



# **Collective Worship Policy**

Date policy approved and adopted: September 2017

Date for review: September 2019

## **Mission Statement**

*The children of Standlake will reach their potential by **belonging** to a supportive and inclusive community, **believing** in themselves, each other and Christian values and **building** on their successes*

## **Aim**

As a church school we want our children to have the opportunity to learn to worship and to grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Collective worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. We believe that we are all made in the image of God and that worship should form an integral part of our lives.

We believe that at its heart collective worship should provide an opportunity for children and staff to come together to learn, reflect and pray, sing, share and communicate their feelings with one another and with God. As a school we highlight the following six Christian values, taken from a Bible passage (Colossians 3:12-15):

### **Compassion, Thankfulness, Honesty, Forgiveness, Tolerance and Love**

As a Christian School, rooted in the teachings, values and spiritual life of the Church of England, we aim to:

- Provide an opportunity for children to praise and reach out to God through our Lord Jesus
- Highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension of life through the experience of vibrant worship
- Provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery, drama, music and silence, worship and reflection
- Provide an opportunity to celebrate Christian festivals
- Heighten awareness of life's ultimate questions and realities of life and to provide good opportunity to reflect upon these in their search for meaning and fulfillment
- Enable all children to appreciate their worth & value to God & to the community
- Respect the integrity of each person as a child of God
- Enable children to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation and prayer
- Celebrate gifts, talents and achievements
- Reaffirm, strengthen and practice key Christian values of the school community such as compassion, thankfulness, tolerance, honesty, forgiveness and love and celebrate each unique individual member of the school community as made in the image of God
- Foster a feeling of community and belonging in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings, joys and sorrows
- Take time to offer moments of forgiveness and thanksgiving in our collective worship
- Provide an opportunity to bring before God in prayer personal needs and those of others
- Encourage a responsibility to care for God's creation by a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues
- Foster awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy in our spiritual journey
- Provide memorable and enjoyable experiences

## 1. Introduction

1.1. Christian worship underpins much of what we do as a school. It gives us the opportunity to celebrate faith as well as encouraging our pupils to think about their place in the world, through Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. We will not shy away from our responsibilities in enabling children to think deeply about God, themselves, the world in which they live and the place that faith has in our society.

## 2. Legal Status of Collective Worship

- 2.1. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, states that the three main legal requirements for collective worship are:
1. Collective worship in a Church of England School should be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship in a community school, that it *should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character* does **not** apply in a church school, where it should be **clearly Christian**.
  2. The school must provide an act of collective worship for **all** children **every day**.
  3. The act of collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class unit.
- 2.2. Parents may withdraw their children from collective worship on religious grounds. This right of withdrawal does not extend to assemblies.
- 2.3. This does not mean that children who have been withdrawn from worship will be in any way exempt from the Christian ethos of the school. Should children be withdrawn, the school will provide adequate supervision to ensure their safety.
- 2.4. Collective worship **is not** be used as part of a teacher's planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1. The school recognises that there is a difference between acts of collective worship and assembly.
- 3.2. **School Assembly** – can be a gathering of the school community; it is often used to celebrate and focus on the life and values of the community itself and is without specific religious content.
- 3.3. **Collective Worship** – can be a gathering of a 'collection' of people of diverse religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment. In our context it refers to a time of distinctively Christian worship, which is educational and inclusive in its nature, rather than being a gathering of believers. Opportunities should be provided for children to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ, without losing sight of either the different starting points of each of the children, or the need for the act of collective worship to take account of the developmental ages of the children.

#### 4. Elements of Worship

- 4.1. The sense of the transcendent. e.g. moments of quiet and reflection to think about yourself in relation to others, the universe and what God might mean to you.
- 4.2. The awareness of the infinite and of one's position within it. e.g. children might look at slides or pictures of galaxies stars etc. with some statistics which show the vastness of the universe and the smallness of people.
- 4.3. The acceptance of life as given e.g. the leader of the collective worship generates a positive outlook by making clear that everybody in the school is there to be accepted and loved. The act of collective worship can generate laughter or sadness, making it clear that there are various aspects to life.
- 4.4. The sense of mystery and wonder and help develop a sense of spirituality e.g. by using natural objects, pictures or slides children can be encouraged to reflect on how such a complex world came into being.
- 4.5. The celebration of personal fulfilment and of those who have given service to others e.g. the achievements and successes of children, staff and the community are celebrated in collective worship.
- 4.6. The concern for the created world and for all life e.g. children may be challenged with environmental issues and their responsibilities for animals and the world.
- 4.7. The acknowledgement of moral demands e.g. in their relationships with others, making it clear that behaviour such as bullying, telling lies or stealing are not acceptable.

#### 5. Church Links

- 5.1. Standlake School actively encourages strong links with St Giles Parish Church
- 5.2. The schools aims to participate in at least one whole school church service per term, or 5-6 times per year. These may include Christmas, Harvest and Easter services.

#### 6. Organisation

- 6.1. The whole school, including members of staff, meet together three times per week for collective worship.

Monday	Whole School	10.20-10.40 am	Head teacher & Rev. Tweedy & Children
Tuesday	Key Stage	Afternoon	Class teachers
Wednesday	Whole School	10.20-10.40 am	Staff and children
Thursday	Class	Afternoon	Class teachers
Friday	Whole School	9.00-9.30 am	Staff and children

## 7. Planning

- 7.1. Collective worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation.
- 7.2. Good worship happens where children are active participants, not passive spectators and this includes being involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation. In this way, the Act of collective worship becomes their own, rather than something that is 'done to them'.
- 7.3. Collective worship is planned around suggestions from the children, the schools six core values and Bible themes or stories which provide a structure for planning. Collective worship should be an intentional learning experience like any other part of the curriculum. Therefore it requires careful planning, thorough preparation, professional execution, resourcing and evaluation. This can also include participation in community celebrations in the local church.
- 7.4. The content of collective worship should be a development of the topic covered during the Monday whole school act of worship. The methodology of collective worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning.
- 7.5. The themes chosen are broad enough to allow all those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective. This will mean that by the end of the term, children will have had the opportunity to reflect on the theme from a variety of viewpoints.
- 7.6. This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.
- 7.7. The Headteacher distributes whole school collective worship planning at the start of the term so that teachers can further develop the teaching point during that week.
- 7.8. All planning must be added to the Collective Worship file at the end of each term.
- 7.9. A very clear form and shape is commended by the Church for simple acts of worship:
  - Preparation (a greeting, confession, praise and a collect or prayer for the day)
  - Liturgy of the Word (hearing and exploring the words of the Bible)
  - Prayers (thanksgiving and prayers for those in need and the Lord's Prayer)
  - Conclusion (dismissal).

### Standlake School format

- Lighting of candle and welcome:  
*You*    *May the peace of the Lord be always with you*  
*All*    *And also with you*
- Main content based on Bible and value: e.g. story, play
- Prayer related to Bible story and theme (including child's prayer from whole school book)
- Song linked to above (if possible)
- Close of worship, extinguish candle:  
*You*    *Go in peace to love and serve the Lord*  
*All*    *In the name of Christ Amen.*

## 8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 8.1. Each person leading worship is asked to plan his or her act of worship in as much detail as they would any learning activity. Acts of worship, planning, working walls etc will be monitored and evaluated in the same way as all other lessons/activities in school.
- 8.2. We seek to encourage children to voice their views on collective worship and to be a part of the evaluation process.
- 8.3. Useful strategies for collecting the evidence will include:
  - written observations; checking that practice matches planning
  - seeking feedback from children, staff, parents, governors, incumbent and visitors
  - observing the extent of the collective worship's influence on children's attitudes and behaviour throughout the school
  - holding regular discussions with colleagues
  - gathering written comments from colleagues on the worship planning sheet
- 8.4. The information gathered via one or more of the strategies listed above will be analysed carefully in order to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the collective worship.
- 8.5. The Headteacher and foundation governor(s), including the incumbent, will be the main evaluators. Formal evaluation of collective worship will take place at **least annually** as detailed in the School Development Plan and collective worship action plan.
- 8.6. This policy is a working document. Therefore, it is open to change and restructure as and when appropriate.
- 8.7. This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Senior Management Team in School and the foundation governor(s) on behalf of the Governing Body.

## 9. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

- 9.1. If there are any children whose parents exercise their right to withdraw them from worship alternative activities will be provided in consultation with the children's parents.