness, respect and honesty***. Through them we aspire to enrich the lives of others, enabling every individual to grow, learn and flourish together so that they may experience "life to the full".

Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian ethos of our school, explores our vision to ***grow, learn and flourish together, experiencing life in all its fullness*** and the associated values of ***kindness, respect and honesty***, we derive from them. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year.

Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. The daily Christian act of collective worship is the heartbeat of our school, central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the 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 with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20 which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England schools rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Executive Headteacher and Head of School.

Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).¹ Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide 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. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Implementation

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England. Therefore:

- We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils 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 use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship as we **gather, engage, respond and send**. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.
- In Woodham Walter, we aim to provide worship spaces which are attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.
- We foster links with St Michael's Church, involving the Reverend Julie in leading collective worship, as well as a School Governor - Anne Rushton. The Senior Minister from Chelmsford Vineyard Church - Libby Woodward also leads collective worship. Our regular visitors provide coherence between worship in church and Woodham Walter school.
- We visit St Michael's Church at least four times per year as part of the Christian calendar.
- We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At Woodham Walter, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to Woodham Walter CofE Primary School, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Our Collective Worship Pattern and Practice

Leadership

- The Head of School leads and oversees the organisation of collective worship
- Collective Worship is led by Head of School; teachers; Reverend Julie; School Governor and Senior minister Libby Woodward, as well as pupils
- Collective Worship takes place at 8.50am, daily and lasts for 15 minutes

Planning

- Collective Worship is planned through a series-based approach, on a three-year cycle.
 - The through the series-based approach, worship reflects the cycle of the Church year
- The Christian values of the school are identified, expressed and celebrated through collective worship - focusing on kindness, respect and honesty
- Through our series-based approach, explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school.
 - Each collective worship is planned through a **'gather, engage, respond and send' approach.**
 - We use a range and variety of materials, including websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g., a picture or candle.
 - Opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today's world through focusing on current affairs and the Global Neighbours Award.
 - Through our series-based approach, the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God is given the opportunity to be explored.
 - Spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured daily through our collective worship and through the school curriculum.

Organisation

- Collective Worship is organised through whole school worship, daily
- Collective Worship takes place in the school hall - a sacred space has been created to ensure the space is special; sacred spaces have also been created in every classroom.
- Sacred spaces include the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year and Christian signs and symbols, candles, music and a focal point.

Resourcing, Staff development and training

The budget for Collective Worship is distinct from the budget for Religious Education. There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Visitor Leaders to Collective Worship

We welcome visitors to lead and participate in our Collective Worship (Reverend Julie, Anne Rushton and Libby Woodward). Visiting Collective Worship Leaders are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. The welcoming Worship Lead will discuss with the visitor, prior to the visitor leading Collective Worship, the content, expectations and practices of Collective Worship. The purpose is to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Collective Worship practice is regularly reviewed (termly) through discussions with pupils and staff through observations and reflections. These evaluations feed into the planning and delivery of future worship by the Head of School.

Collective Worship is monitored by the Head of School and link School Governor. Through the monitoring process, the collective worship is continuously improving.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The Head of School as Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.