

# ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL



## Policy for Whole School Worship

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

*Learning together, rooted in God, pupils at St Lawrence Church of England Primary School are easy to distinguish by the personal qualities they present. They are happy, confident, articulate children with a love of learning, who recognise and celebrate their own individuality and that of other members of our community. They are generous, kind and welcoming; they are forgiving and understand justice. With God by their side, they face the world with resilience, integrity and joy*

Policy Adopted: September 2014  
Policy Reviewed: September 2021 (K Rogerson)  
Next Review Due: September 2023

## 1. Fundamentals

### (a) Christian emphasis

In this Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Collective worship is in conformity with the ethos statement and the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England as laid down in the Trust Deed.

The school's ethos statement is:

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

The school's Trust Deed

*In accordance with The School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Section 69 (4) and Schedule 20, section 5, the Collective Worship provided in the school, in the absence of a Trust Deed, is in accordance with designation of the religious character of the school by the Secretary of State.*

- (b) Collective Worship contributes to the working out of our **Ethos Statement** through our **Mission Statement** and the **aims** and **ethos** of the school, and therefore to the Christian Education we provide. It also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the values of our school.
- (c) Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils' education. As such we are concerned to resource it properly and ensure that it is of the highest standard. The worship and prayer life of the school is not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities will be taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum generally and at the end of (morning and afternoon) sessions as well as graces before lunch and hometime.
- (d) The Church of England Heritage  
Forms of worship within our denomination differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to our Trust Deeds. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian Church.
- (e) Whatever the approaches, we expect that pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them. These would include:
- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

- The nature of human beings as children of God, part of his creation and, though sinful, destined for eternal life;
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God;
- The central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity;
- The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance;
- The importance of prayer;
- The central symbols of Christianity;
- The cycle of the Church year.

(f) The links with St Lawrence Church.

The school celebrates and enjoys close links with St Lawrence Church. The Vicar leads weekly worship in school and also assists with the teaching of aspects of the Religious Education Curriculum. A half termly whole school Eucharist Service is held in the church and parents are warmly welcomed. Our end of term services in church are particularly well attended; the school, parents and parishioners come together to celebrate the previous term and prepare for the next. Once a year, on Education Sunday, the church visits school. Members of the congregation are warmly welcomed and parents serve refreshments in order to return the hospitality offered to them at weekly services. The headteacher regularly attends Sunday Services and is a member of the Church Worship Committee, attending regular meetings to plan worship and discuss the impact that services have had on the community in general and the school in particular.

**Aims**

- To encounter a faith that is alive and relevant
- To experience the joy of celebrating God's love
- To be part of the world wide Christian community
- To work with God for the benefit of others

(g) Collective Worship and Assembly

The school meets together for Collective Worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, e.g. important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from Collective Worship and parents' rights to withdraw their children do not apply.

(h) Worship in the school, while reflecting our denomination, will take into account the levels of development of pupils.

(i) The provision of collective worship conforms to Diocesan policy.

(j) The relationship to Denominational Religious Education.

Worship and Religious Educations sessions are closely interconnected. Links to studies of other world religions are explored through collective worship as children present their learning to the other children. God's Big Story is also taught through Religious Education sessions and referred to in our acts of collective worship.

## 2. Responsibility for the policy

- (a) This policy was adopted by the Governing Body in September 2014 and is updated bi-annually. It was written (and reviewed) by the Collective Worship Co-ordinator in consultation with the Headteacher, local clergy
- (b) Responsibility for the implementation of this policy falls to the Headteacher (Mrs J Goodwin) and the Collective Worship Co-ordinator (Mrs K Rogerson).

## 3. Statement of broad aims

- To encounter a faith that is alive and relevant
- To experience the joy of celebrating God's love
- To be part of the world wide Christian community
- To work with God for the benefit of others

## 4. Organisation and Delivery

- a) Collective worship will take place according to the following rota:

MONDAY	Whole School Collective Worship	Led by the Headteacher following termly themes based on the church's year and the school's Christian Values for Life but also responding to significant world events
TUESDAY	Class Worship	Led by members of staff and based on a common worship theme using Roots and Fruits resources
WEDNESDAY	Whole School Worship	Led by the Vicar of St Lawrence Church following termly themes as above and rooted in the Bible.
THURSDAY	Whole School Hymn Practice	Led by members of staff on a rota basis. Hymn practice includes the use of Christian symbols, e.g. candle and responses e.g. The Lord be With You. The session ends with a time for reflection and a prayer.
FRIDAY	Family Worship	This very popular celebration worship is led by the headteacher or other member of the leadership team. Parents are invited to attend.

- b) Collective worship will be led by different people depending on the content of the worship. This will vary between staff, pupils, local clergy, visitors, governors.
- c) The approximate length of collective worship is 30 minutes. Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfES regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussion and question and answer. Pupils may be read to or instructed or they may be asked to listen to readings or to think about and respond to a stimulus such as a work of art.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt. Frequently pupils are involved in leading worship or performing through dance, drama or music.

When any such activities occur, they may be counted as teaching time even though they take place within worship. It is appropriate that, in a Church school, worship and learning is seen as a seamless whole even though, for the purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two.

- d) Parents and families are invited to join worship every Friday for our whole school family worship. In addition to this, any parents and family members of children leading a collective worship will be welcome to attend those times. Governors are welcome to join any collective worship on any day.
- e) A sense of worship will be built through the use of music, singing, and a calm and orderly entrance and exit to the hall. The hall is decorated with our own artwork depicting God's Big Story and the stained-glass windows in the hall. The candles are lit on the worship table at the beginning of each collective worship and the children are encouraged to keep a moment of silent thought as the candles are lit.
- f) Notices will be distinguished from the act of collective worship by only announcing them after the final prayer and as the last thing before the children leave the worship space. Where appropriate, notices will be given by someone other than the worship leader.
- g) Worship in the form of a Eucharist Service takes place in Church each half term. These worships are planned by the Worship Committee of which the Headteacher and Vicar are members. Children are heavily involved in the Eucharist Service - leading prayers, receiving the grapes from the altar, talking the candles, bread and wine to the altar.

- h) The school has a flexible approach to worship and works closely with families to enable every child to be part of the daily act of worship. Parents may however request that their child is withdrawn from worship if they prefer. Children who are not included in worship will be allowed to remain in class with a member of staff. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request; this right of withdrawal complies with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- j) Because of the importance placed on the worshipping life of the school, children will not be withdrawn for extra tuition, music lessons etc.
- k) Children will enter the worship space in an orderly manner and sit in their year groups facing the worship leader. Where needed, an aisle will be left down the middle of the space for children and adults to move around. When collective worship is to take place in church, the children are to walk to church in their year groups and sit in their year groups within church. Where parents, families and governors join us in church worship, they will be invited to sit at the back of the church or in the side aisles. Children will remain sitting with their class even if their parents are present.

## **5 Content and Approaches**

- (a) Class worships focus on one of our school values and are underpinned by biblical and theological grounding using the Roots and Fruits resources. Whole school worships endeavour to put the school values into an everyday context using examples of courageous advocates from society as a whole and our local community. Over the course of two years, the children learn about each of our 12 school values and their grounding in theology and demonstrations of them in life. We also cover key events in the life of the church, world religious festivals and celebrations, and the Christian calendar.
- (b) Key events in the life of the church (eg saints days, Pentecost, harvest etc.) and world religious festivals and celebrations (Diwali, Eid) will be focused on in our collective worship at the appropriate times in the year. Our school values are on a rolling two yearly programme for us to focus on one per half term and really dive deeply into the theology and importance of each value. Celebrations of curriculum work and children's individual successes will take place weekly as part of our whole school family worship.
- (c) A wide range of approaches are to be used, e.g. adult and pupil led, story telling, music and movement, drama (rehearsed and improvised), visual aids, role play etc.

## **6. Resources**

- a) The appropriateness, coverage of and relevance of the resources for worship is reviewed regularly. Should new resources be required, these are purchased at the discretion of the headteacher.
- b) Resources such as Roots and Fruits, Jack in the box worship, historical religious artworks and visual aids, story books and music are kept in the Worship Resources cupboard within the Collective Worship Co-ordinator's classroom.

## **7. Consultation, Management, Recording and Review**

- a) Each half term there is a meeting of the Worship and Values committee (consisting of staff, pupils, governor and clergy) in which the upcoming school value is discussed. The committee decide upon the texts, images and real-life examples to use in the illustration of the value. The children from the committee then script their own worship to support the delivery for the half term. A worship questionnaire is undertaken at least once per year to gauge the children's thoughts and suggestions for how to improve worship.
- b) All new staff to school undertake training provided from the diocese to support them in the delivery of collective worship. As new CPD opportunities arise, staff are invited to undertake these courses.
- c) Each act of worship will be recorded in a variety of ways. Class worships will be recorded in the class worship books (including pictures, children's thoughts, work created in response to the worship). Whole school worship will be recorded in the WAV committee record book by a nominated member of the committee. Staff running the worship will record their content, next steps and any evaluation of the worship on the evaluation proforma saved on the server.
- d) Once per term the Collective Worship Co-ordinator will attend a worship with the sole purpose of observing the children's participation within the worship. Class worship books will be collected in for scrutiny as part of the regular monitoring of RE and Worship. The worship evaluation proforma will be regularly monitored for any evaluations showing possible improvements to the way worship is delivered. These findings will all be reported to the RE and Worship governor on at least a termly basis for further reporting to the wider governing body.

### **The legal requirements for Collective Worship in our school**

#### **(a) Legal Basis**

Collective Worship in Church Schools is governed by both the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts as well as by the Trust Deed of the School. The Collective Worship provided by the school must be in accordance with the Trust Deed, or in accordance with the tradition before we became an Aided school.

**(b) Daily Worship**

Daily Collective Worship has to be provided for every pupil. This worship may take place in various groupings such as the whole school, separate Key Stage groups, year groups or house groups or in classes or tutor groups, but not faith groups. Worship may take place at any point in the school day.

**(c) Worship in Church Aided Schools.**

Worship should normally take place on the school premises, but may take place in Church on special occasions.

**(d) Parental rights of withdrawal**

Parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship (see section 4 paragraphs h and j). The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.

**(e) Complaints about the provision of Collective Worship**

It is hoped that any complaint will be resolved informally by the Headteacher, in consultation with the Governors, and possibly with advice from the Diocese or District. However, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, then formal procedures come into play and the matter will be adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the Bishop.