

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY



**ST. AUGUSTINE'S C of E (VA) JUNIOR SCHOOL**

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Headteacher<br>(Sam Brunt)    | Signature<br><i>S Brunt</i>   |
| Vice Chair<br>(James Fordham) | Signature<br><i>J Fordham</i> |

**Date ratified: 24.11.21**

**Review date: Autumn 2023**

**Our Vision: To be guided by God's wisdom, to embrace challenge and to strive to achieve our best, enjoying all that we do together.**

## **Vision and Values**

**Our Vision: To be guided by God's wisdom, to embrace challenge and to strive to achieve our best, enjoying all that we do together.**

Our Christian Values lie at the heart of our school. One Christian Value is focused on across the school each half term.

Our specific Christian Values are:

- Love
- Community
- Thankfulness
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
- Hope

These Values are embodied in the New Testament that Jesus gave us:

*"... Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."*

*John 13:34-35*

### **Religious Education, Assembly and Collective Worship**

We feel it is important that the relationship between RE, Assembly and Collective Worship is understood by teachers, pupil and parents.

They are each distinctive activities which all contribute to a broad and balanced curriculum, they should endorse one another, and are all intentional learning activities within the curriculum and therefore important in the planning process. When planning these activities, teachers take a range of learning styles into account to create opportunities that are accessible by all children.

**Religious Education** is about enabling pupils to be religiously literate and able to hold balanced and informed conversations about religion and belief. RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity as well as other principal religions and world views. Themes that are introduced in an act of worship may be further developed in RE lessons or in other areas of the curriculum.

**School Assembly** is often a time for notices, celebrations of pupils work or when visitors come to school to give a talk or make a presentation. The atmosphere and structure are different. A Collective Worship may begin with an Assembly but the transition from Assembly to Collective Worship must be made obvious. An assembly does not have to include an act of worship nor does an act of worship have to take place in an assembly.

**Collective Worship** can take place within an assembly and can be seen as one element or dimension. But an act of worship is far more than just a coming together of the school; it should fulfil the definition of worship as described in this policy.

### **What does Collective Worship mean to us?**

At St Augustine's, we believe that Collective Worship is a highly valued part of the school day in which the whole school community comes together in a 'time to breathe'. Just as breathing is vitally important to life itself, we believe Collective Worship is as important to us

as it gives all of us opportunities to offer and interact with worship to God in a diverse and age-appropriate way.

Our Collective Worship aims to ***inclusive, invitational and inspiring to all.***

Collective Worship at our school:

- Offers **all** pupils and adults the opportunity to foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness without compulsion.
- Share the teachings and 'Big Ideas' of the Christian faith.
- Enables adults and children to worship together to promote community cohesion.
- Enables the school community to explore and celebrate difference and diversity within the Christian faith, the local community and the wider world.
- Allows children and adults to learn about and reflect upon the teachings of Jesus Christ using Biblical texts.
- Enables pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's society.
- Helps children to discover and understand their place in the world as 'agents of change'.
- Contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every child and adult.
- Helps to develop an understanding of the Christian belief in the Holy Trinity.
- Encourages children to learn about and celebrate special times in the Christian Liturgical calendar.
- Helps the school community to appreciate that Christians worship in diverse ways, for example using music, story, prayer, silence and reflection.
- Enables pupils to take ownership of the planning, leading and evaluating of Collective Worship.
- Allows children the opportunity to have a personal two-way conversation with God through prayer.
- Enables children and adults to learn about and understand the importance of Christian Values and attitudes.
- Embraces times of stillness and reflection as well as times of vocal celebration and elation.
- Allows children and adults to respond to local, national and life events with respect, awe and wonder and an appreciation of the importance of such events to them and the school community.
- Fosters and enables a concern for the needs of others, a recognition of the vulnerability of self and of others.
- Reflects our Christian vision, values and ethos.
- Is grounded in distinctively Christian teaching.
- Is well organised, resourced, planned and delivered.

### **The contribution of Collective Worship to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of every child**

We use acts of Collective Worship, Religious Education, our Christian Values, our focus on Cultural Capital, inspiration learning opportunities, Reflection and our School Vision to enhance our SMSC development.

**Spiritual Development** relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence which are of enduring worth.

**Moral Development** refers to pupils' knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is right or wrong.

**Social Development** refers to pupils' progressive acquisition of the competences and qualities needed to play a full part in society. It is concerned with the skills and personal qualities for individuals to live and function effectively in society.

**Cultural Development** refers to pupils' increasing understanding and command of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills which, taken together, form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups.

We believe that our ethos and programme of learning contributes to this development.

Through our acts of Collective Worship we feel a significant contribution can be made to the development of these areas for all our children for the reasons stated earlier in this document. Reasons such as, that worship provides opportunities for the children to:

- gain a sense of self-knowledge, vision or inspiration; a sense of awe and wonder
- appreciate the values and attitudes upheld by the community
- be encouraged to keep/maintain/develop a quest for truth and meaning
- observe and encounter varieties of expressions of belief and commitment

### **What does Collective Worship look like at our school?**

- The Collective Worship leader, which could be the Collective Worship Council (CWC), creates a welcoming and inviting atmosphere by playing worship, appropriately themed or quiet reflective music as the children enter the worship space.
- A member of staff or a member of the CWC make a record of each Collective Worship on Padlet.
- The leader verbally welcomes the children and adults to Collective Worship.
- A candle on the 'altar table' is lit and the children and adults are invited to welcome Jesus into the Collective Worship with special words of welcome
- The 'altar table' is covered with a cloth which is the correct colour for the Church liturgical calendar.
- The leader speaks to the school community using a variety of genre including storytelling, roleplay, Powerpoint presentations, drama, use of props, music. A variety of themes is used in our worship. It is expected that those leading worship will relate their worship to one of these themes. This will mean that pupils will have had the opportunity to reflect on the theme from a variety of viewpoints. This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that worship leaders may feel that they need to respond to local or national events. We aim to provide a variety of experiences for our children.
- The Collective Worship includes a piece of scripture which forms the basis of that week's learning
- The leader tells the children which book and verse the Bible verse is from.
- The children's responses during the spoken message and to the Reflection are recorded on Padlet.
- The leader encourages the children to reflect about the spoken word or Bible verse used. Reflection questions are used to prompt the children to think about the key thoughts or message of the Collective Worship.
- The leader gives the children and adults the opportunity to pray by inviting them to 'prepare for prayer'. The children are encouraged to sit comfortably but respectfully whilst praying. They are not told to 'Put your hands together and close your eyes.'
- The leader then says 'If you want to make it your prayer, say Amen with me at the end.' An appropriate prayer is said.
- A variety of prayers are used: the Lord's Prayer, an extempore prayer, a teaspoon prayer or a planned prayer linked specifically to the spoken word.

- Choral worship takes place during every Collective Worship.
- The candle is extinguished by the Leader at the end of Collective Worship.
- The leader sends the children out with a thought or question to enable them to continue their thinking as they walk back to their classrooms.
- Music is played to encourage the children to leave the space in a quiet reflective way.
- Back in the classroom the class teacher leads a discussion about the Collective Worship and notes any responses to the reflection question given.

We welcome visitors to participate in organising acts of worship. From time to time, we welcome speakers from other denominations, charities and organisations.

Multi faith festivals are acknowledged throughout the year within Assembly and Collective Worship time if comparisons between these festivals and Christianity are made.

## **Aims and Principles**

The Aims of Collective Worship:

- To help children discover their place in the world.
- To provide an opportunity for the children to reflect upon God and to give Him honour.
- To highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension through experiencing worship.
- To provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery.
- To provide an opportunity to celebrate Christian festivals.
- To heighten awareness of the ultimate questions / realities of life and to provide the opportunity to reflect upon these.
- To support the search for meaning.
- To enable children to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to the community, and to respect the integrity of each individual as a child of God.
- To enable pupils to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer.
- To celebrate gifts, talents and achievements.
- To establish, explore, and reinforce the common Christian values of the school community such as love, peace, kindness, compassion.
- To foster a feeling of community and belonging in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings.
- To develop personal relationships and to encourage social development.
- To provide an opportunity to empathise with the needs of others.
- To provide an opportunity for children to become acquainted with people from the local and wider community, particularly the local church.
- To encourage respect and care for God's creation by a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues.
- To foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy.
- To give memorable and enjoyable experiences.
- To provide an opportunity to bring personal needs and those of others before God in prayer.
- To share with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level and thereby give them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework.

The Diocese of Ely recommends that **Church Schools** use a four part model of worship in their collective worship, with liturgical greetings and the format "**Gathering, Engaging, Responding, Sending**" (**GERS**) which is the outline format for any Church of England Service of the Word.

## **Leadership and Authorisation**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that a daily act of Christian Worship takes place in school. The weekly themes of Collective Worship are organised by our RE lead and collective worship is regularly led by members of SLT and RE lead on a rotation basis. Our incumbent leads collective worship at least once each half term.

Every class is responsible for leading two acts of Worship throughout the year, one in school and one in St Augustine's church.

Worship is led by our "Praise Pals" approximately twice a term.

We are always keen to welcome leaders from local churches into school to lead collective worship.

## **Reflection**

Children are encouraged to use the reflection area outside Elgar room to reflect on themes and issues raised during daily Collective Worship as well as have time to step away from the busyness of the school day in order to undertake some contemplative, quietening activities. The area is also designed as a resource to support the mental health and wellbeing of all children.

All pupils have the opportunity to personally and collectively reflect on the themes and issues raised within daily Collective Worship by contributing to the whole school Padlet back in their classrooms each day.

## **Collective Worship Councillors**

At least one pupil representative from each class is chosen each year to be an advocate for Collective Worship and set an example to their peers as a Collective Worship Councillor. Their typical roles and responsibilities include: lighting the candle at the beginning of worship, being a willing participant during daily worship, attending regular Collective Worship Councillor meetings to discuss new ideas and review the ongoing impact of Collective Worship across the school, regularly monitoring Collective Worship provision and the impact it is having on their peers.

## **Withdrawal**

Parents have been able to withdraw their children from collective worship since the 1944 Education Act and no recent legislation has affected this right. It is most recently confirmed in Section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The government guidance document which remains current in the case of collective worship is Circular 1/94: Religious Education and Collective Worship. The law states that in on occasions, the parent (or the student themselves if over 18) may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from collective worship. The right of withdrawal from collective worship would normally be exercised through the physical withdrawal of the pupil from the place where the act of worship is taking place.

Any parent wanting to exercise the right of withdrawal would be asked to meet with the head teacher to clarify:

- the elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part;
- the practical implications of withdrawal; and
- whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and, if so, how much.

# APPENDICES

## 1:1 Collective Worship and Assembly – How they are different

It is still customary in the majority of schools for teachers and pupils alike to use the term 'assembly' when they are referring to the 'act of collective worship'. This accepted shorthand should not be allowed to blind us to the differences between the two activities. Schools frequently assemble for a common purpose. In essence the purpose of most school assemblies is to gather the school for collective worship followed by the sharing of notices. In this scenario, pupils withdrawn from collective worship should rejoin the rest of the school for the assembly notices. There are many elements which worship and assembly have in common, such as helping children to develop common standards and values, or to develop an awareness of, and a concern for, the needs of others. However, the presence of these common elements alone does not turn an assembly into an act of collective worship. It is a mistake to assume that, for example, inviting a charity worker to address the school during the 'collective worship slot' is collective worship. In each and every act of collective worship some of the elements of worship (ie of 'giving worth to God') must be present. *An Assembly may include Collective Worship. Not every Assembly is Collective Worship.*

## 1:2 Assistance with Planning and Execution

□ Using the tool: "Gathering, Engaging, Responding, Sending"

The Diocese of Ely recommends that Church Schools use a four part model of worship in their collective worship, with liturgical greetings and the format "Gathering, Engaging, Responding, Sending" (GERS) which is the outline format for any Church of England Service of the Word.

"Flippin' Praise" is an excellent resource with which to do this and can be purchased through [ChurchschoolsEast](http://ChurchschoolsEast.com).

The principles are applicable to whole school, key stage and class worship. The notes below are to help with your preparation using this format.

### *Gathering*

We gather together and greet each other.  
We all come to play a part in this community.  
We are preparing to meet God.  
How is the room set up?  
How is seating arranged?  
Does everyone know what they should be doing?  
What will the greeting be like?

### *Engaging*

We engage with the big things and the little things in life.  
We encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible.  
We are listening for God's message for us.  
How will you share God's message?  
How will you share your own experiences or contemporary events?  
What strategies will you use?

### *Responding*

We respond to what we have heard and seen.  
We respond together as individuals.

We are given the opportunity to worship God.  
 Will you use singing or prayer or reflection time?  
 Will there be a practical response and how will this be encouraged?  
 Do you give enough time to responding?

*Sending*

We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world.  
 We are all dismissed with God's blessing.  
 How will people leave worship – singing? silently?  
 Will there be special words of blessing or dismissal?

**1:3 Monitoring Proforma**

Collective Worship Observation Form

Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer \_\_\_\_\_

Theme \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| Criteria   | Aspect  | Comment |
|------------|---|---------|
| Gathering  | Is there a real sense of a marking a start of a special time of day?<br>Candle, song, reflection?   |         |
| Engaging   | Does the worship leader capture the attention of the children and staff so the become actively engaged with the content?                          |         |
| Responding | Does the leader allow for a response from the children and adults-whether active or quiet, passive, or noisy?                                     |         |
| Sending    | Does the leader send us out with a clear 'thought of the day' something that may change our behaviour in some way?<br>Passing of the peace? Song? |         |
| Content    | Clear Christian content and teaching?   |         |
| Summary    | Quotes from the children, staff or other members of the congregation.   |         |

## **1.4 Resources**

The resources listed below have been suggested by the Diocesan website:-

### *Websites to support your Collective Worship*

#### *Christian Collective Worship*

- Planning the formal framework of collective worship – greetings etc (with seasonal variations) also downloads of hymns <http://www.worshipworkshop.org.uk/>
- The Ely website has collective worship materials which follow the Sunday Bible readings and collections of materials for special events as they occur [http://www.elyeducation.org/main/?page\\_id=253](http://www.elyeducation.org/main/?page_id=253)
- Assemblies from Christian Aid <http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/TeachersResources/primary/ResourceOverview/assembly.asp>
- Sermons 4 Kids is a church resource rather than a school one – nut it may give you some ideas <http://www.sermons4kids.com/>
- Barnabas: <https://www.brfoonline.org.uk/collections/barnabas-in-schools>

#### *General Assembly Websites*

- <http://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/> is now the main general assemblies website with Christian, secular and different faith assemblies. New assemblies are placed online every month and it also includes access to materials from the Culham Archive which was its predecessor.
- <http://assemblytube.com/> chiefly secular assemblies rather than collective worship – film clips and scripts – but you could adapt some of these to Christian values themes
- Materials from CAFOD at <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-teaching-resources>