

High Wycombe Church of England School



POLICY: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

COMMITTEE: Curriculum

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High Wycombe Church of England School

Collective Worship Policy

‘Be Strong and Courageous’

Worship is an integral part of the daily life of our school. The ethos of our school is based on our 6 Christian values, **Compassion, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Peace, Hope and Respect** and our emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is guided by the teaching of Jesus Christ. This emphasis is reflected in our collective worship. Our worship times seek to be invitational, inclusive and inspirational to hearts and minds of all who are present regardless of their faith or non-faith background.

At High Wycombe Church of England School, we understand spirituality as a journey of **Looking In, Looking Out and Looking Up**.

- **Looking In:** reflecting on our own thoughts, feelings, beliefs and values
- **Looking Out:** recognising and responding to the world and others around us
- **Looking Up:** exploring our relationship with God, faith and the big questions of life

These three lenses underpin and deepen our collective worship, enabling all members of our community to engage in ways that are meaningful and personal to them.

Our school worship reflects the Anglican foundation of the school. However, we recognise that many in our community come from different faiths or world views. Diversity in religion, race and culture is a celebrated aspect of our school community, and the integrity of our pupils and staff, and that of the faith communities which they represent, is always respected. Our aim is that all in our community are both invited to join worship and feel included in this important part of our school day.

Each child experiences a daily act of collective worship. There is a distinction made between assembly, where routine notices and a celebration of achievement take place and collective worship where God is acknowledged and His nature and purposes are reflected upon.

AIMS

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- Celebrate –
 - Christian seasons and festivals;
 - School values associated with our vision;
 - Pupils’ and adults’ achievements;
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection, particularly supporting **Looking Up**;
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- develop **Looking In** through personal reflection and self-awareness;
- Engage in **Looking Out** by considering others, the wider world and issues of justice;
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions;
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision;
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed;
- worship God on their own terms.

Worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth through opportunities for Looking In, Looking Out and Looking Up;
- enable participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context;
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy;
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today;
- encourage participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage;
- reflect the teachings of Jesus and a trinitarian theology.

GUIDELINES

- Collective acts of worship will vary in format in order that children may experience worship in different groupings i.e. whole school worship, key stage groups, class groups.
- Worship should be planned to be relevant and appropriate to the age of the children involved.
- Worship will be planned termly by the Headteacher and the Collective Worship Committee and will be based around a biblical text with a linked Wondering Question.
- Records of Clergy acts of worship are kept by RE Co-ordinator in a folder.
- Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from an act of worship.
- There should be a sense of order and an atmosphere conducive to worship and prayer.
- Children's achievements, work and learning may be shared and celebrated.
- Acts of worship should contain a variety of experiences providing opportunity for reflection, prayer, quiet, celebration, music and story.
- A variety of teaching aids should be used such as pictures, artefacts, music, dance and drama.
- A variety of prayers are used including those written by the children.
- Christian symbols will be used for prayer and reflection in worship e.g: lighting a candle, cross, crucifix, bread and water etc.

ORGANISATION

We have organised daily collective worship which fosters worship in a variety of different groupings, from whole school to class.

MONDAY: WHOLE SCHOOL COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

One class contributes to this collective worship on a rota basis each week celebrating what they have been learning about in school. Year 6 children co-ordinate the collective worship, choosing a hymn to be sung.

WHOLE SCHOOL COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (once a half term)

Launch of the focus Christian Value for that month led by the Head Teacher.

TUESDAY:**WHOLE SCHOOL CLERGY COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

This clergy collective worship is led by a member of the clergy from the Wycombe benefice. The Collective Worship Committee decides on the theme and then we have linked a bible passage, a wondering question and the music to each week's focus.

WEDNESDAY:**CLASS COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

The Pupil Worship Team leads our Class Collective Worship usually in response to the clergy led assembly.

The theme for Class Collective Worship is based on the 'Wondering Question' and gives children time to respond to the ideas explored in Clergy Collective Worship. One class each week will create a response to the wondering question which is then displayed in the hall. Once every half term the children are given a chance to respond to our Christian Values in their journals. Voice of a Learner Activities are also completed in these sessions.

'BIG QUESTIONS' CLERGY COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

During the year each year group in KS1 and KS2 will have a 'Big Question' session with a member of the clergy. The children are asked to pose questions they would like to ask the week before the session. This may come from the wondering questions, clergy collective worship or just questions they have and would like to explore. The intention of these sessions is to enable children and clergy to engage in deep conversations about faith.

THURSDAY:**PRAISE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

This collective worship is for KS1 and KS2 children and is led by the music teacher. Early Years join this in the summer term. Songs are used for praise and worship.

FRIDAY:**WHOLE SCHOOL SHARING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Each class leads one Collective Worship a year, when they will perform music, drama, and dance usually connected to a topic studied.

Parents of the year group leading the collective worship are invited to join the worship for this collective worship.

KEY STAGE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

This collective worship is led by the teaching staff on a rota basis and is used as an opportunity to: introduce our vision character, discuss world events, mark other religious festivals and our British values. Themes for these times of worship are planned so are pertinent to that week or time of year.

ACHIEVEMENT COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (once a half term)

This collective worship is led by the Head teacher and is to celebrate the achievements of the children both in and out of school. Certificates are awarded to a nominated person in each class for an 'achievement' award, an 'effort' award, a 'Christian Value' award and a 'Christian Vision' award. We also celebrate achievements outside of school e.g. sporting awards and music awards,

PLANNING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The Headteacher and Collective Worship Committee are made up of the clergy members, RE/Music subject lead. They meet twice a term, once to plan the theme for the following term's collective worship and secondly to consider various aspects of our SIAMS self-evaluation process.

The Committee also look at evaluations and Voice of a Learner Activities from the previous term which is used to help plan the next term's Collective Worship.

PUPIL WORSHIP TEAM

The Pupil Worship Team is made up of 2 children from each year group Y1-Y6. They are responsible for leading the various services at the Church over the year and taking a lead in Class Collective Worship each week. The RE Co-ordinator meets up with the Pupil Worship Team to collect their thoughts and ideas for Collective Worship in the school. Ideas from these meetings can be fed back to the Collective Worship Committee and aid planning for the next term. The RE Co-ordinator involves Pupil Worship Leaders in planning for Class Collective Worship wherever possible and children in this team often set challenges for the other children based on Wondering Questions explored.

PRAYER DURING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

As collective worship times can often have an information or performance element it is important that the time for prayer and reflection is clearly demarcated and the atmosphere is appropriate, thereby creating a quiet setting before we join in prayer or thought together.

PRAYERS

Children are encouraged to share their own prayers during collective worship. Pupil Worship Leaders and other children are growing in confidence in leading prayer in a whole-school setting, and all children are given the opportunity share prayers within the classroom. This time supports **Looking In** through reflection, **Looking Out** through prayer for others and the wider world, and **Looking Up** through communication with God.

Children also have access to a prayer board in their classroom. Responses from class collective worship are often shared here, and children may add their own prayer requests, which are then shared with the group by the class teacher. These prayers may be named or anonymous.

JOURNALS

The children are given Vision Journals when they join the school in Reception. They are given time in Class Collective Worship every half term to respond to our Christian Values. The journals provide a record of each child's spiritual journey, capturing moments of **Looking In**, **Looking Out** and **Looking Up** and are presented to the children in their leavers assembly at the end of Year 6.

WORSHIP IN CHURCH

In order to reflect the Anglican aided status of the school and our commitment to forge links with the parish, we hold a collective act of worship in All Saints Parish Church, several times throughout the year. This programme includes:

- A Harvest Service (October)
- A Christmas Carol Service (December)
- An Easter Service (March/April)

Other services, as appropriate are added to this programme during the year.

RESOURCES

A document has been produced with website links providing a large variety of suggestions for Anglican and Christian worship themes.

PowerPoints are made by the RE Co-ordinator for each week's Class Collective Worship. A list of worship songs that we sing in school, with links to videos, is available for staff to access for their Collective Worship.

Each member of staff has a copy of the Collective Worship Policy and accompanying Staff guidelines in their Staff handbook.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THIS POLICY

- Collective Worship is evaluated by teaching staff and year 6 children following every clergy collective worship (*Appendix 1*)
- Voice of a Learner activities are completed each half term to obtain children's views on collective worship.
- Collective Worship is also evaluated by the collective worship committee termly at collective worship committee meetings.
- Big Questions is evaluated after each session by the staff, children and the clergy (*Appendix 2*)

A LEGAL NOTE

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. Requests for withdrawal must be granted without delay. The 'religious grounds' do not have to be justified and explained by the parents. Should children be withdrawn, the school must provide adequate supervision to ensure their safety. Children should not be withdrawn from Collective Worship for other purposes, e.g. reading, music lessons, to do so is to break the law.