

ETTINGTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reviewed September 2023



Learning for Fullness of Life
Trust-Respect - Love

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY 2023-2024

Ettington Church of England Primary School

Policy for Collective Worship

Inclusive Invitational Inspiring

Introduction

In Church of England schools, collective worship is seen as more than a daily 'awe and wonder' moment. It is the unique heartbeat of the school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together.

Collective Worship is central to Ettington C of E Primary School as it strengthens and supports the Christian Distinctiveness and Spiritual Development of our school and reaffirms our vision and core values. It celebrates the central role that each child has to play in the community and is an essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to *Learn for Fullness of Life*.

As a result of our Christian faith, we recognise our responsibility to show love, trust and respect to all. These values are our Core Christian Values. Our vision is to enrich the lives of the individuals and families within our school and wider community and thus ensure they are provided with the opportunities to embrace "Life in its fullness" (John 10:10).

The story of Creation is the bedrock for our vision. Building on the theological concepts that God created the earth and everything in it, including humans, we provide opportunities to appreciate God's creation of the world and how EVERYONE was made in God's image (Imago Dei) and loved, valued, celebrated and represented. As a school, we aspire to live out God's plan for all creation to flourish. We believe in providing our children with varied opportunities to use and develop the gifts and talents they have been blessed with, to ensure they embrace "Life in its fullness" (John 10:10).

Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily act of collective worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. All worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

Inclusive, Invitational, and Inspiring

Inclusive: Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. In our Church school pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all. We acknowledge that there are pupils and staff in our school that will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils should be given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There should be space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. It is an expectation that care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

Collective worship should not be 'done to' but will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion requires pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship.

Although part of a national legislative framework, collective worship in the Church school grows out of the local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds.

Invitational: Parents, pupils and adults can expect to encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There should be no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship should provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. The metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' captures this idea. The warmth of the fire derives from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at its heart. There is no value to an encounter with a watered down, lowest common denominator version of faith. Importantly the door is open, all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable. Pupils and adults should always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and should be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer should always be accompanied by the option to reflect.

Inspiring: Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter in a Church school to be inspirational. Worship should be formational and transformational: it should enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It should motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result of inspirational collective worship, they should be inspired to become courageous advocates of causes. It should encourage them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

Intent

Collective Worship at Ettington C of E Primary School is important to us as a school community. It aims to enable pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Spirituality is taught through the Windows, Mirrors, Doors approach as described in our Spiritual Development Policy. We come together to listen to God's word, sing songs and pray together. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared. Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present which are often linked to invitations to pray. Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place for hearing the Christian story. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service, through reflecting on the Bible stories and our school values. At Ettington, we use Roots and Fruits to support exploration, discussion, discovery and reflection. The material is rooted in the Bible with a strong focus on what John Cox in his book *More Caring and Sharing* calls the 'lived outness' of Biblical teaching. This 'lived outness' will be recognised in the *fruit* or the *values* that build character and inform attitudes and behaviours consistent with the teaching of Jesus Christ.

It is our intent to:

- Explore the school's vision of Learning for Fullness of Life and its basis in the Creation Story. Reflect on how the vision informs the school values and key learning habits and the two are interwoven.
- Provide opportunity to reflect on the half termly values and linked Bible stories.

- Develop our key learning habits - **perseverance, concentration, collaboration** and **curiosity**, 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 and festivals.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice
- Be inspirational and inclusive, engaging all learners. They can talk about the impact it makes on their relationships and on life in the school
- Help all learners to understand Anglican and other Christian traditions found in the UK and worldwide.
- Provide an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals

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 assemblies on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church. We will always conduct our collective worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and inclusive of all. While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold collective worship that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in our school and the wider community.

Legal Requirements

The law requires the Headteacher and Governing Body of every school to provide a daily act of Collective Worship. Collective Worship is regarded as an essential part of the development of the whole child and as such is recognised by staff and governors as an important part of daily learning. We expect all children to attend but 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.

Planning and organisation

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school either as a whole school or in classes. The structure of collective worship varies but usually includes a song, questions, times of silence and prayer.

Collective Worship follows our school vision and values and is based on:

- The half termly value and linked Bible Story
- Religious events and special days
- Special events in the life of the school and wider community

On Fridays, parents are invited to join us in an assembly to celebrate achievements. These allows them to be part of our collective worship and join us as part of the community.

Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Values Worship	Singing or Praise Worship	Values Worship Classroom worship 'The Big Question'	Community worship Vicar Storytellers Children	Celebration worship

Each person leading worship is expected to plan his or her act of worship with the same degree of thoroughness as any other aspect of their teaching. Collective worship is led by different staff within the school, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other teachers. It is also led by clergy and visitors for the local church and Storytellers. Storytellers or 'Open the Book' is a programme for schools organised by the Bible Society. Stories are presented in dramatic form with many of the storytellers dressed-up in costume, acting out the stories as they are narrated.

Children are encouraged to be involved in leading collective worship. They are given the opportunity to share prayers they have written. Key Stage 2 children are also given an opportunity to lead collective worship on an issue that they are passionate about and would like to raise awareness of. Children fill in a planning sheet beforehand and then prepare a script or presentation, as well as choosing a song or prayer.

Reflective spaces in the hall and classrooms provide a focus for collective worship. Children are encouraged to use boxes in classrooms to post prayers and responses.

Visitors

Visitors are invited to lead and enhance collective worship. Examples of visitors include clergy, volunteers from local churches, Storytellers, leaders from other religions and charity representative. Visitors should understand the educational aims of collective worship at the school and the need to avoid any proselytising. Attempts to persuade pupils to adopt a particular religious or non-religious belief are not appropriate. The Headteacher is consulted before a visiting speaker is confirmed. Visitors should not speak about raising money for any particular cause(s) without the prior permission of the Headteacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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 parents' contributions through questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. All leaders of collective worship are asked to evaluate continuously, reflect after every worship, to develop and improve their practice. Children,

staff and governors are encouraged to fill in an evaluation of collective worship, to share their responses and the impact of the session. Staff and governors also meet with the school council to evaluate collective worship and suggest ways it can be improved.