



**Teversham Church of England Primary
School**

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

2023-2027

NON STATUTORY

DATE ADOPTED: 10th July 2023

REVIEW DATE: February 2027

Collective Worship Policy

Inspire Believe Achieve

Inspired by God's love for us, we seek to be a loving, serving, learning community in which our belief that all people should be valued for who they are in God's image creates a culture where all can explore, discover, flourish and therefore achieve their best.

"We love because God first loved us" 1 John 4:19

In our school, the value of "love" underpins everything we do. We believe that all people are made in the image of God and are valued because of this. Staff and governors at Teversham Church of England Primary School seek to provide an environment where children and all school members can be safe, happy and learning and where they can all explore, discover, flourish and achieve their best.

We do this by:

- creating a caring, inclusive Christian environment through our distinctive Christian ethos and values
- creating inspiring opportunities for learning through our Curriculum
- developing positive relationships based on respect of self and others and through our Christian values
- supporting a creative approach to personal development and growth.

We work in partnership with parents and our community to fully equip children for their future.

Importance statement

The daily act of collective worship at Teversham Church of England Primary School plays a central role in our life and work. It is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian values and ethos of the school and it provides us with valuable opportunities to reaffirm these. It offers important opportunities to strengthen our sense of community, belonging and inclusiveness and to reinforce the respect and care we have for each other. Through collective worship we make a significant contribution to the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of those present. It is an inclusive act which encourages reflection in everyone present, of all faiths and those of no faith, rooted in the Christian understanding of God as Trinity. This will include belief in God the source of all being and life; Jesus who reveals God's love by his life, death and resurrection; the Holy Spirit who makes the presence of Jesus known in the world.

We want all our children to 'enjoy and achieve' and collective worship provides a valuable vehicle for this. It provides opportunities for spiritual development enabling pupils to celebrate goodness and beauty and to express thankfulness for the joy of being alive. It gives time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space and provides a rich variety of forms of expression through music, drama, story and art. Classroom teachers can build opportunities for reflection, stillness and quiet times for pupils to share experiences - good or bad - and to use stories to promote spiritual development.

Legal Framework

There must be a daily act of Collective Worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude (Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. Since this is a church school however, worship is central to its life and work and is regarded as a very important part of children's education.

Aims

Through collective worship in our school we aim to:

- Introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year
- Explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well known Christian prayers, e.g. Lord's Prayer, traditional Anglican responses

- Strengthen and support the school community, giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school
- Celebrate the gifts that each person brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual
- Encourage reflection on the puzzling questions that life poses and response to the wonder and mystery of the world around us
- Foster a concern for others within the school, the community and the wider world
- Foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar

Organisation

Collective worship happens in the school hall, in classrooms or at All Saints Parish Church, Teversham.

Patterns of Worship

The general pattern for daily worship is as follows:

Day and Time	Worship	Worship Leader
Monday 9.10 – 9.30 am	Whole School Worship	Headteacher
Tuesday 9.10 – 9.30 am	Whole School Worship or Class Worship	Teachers
Wednesday 9.10 – 9.30 am	Whole School Worship	Visitors from local churches
Thursday 9 – 9.30 am	Singing Worship	Julia Taylor, Music specialist teacher
Friday 9.10 am - 9.30 am	Whole School Celebration – presentation of awards, certificates, house points etc	Headteacher

When Collective Worship does not take place in the hall for any reason, a class act of Collective Worship will take place in the mornings after registration. Each classroom has a worship table with a cross, age appropriate Bible and prayer book, as well as a battery operated candle, to mark when worship is taking place.

Each term ends with an act of worship in the Parish Church and a Celebration Assembly in the afternoon.

Key Christian festivals and end of term services take place in All Saints Parish Church, led by staff, children and members of clergy together. Families are invited to join us. We also welcome other visitors to lead worship, for example, from the Parish Church and Hope Church. The GenR8 team also visit the school termly to lead worship and allow the children to reflect further on the theme for the term i.e. Christmas, Easter.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

The content of all acts of Collective Worship is considered carefully, to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils.

Termly planning sheets identify the themes, the values or festival for the session, a suggested assembly/story, suggested music and the opening and closing responses. The themes are flexible to allow staff to include current and topical issues. These are also shared with parents on the termly Curriculum Plans that are sent home at the start of each term and also on the school website.

Setting the scene:

A centre point is always created prior to the worship signifying the importance of the time in the hall. This can be done in numerous ways but always includes a cross, The Bible and a reflection object (candle, fibre optic light). The table is covered with a special cover, with a drape matching the liturgical colour of the appropriate time in

the Church calendar, to make the space special and the candle is lit prior to the opening response to signal the start of worship. The cross also has a ribbon in line with the liturgical colour.

Song/music

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. We have a bank of music from which to draw, taken from a variety of cultures and types, likewise with the songs we sing. We select our songs/music carefully to match the value/theme.

Each week we have a singing worship. During this we take time to consider carefully the words of the songs and make this a worshipful experience by our reflection and responses to the words and music. Signs are taught the children for the words to the songs and the year 6s support as Signers helping the younger children by leading the signs from the front.

We aim to provide the opportunity for children to listen to a wide variety of music as they arrive and leave the hall for worship. The music is carefully planned and chosen by our music specialist but alternative music may be chosen if this suits the theme. Once a week, entry and exit music is provided by pupils playing their chosen instrument. The entry and exit music also contributes towards creating the reflective atmosphere in the hall space.

Opening and Closing Responses

In line with the Church of England tradition, Collective Worship begins and ends with an opening and closing response. There are responses for each half term and these are displayed in the hall to enable all leaders to use the appropriate response for that half term. However, if the worship requires a different response then this may be used. Year 6 pupils lead these responses.

Children's Input in Worship

Year 6 pupils lead the opening and closing response to signal the beginning and ending of worship.

In addition, pupil led assemblies take place across the year. Children from different classes may assist with different parts of the worship, including acting out scenes to tell stories.

Children take an active role in all the church services during the year, by leading the prayers and taking the readings. Church services are planned to enable the children to be actively involved and in most services, each class will present an aspect of the theme and will be as actively involved as possible.

A signing group leads the school in signing and actions to the songs, whenever appropriate.

The Act of Collective Worship

A variety of teaching and learning styles and active and interactive methods are appropriate in acts of Collective Worship. Any and all of the methods employed in the classroom can be used effectively in acts of Collective Worship. A variety of resources are used including ICT. All Collective Worship resources are stored in the hall. Leaders choose the style/method and resources which are appropriate to the content, the age, aptitude and the background of the pupils.

The content and process must be sufficiently stimulating in order to evoke a response in the individual. This may not be visual, but opportunity must be given to express this response through reflection and prayer.

The use of prayer has led to a great deal of debate. We feel that prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. Nevertheless, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. We have developed various forms of introductions to our prayers which distances children, but gives them the opportunity to participate if they so desire.

For example,

'And now in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well known Christian prayer...'

'I am now going to say a prayer. If you agree with my prayer, then you can join in with Amen at the end.'

In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions if we deem appropriate.

In addition to a prayer, we include the use of silence to provide an opportunity for pupils to respond in their own personal way if they so wish. We offer the children the chance to reflect by posing a question for them to think about, relating to the theme of the worship, during a short period of silence.

We invite the children to either look at the floor or close their eyes in order to help them to not be distracted.

If announcements are to be given at the same time as an act of worship then they will be of a **positive** nature, which at times may enhance the act of worship itself. Announcements will be made preceding or after the act of worship and a clearly defined break between them and the act of worship will be made. (A change of personnel, music, a moment of silence, lighting the candle or blowing it out etc).

Grace and End of the Day Prayers

Each class says Grace together before lunch each day at 12.15 pm. Different versions of Grace are available to use.

Each class ends the day with a class prayer, which is written together by the class at the beginning of the year.

Visitors

We enjoy the fresh approach which visitors can bring to our school worship, but we require them to adhere to our values. Anyone invited to lead our collective worship is made aware of our policy by which they are expected to abide, and unless otherwise agreed, will fit into the theme for the week. Guidance for visitors is to be found in appendix 2 and a leaflet with key information is given to all visitors who lead worship, which can also be found on our school website.

We have made links with a range of visitors who regularly lead worship as part of our termly programme.

Pupils of other faiths

As a church school which includes some pupils from other faith traditions, the beliefs and values of those pupils are also recognised. Provision for specific religious observances (e.g. fasting) is made if required.

Evaluation

Worship is monitored across the year both internally (headteacher, staff, children) and externally (governor visits, Ely Diocese Regional Advisor (EDRA)).

We consider whether acts of worship have been successful by evaluating against some of the following:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- Positive response to shared experience
- An atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well being
- A sense of occasion
- Good order
- Staff affirmation
- A sense of challenge
- A place in the overall plan of the school
- Enrichment of pupil's experience

Monitoring

- Worship leaders regularly reflect on the effectiveness and impact of collective worship. The Senior Leadership Team discuss and review the evaluation and this informs future planning.
- Governors attending Collective Worship complete an evaluation that forms part of the evidence base for self-evaluation. Governors are also invited to provide informal feedback to the Collective Worship Co-ordinator.
- Pupil views are sought through a range of ways including through pupil forums and pupil monitoring forms, which are completed by different groups of pupils at least once a year.
- The governors responsible for SMSC monitor the policy and practice as part of the programme of governor visits and reports are discussed as part of the Standards Committee meetings.

Adopted: 10th July 2023

Date of next review: February 2027

After approval by the Governing Body this policy will be electronically signed by Dr Liz Taylor, Chair of Governors.

Appendix 1

Monitoring Collective Worship for Pupils		
Observer		Date
Worship Leader		Time
Venue	Classroom School Hall Church	Whole School Key Stage Class
Song Title		Pupil Response
Worship Theme	Theme	Focus/Story
What did you do?		
What did you learn?		
Stars	What did you enjoy most? Why?	
Signposts	What would you improve? How?	

Guidance for Visitors leading collective worship

We really appreciate the contribution that visitors can make to collective worship. Visitors can greatly enrich the school's collective worship experience, and offer opportunities for pupils to learn from others beyond our school community. We welcome our regular visitors, which includes our local church clergy, clergy from Christ the Redeemer Church and the pastor and members of Hope Community Church who meet in our school, as well as more occasional visitors. We also benefit from visitors who lead worship in local schools several times a year. Whether regular or occasional, we recognise that is helpful if the school provides some guidance about what is expected and how to approach the children and what topics are appropriate for them. Our aim is that visitors are very comfortable leading worship in our school and that the occasion is a very positive experience for both the visitor and the children.

When briefing visitors for school worship, we share with them:

- who will attend worship on that day (whole school or different year groups)
- the time available for collective worship on that day
- the current assembly theme and context - what has already been done and what will be done later in the term
- how pupils and staff are normally involved in collective worship
- what resources, including ICT, are available to them, should they so wish
- exactly how much their contribution will be - is it just the talk or will they be asked to choose the song and lead the prayers

We aim to:

- give visitors plenty of notice
- invite visitors to attend an act of collective worship beforehand so that they may see how worship is usually led, or, if this is not practical, give them a copy of the collective worship policy

It is important that visitors are aware that the school collective worship is not an opportunity for strong evangelism, and that we always avoid inclusive language such as "we all believe..."

We make sure that visitors are aware of the way we invite children to reflect and to pray if they wish to (see collective worship policy).

There will always be a member of the Senior Leadership Team present during all acts of collective worship led by visitors.

Please see Collective Worship Guidance Leaflet, designed for all adults leading worship.

DO

Do find out:

- ✦ who will attend the collective worship - the whole school, or just part of it
- ✦ how long you are allowed to speak for (and don't over run)
- ✦ which theme the school is presently following in collective worship, what they have done already and will do in the rest of the term
- ✦ whether pupils and staff are used to being involved in activities, should you wish them to be so

Do prepare thoroughly – a meaningful talk which addresses the needs and variety of backgrounds of pupils has to be carefully thought out, and should always begin by making a real connection with the children's world.

Do help pupils by allowing them time for silence in which they may think, reflect and respond at their own level

Do remember the difference between collective and corporate worship. A school assembly is not the appropriate venue for strong evangelism.

Do adopt a variety of approaches in each act of worship or within each series of acts. Introduce them on a variety of occasions to the breadth of Christian experiences and practices.

DON'T

Don't:

- ✦ talk too much
- ✦ forget that pupils are used to a variety of learning styles
- ✦ talk down to them
- ✦ merely entertain them
- ✦ talk over their heads

Don't assume that pupils' presence at worship signifies their personal commitment or involvement. You should not impose on pupils words or attitudes which they cannot honestly express. Your task is not to compel worship, but to enable it.

Don't conduct an act of worship without visiting the school first. Arrange to meet the Head for a discussion of the school's policy and procedures, and if possible, be present at an act of worship in the school.

Possible Themes

The Christian festivals invite the use of particular themes for collective worship through the year. These include:

Themes for Autumn Term

First half	Second Half
Beginnings New friends, new starts, new hope Welcoming, community, belonging Initiation ceremonies Rules of this school, rules of life Rule of Law Universal Rights of the Child Rules to live by – 10 commandments Two Great commandments Harvest Environment, stewardship, conservation Earth, land, sea, creation Bread, bread of life Celebration, thankfulness, sharing, caring Third World need: Famine, drought Talents and achievements Lifestyles, hopes, thankfulness St Luke (18 th October) Medicine Healing, healing miracles of Jesus Disability Famous people connected with medicine Service, working and caring for others	People of faiths, Saints Patronal saint of the parish church All Saints, All Souls Biblical heroes and heroines Today's heroes, Personal heroes Christians today, famous and local Remembering War and peace Remembrance Sunday Older people Eucharist Sadness and loss Special memories Advent New Church Year Preparation, anticipation, hope, waiting The meaning of the candles of the Advent wreath Light Customs Christmas The Christmas Story Customs and Traditions Christmas in other lands Gifts and giving Incarnation Light of the world Love, joy, peace, hope Families and relationships Refugees and homelessness Poverty Messengers and angels Carols

Themes for Spring Term

First half of term	Second half of term
New Year New beginnings Fresh start Resolutions Anticipation New life, seasons, Spring	Lent and Holy Week Growth – mental, physical, spiritual Special days – Shrove Tuesdays, Ash Wednesday, Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday Fasting, abstinences, self-control, giving up Spiritual spring cleaning

Epiphany Gifts and gift bringers Thankfulness Journeys Dedication, baptism, names Candlemas The light of the world, light. Initiation Babies, dedication, hope	Pilgrimage, spiritual journey Temptation, penitence, saying sorry Conversion of St Paul Forgiveness Foot washing, service to others Last supper, Eucharist Rejection, loneliness, separation Easter The Easter Story Joy, hope, love New life, new beginnings Surprise, triumph, promises, evil, suffering, pain, sacrifice Friendship Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, salvation Customs – cards, food, gardens, eggs
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Summer Term

First half of term	Second half of term
Rogation Community – school, parish, world Establishing boundaries Homes Creation, caring for the Earth Ascension Kingship Authority Symbolism, imagery Saying goodbye	Pentecost Holy Spirit Trinity Fruits of the Spirit Baptism, confirmation Power Birthday gifts Customs Fire Wind
The end of the year –moving on Pilgrimage Saying thank you Explorers, discoveries Trust, promises, worry, bravery Surprises and disappointments Confidence, assurance, prepared New class, new school Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life (I AM sayings) Memories, learning Journey of life The Unknown	

Collective Worship Themes

Additional Themes:	Christian Values
Bible stories – including Joseph, Ruth, Paul Achievements Barriers and bridges Bible heroes/heroines Bullying	Love, Thankfulness, Compassion, Peace, Forgiveness, Justice, Service, Courage, Humility, Generosity, Hope, Perseverance. (Each value forms the focus for a half term over a two year cycle).

<p>Celebrating Differences Communication Creation/Nature/Environment Different charities Famous Hymns Famous Prayers Forgiveness Friends and Neighbours I believe Loneliness Loss Making decisions Making promises Ourselves Parables Peace People who have influenced us Prayer Prejudice Saying sorry Signs and symbols Special books Stories of Jesus, Stories by Jesus, Sayings of Jesus The church (building and people) The gifts of the Spirit The Lord's Prayer The senses We can help</p>	<p>Also explored are: Creativity, Trust, Justice, Respect and Reverence, Wisdom, Responsibility</p> <p>“In all the work you are doing, work the best you can. Work as if you were working for the Lord, not for men.”</p> <p><i>International Children's Bible Colossians 3 v 23</i></p> <p>“Brothers, continue to think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected.”</p> <p><i>International Children's Bible Philippians 4 v 8</i></p>
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