

Collective Worship Policy

Our mission as a church school is to be – loving, welcoming and succeeding with faith, family and friendship at the centre of all that we do. The key Christian values that are the core of our school life are forgiveness, creation, koinonia, reverence, service, wisdom, trust and endurance.

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves members of the school community coming together and participating in an act of worship, which involves praying, praising and learning. Everyone takes an active part.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’, we normally base our worship on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

Acts of worship in our school are explicitly Christian, although at times we hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Right of withdrawal

We expect all children to attend Collective Worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The head teacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

Aims

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God and reflect on the teachings of Jesus;
- to enable children to deepen spiritual awareness and an understanding of moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to affirm and strengthen Christian values;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit and celebrate all that is good;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to celebrate special times in the Christian calendar;
- to offer comfort and support in difficult circumstances;

In worship we emphasise the importance of exploring, encountering and experiencing.

Exploring

- The Bible and its teachings and other religious texts
- Christian values
- Human stories which raise questions about meaning and purpose in life
- Spiritual and moral issues
- The part played by religion in everyday life
- Ideas about God and the way people of faith relate to God

Encountering

- Christianity as a contemporary, diverse and world-wide tradition
- Christianity in action
- People of faith
- Worship and prayer as part of the natural rhythm of the day
- The annual cycle of feasts and festivals of the Christian year
- The Bible as a source of inspiration

Experiencing

- Gathering together and building community: sharing achievements, disappointments, joys and sorrows
- What it means to be part of a community
- A sense of awe wonder, mystery and silence
- A community where faith is taken seriously
- Worship that is enjoyable, creative and imaginative

Organization of collective worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. Please refer to the following rota.

Monday 9.10	Tuesday 9.10	Wednesday 9.10	Thursday 9.10	Friday 9.10
Whole school worship led by HT or DHT.	Whole school worship led by a member of staff	Class worship – led by CT.	Whole school worship led by visiting clergy	Whole School Worship and Celebrations

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The head teacher and other members of staff conduct Collective Worship, and we also welcome local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups on a weekly basis.

We take the themes for our worship from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our worship reflect and build on

topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our worship as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

Our Friday Worship reflects the achievements and learning of the children. It offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. Our school awards are clearly focussed on our 'Six Super Skills': risk taker, keeping going, aiming high, enthusiastic, inquisitive, and adaptable – all of which link closely with our School Christian values. The children proudly display them on our Achievement Wall. The children play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. Little Waltham C of E Primary School is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of all the children as part of our Friday Worship.

Parents are invited to attend our Termly Church Worship at St. Martins. We encourage parents/families to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home, school and Church work together to support the spiritual development of our children.

We welcome governors to participate in our Collective Worship at any time.

Monitoring and review

The Subject Leader arranges Worship Schemes and Rotas, invites the visiting clergy, and generally ensures our Collective Worship is well planned for and resourced.

The Subject leader liaises with the school governor with responsibility for Religious Education and Collective Worship to monitor the policy and practice of Collective Worship. The governor concerned liaises with the head teacher before reporting to the governors on Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Signed:

Date ratified: September 2017

To be reviewed: September 2018