

# Collective Worship Policy

## Parish Primary School

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**PARISH**  
CE Primary School

Building Learning, Friendships and Faith.

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## Introduction

As a Church of England (controlled) Primary School, our worship policy not only follows the minimum requirements of the 1996 Education Reform Act common to all schools. Worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England as well as other Christian traditions, and recognises and follows the Church's liturgical year. Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the distinctive Christian character of our school, reaffirms our Christian values and celebrates the contribution that each child makes to our community. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and Advisory Council Members.

## Aims

Collective worship at Parish supports the school's Vision and Values and contributes to the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of our pupils, by providing opportunities for students and staff:

- to explore a relationship with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, supporting the pupils' spiritual development.
- to reflect on our explicit Christian values which are at the heart of our school.
- to develop personal spirituality especially through prayer, and also through a range of other experiences enabling pupils to bring before God in prayer both personal needs and those of the wider world.
- to be engaged in an exploration of the relevance and application of the Christian faith
- to develop an enquiring mind and express and explore their own views openly and honestly, feeling a sense of awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy through memorable and enjoyable experiences.
- to develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared Christian values
- to foster an awareness of the world around them and a sense of their place within it

## Organisation

A 20-minute Act of Worship is held every day at Parish. These are led by either the head, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, other staff, a school class, the R.E. reps, BIF club, the Vicar of St Mary's, the Vicar of the Parish Church or a visiting speaker.

Weekly worship includes:

1. Whole school collective worship, which focuses on the half term value. Links are made between the whole school Christian Values, the outworking of these through the Fruits of Spirit and how our daily lives reflect these.
2. A 'Celebration Worship' where the children are encouraged to celebrate their talents and weekly achievements. This worship is a time to thank God for His blessings and to ask Him to guide us and help us use our gifts.

3. Family Worship, which a class plans and leads. Parents and carers are invited to share in the Act of Worship and a member of the clergy will also attend.
4. Birthday Prayers (KS1) and Phase Worship where children can explore ideas and beliefs age appropriately. This worship may also include times for children to focus on the use of song in worship. New songs may be taught and children are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of the words.

The whole school meets together at St. Mary's Church to share in services for Harvest and School Thanksgiving and Y4-Y6 celebrate Christmas at the Parish Church. Different Year Groups, the R.E. Reps and Chamber Choir help prepare and lead these worships.

Prayer is central to the life of the school. Every day each class say an end of the day prayer. The Lord's Prayer is used throughout the school. A class candle provides a worship focus and each classroom has a prayer corner or table decorated with appropriate visual stimuli.

The Headteacher and/or R.E. Subject manager oversee all worship services. The yearly overview is drawn up in consultation with the clergy of St. Mary's Church, The Parish Church and the Senior Leadership Team.

## Content

Each Act of Worship includes elements of the Diocesan Collective Worship Framework:

- Gathering: A call to worship and traditional Anglican greeting.
- Engaging: This is the part of the worship where the attendees are asked to join in with something. This might include; listening to a story or a prayer or a song, watching a play or joining in with a dance or activity, thinking about something. This is delivered in a variety of different ways suitable to the topic and age range of the children. Visual stimuli, audio visual resources, drama and other interactive pupil participation are used where necessary.
- Responding: This is the part of the worship where the attendees are given a time to reflect personally on the idea or theme we have explored or reading we have listened to. This often includes a quiet time for reflection, prayer or song.
- Sending out: Attendees are reminded of the theme and given encouragement to take forward these ideas into the life of the school, living out the Christian Values.

To provide a worship focus as the classes gather, each class has their own candle that they bring to the hall, reinforcing the idea of God's presence in worship and God being with us where ever we are.

The content of each Act of Worship follows a two-year cycle (although principle feasts may repeat traditions.) A variety of resources are used to plan appropriate material, including documentation provided by the Diocese of Rochester. The content is designed to reflect and reinforce the Christian Values of the school and the Fruits of the Spirit, as well as acknowledging British Values and the diversity of the school community. It covers the main seasons, feasts and festivals of the Christian year and all acts of worship have a Bible story, passage or Christian idea or key teaching at their heart.

Occasionally non biblical Illustrative material and moral stories from beyond the Christian tradition are used where they are appropriate to a given theme. These are linked to a Christian idea.

## Pupil Involvement

Children are actively encouraged to participate in the planning of worship.

Each class prepares at least one Family Worship a year and pupils are fully involved in the planning of this service through: writing their own prayers, songs and reflections and suggesting ways to engage the attendees through drama; dance; creative writing and other visual representations of their key message.

The R.E. Reps, consisting of representatives from each class, meet regularly to discuss ideas for worship, prayer spaces, displays, services... They will also lead at least two Acts of Worship a year and are involved in the monitoring and evaluation of worship.

BIF (Bible is Fun) meets Monday lunchtime to focus on key Christian ideas. They will also plan and lead at least one Act of Worship a year.

By encouraging pupils to lead worship they are able to 'build their faith', develop their relationship with God and engage in prayer as they reflect on themselves, celebrate the world around them and think about the needs of others.

## Church and Community Links

The school values its links with two churches, St Mary's and the Parish Church, and also its contacts with ministers and workers from other Christian traditions and denominations. Chamber Choir take an active role in a one or two Sunday services each year at the Parish Church.

## Inclusion and Withdrawal

Worship is a communal event and, as far as is practical all members of teaching staff working with a class at the time of worship are required to be in worship and must seek the Head teacher's permission to be released if urgent matters arise that need to be dealt with during this time. Non-teaching staff are actively encouraged to attend worship, especially for key festivals and services at church.

Parents are invited to class led Family Worships, services at the church and the end of term Celebration and Achievement Worship.

Worship has a central place in school life but parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from this activity. Before reaching a decision to exercise this right, parents are encouraged to discuss the issue fully with the head teacher.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of collective worship is closely monitored through regular feedback from children and staff. Annual reviews of this feedback is carried out by the R.E. Subject leader working with the Senior Leadership Team and, where necessary, external advisors from within the Aquinas Trust or The Diocese of Rochester.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and the R.E. Subject leader with advice from the Academy Advisory Council. The policy statement will be reviewed every three years