



Vernham Dean Gillums' CE Primary School

Collective Worship Policy



Introduction

This policy is an agreed statement of the values and aims of collective worship at Vernham Dean Gillums' Church of England Primary School.

*Isaiah 40:31 (NIV) but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will **soar** on wings **like** eagles.*

Worship in our school should:

As worship:

- Be at its simplest create a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us
- Be distinctively Christian
- Use and promote the clearly identified core Christian values of the school
- Have **Integrity** as acts of Anglican worship whilst being **Invitational, Inclusive** and **inspirational**
- Be based on Biblical text or themes
- Enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Be central in importance to the life of our school community, which is part of a wider community that embraces the whole world
- Reflect on human existence
- Use the seasons and festivals of the Christian year
- Develop understanding of Anglican traditions and the practice of the local parish church

For people:

- Develop personal spirituality within the school community through a range of experiences including individual and collective prayer
- Engage pupils and adults with collective worship, making it relevant and transformational to the lives of members of the whole school community
- Celebrate the God given gifts and talents of individuals and the whole school community
- Make a significant contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of members of the school community
- Consider the beliefs and values of others, especially those within the school community
- Raise aspirations of individuals and the school community

To comply:

- Reflect the trust deed
- Be clearly outlined in the school prospectus and documentation
- Involve learners and adults in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship
- Be monitored and evaluated for the impact it has on the school community by foundation governors

Aims

- To promote the joy of worship as engaging, inspiring and transformative
- To develop spirituality, morality, social and cultural values
- Sometimes to provide a peaceful environment enabling stillness, reflection and prayer
- Sometimes to be noisy and joyous with singing, music, dance and drama
- To give an opportunity to acquire a secure knowledge of the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible
- To understand, celebrate and develop children's knowledge of Christian beliefs, celebrations, traditions and religious festivals in the Anglican Church's year
- To appreciate that people, cultures and beliefs differ and to demonstrate respect, tolerance and generosity towards them
- To develop pupils' sense of self-worth and to provide opportunities to celebrate achievements
- To develop a caring attitude to others and a sense of community and loyalty
- To provide opportunities for children to plan, lead, contribute to, monitor and evaluate collective worship
- To invite clergy of the parish, other lay members of the parish and other Christian leaders in the community [as are acceptable to the parish church] to lead worship weekly

How we achieve our aims

We aim to promote collective acts of worship, which are rich, meaningful experiences that are appropriate and significant to the pupil's needs, age, development and interest by:

- Creating a sense of occasion and reverence following the 4 central attributes of worship
- Arranging worship at different places when possible, different times with different people and groupings, involving all members of the school community at some time
- Planning and linking themes which focus on a particular idea/concept, i.e. the liturgical year; RE curriculum, festivals and celebrations, within Christian and other faith traditions, our Christian values of Love, Hope and Courage, and the PSHE curriculum – celebrating achievements, good work and behaviour
- Using a wide range of resources, devotional aids, artefacts (from religious and secular sources), music, art, drama and external speakers to engage children's interest
- Encourage children to participate and experience different styles of worship, e.g. prayer, praise, silence, rituals, and become familiar with the language of worship, Biblical readings and liturgy
- Providing opportunities for pupils to reflect, contemplate on their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs
- Using the centrality of prayer – personal silent prayer, personal shared prayers, collective prayers, writing prayers
- Providing opportunities that develop pupil's awareness of what is beautiful, good, wonderful, awesome and puzzling in life experience
- Involving pupils and members of the wider community to participate in collective worship and activities within the parish
- Presenting and creating displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas, thoughts and questions

Central attributes of an act of worship

The School will endeavour to fulfil the legal requirements of 1988 Education Reform Act in conjunction with School's trust deed, by holding 'an act of collective worship every day'.

During collective worship, whether in the hall, classroom, outside or during offsite learning, we will apply the following 'central attributes' of worship:

Gathering	Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony
Engaging	Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content
Responding	Ensuring there is time and opportunity for individual, group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways
Sending	Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas covered and to conclude the worship

School specific organisation

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Headteacher.
Tuesday	Class or House worship led by staff/House Captains
Wednesday	Whole school worship led by staff/Worship Working Party.
Thursday	Whole school worship led by the parish vicar or local minister
Friday	Whole school celebration worship led by Head teacher

The School may vary this organisation each year or term. Collective worship should be planned systematically, so that there is continuity, variety and clear focus on Christian beliefs and festivals. Worship is led by a variety of people that include School staff, pupils, Governors, representatives from the parish church, and members of the local community.

Prayer

During the collective worship there will be a time for response and reflection, to ponder on a question, statement or thought. This may also be reflected in a prayer, offered spontaneously by a pupil or adult, read out or recited. This prayer can be displayed on the school prayer board and used in class and school reflective areas so that:

- Children understand the nature and purpose of prayer
- Children understand the part prayer may play in their lives and the life of the school community
- Prayer contributes to the spiritual development of individuals and the whole school community

There will also be appropriate opportunities for prayer and other worship activities, including reflection, outside of collective worship. Each class has a 'reflective area' to engage and promote individual pupils and adults.

Management and organisation of resources

The Worship Leader and senior leadership team plans worship on a termly basis, with input from pupils, teachers, members of the parish church and reflections / feedback from pupils, staff, governors and parents.

Resources and artefacts are available from the RE resource library on request. Other resources are kept in classes and in the R.E. area within group room. All classes have a prayer book and a set of Bibles, as well as access to a variety of additional books.

The displays in the hall highlight the collective acts of worship themes, music and prayer and reflect the colours of the Anglican Church's year.

Communication

The biweekly school newsletter seeks to promote and reflect our 3 core Christian values of Love, Hope and Courage and contains a prayer contributed by a child. Each half term one of the school's Christian values is explored in depth and parents also receive a supplementary newsletter about this value.

The school contributes articles to the parish magazine on a regular basis.

Parental involvement

Parents are actively encouraged to attend and share in our acts of worship. Parental feedback is encouraged, valued and used as part of our ongoing aim to improve the quality and impact of worship in our school.

Legal status of collective worship

All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship.

In a Church of England School, worship must be in line with the trust deed of the school and will reflect the traditions of the Church of England, i.e. the Anglican tradition.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the daily act of collective worship. The School must comply with this wish and must ensure a duty of care for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Collective worship guidance is contained in Circular 1/94.

The school will respect parental wishes and will try to discuss the request to see if an accommodation can be reached and to ensure worship remains inclusive and invitational and open to all members of the school community.

Responsibilities

The normal expectation within our church school is for all staff to view daily collective worship as an important part of their own wellbeing and spiritual development as human beings. The school will endeavour to timetable staff so all have an opportunity to attend regularly.

- At interview all applicants are informed that the school holds daily acts of collective worship that promote the Christian ethos and values of the school
- The normal expectation will be that teaching staff, including student teachers, will participate in and lead collective worship
- The school welcomes offers from any member of staff who feels confident to lead worship
- The worship leader and SLT are responsible for collective worship and co-ordinating the programme of induction and training for staff

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of collective acts of worship, is undertaken by pupils, staff, and governors on a termly basis. All who deliver worship will be observed on a regular basis. This process supports the school's self-evaluation, is a specific responsibility of the foundation governors and is reported to the whole governing body.

Pupils are also involved in evaluating collective worship through feedback in weekly class worship, questionnaires and pupil conferences.

All leaders of collective worship contribute to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of worships to improve their practice and impact with the children.

Review

This policy should be reviewed annually, or earlier if changes are made to the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule.

Approved by Governors
(Signature Chair of Governors)

Review Autumn 2019