

Collective Worship Policy

St Eanswythe's CE Primary School



Vision: We radiate God's unconditional love by being accepting, inclusive and supportive. Everyone is nurtured, enabling them to reach their full potential as caring, confident members of both the school family and global community. All are educated holistically through a variety of enjoyable academic, creative, physical and spiritual experiences.

Date:

Signed:

Headteacher

Signed:

Chair of Directors

Strapline

Learning holistically through God's unconditional love.

Vision

We radiate God's unconditional love by being accepting, inclusive and supportive. Everyone is nurtured, enabling them to reach their full potential as caring, confident members of both the school family and global community. All are educated holistically through a variety of enjoyable academic, creative, physical and spiritual experiences.

Bible story

Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus

Bible verse

John 13:34 *A new command I give you: Love one another as I have loved you.*

Narrative

The love of God is agape love which is immeasurable, incomparable love. It is ongoing, outgoing, self-sacrificing concern for people. God gives his love without condition, unreservedly. Agape love is active, demonstrating love through actions. John 13:34 teaches us that we should show this unconditional love to each other just as God loves us and therefore underpins everything that we do in our school. All children no matter where they are from, their religion or economic standing are actively welcomed into our school family.

The story of Zacchaeus exemplifies our vision clearly. Zacchaeus was a man who was shunned by society, however, Jesus saw the potential in him, treated him with dignity and respect and showed others that they should do the same. This encounter with Jesus changed Zacchaeus' life journey and set him on a path to a more positive future. This is the aim for each child and adult who joins our school family. Zacchaeus is a real example of the impact of unconditional love and is an example to us all. It highlights that re-education is always possible and shows that everyone has value and worth and a God given path that they can choose to follow.

Holistic education is a philosophy based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to values such as compassion and forgiveness. In our school we care about everyone as an individual and desire to develop them as people. The aim is to provide as many diverse cultural, academic, musical and sporting opportunities as possible thus enabling children to widen their horizons and identify their God given skills, passions and giftings. In addition, part of enabling our children to become resilient and flourish as adults is teaching them how to care for others both within our own community and in the wider environment. We use independent learning across the school developing children as thinkers and problem solvers. As part of this they actively raise money to support those in greater need than us both at home and abroad. We also encourage children to be active members of the community, in the church, the creative quarter, old people's homes and local businesses. All these things develop well rounded individuals who have a caring heart and an understanding of different cultures and interests.

Our six values, of which we focus on one per term, help us to live out our vision of unconditional love. These are generosity, compassion, honesty, forgiveness, respect and perseverance. All of these values are integral parts of the ability to love unconditionally. Jesus showed each one in his treatment of Zacchaeus and throughout his life. He is the example of unconditional love which we follow. These values have become who we are as a school and have had a major impact on the way we treat each other both staff and children. The desire is that these values will continue with the children beyond their time at St Eanswythe's School and enable them to find their purpose in life.

Introduction

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of generosity, compassion, honesty, respect, forgiveness and perseverance and celebrates

the central role that each child has to play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and other Christian denominations, and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

What is Collective Worship?

Legislation requires schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools, to conduct daily acts of Collective Worship. However, the legislation does not define what is meant by the term 'Collective Worship'.

"... Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'collective worship' rather than 'corporate worship'. (DfE Circular 1/94 para 57)

Corporate worship assumes a shared set of beliefs and values, i.e. a worshipping congregation meeting on a Sunday, where the worship is confessional and evangelistic (to spread the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness).

Collective worship, in recognising the collectivity of all participants, can make no such assumption that all have the same beliefs and values.

Collective Worship should be:

"Appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes." (DfE Circular 1/94 p.22)

Collective Worship gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist/Baptist and Community Church worship and festivals.
- c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.
- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

The Anglican Christian Tradition

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection

Implementation

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors.

Worship Leaders from Yr5 and Yr6 plan and lead acts of worship on a weekly basis. Our collective act of worship takes place as at the beginning of the day on all days except Friday. On a Friday collective worship is held as the last act of the day. We have whole school worship four times a week and Key stage worship once a week. Our school plans systematically and cohesively *Canterbury Diocesan Collective Worship Planning* as a basis which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. We also have weeks each term focusing on our values and vision. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity. Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including *music, silence, singing, dancing, drama, videos, partner talk and object lessons*.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- *Gather* – we welcome the community with greetings, music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle
- *Engage* – we share, for example a Bible reading or story followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message
- *Respond* – pupils discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- *We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle*

Expectations of pupils

As pupils come into worship, they are expected to either sit silently or sing along to the music being played as they enter. During worship children behave in an exemplary manner listening and responding where appropriate.

Pupils plan and lead worship on a weekly basis. They work with a member of staff to develop their own understanding of worship and to design a worship to support the spiritual development of their peers.

Developing Worship

The school allocates part of its budget to support the daily act of collect worship. The collective worship leader attends regular professional development with Canterbury Diocese and accesses a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils through our questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared with *during full governing body meetings* and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury (SIAMS).

Collective worship in a Church of England school will do the following:

- Explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, it will reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

Parental Withdrawal

Worship is regarded as special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none. We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship. However, as collective worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents.