



## Collective Worship Policy

**"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
Worship the Lord in the splendour of holiness"**

**Psalms 29:2**

### **Rationale for Collective Worship**

At Wootton St Andrew's C of E Primary School, we understand worship to be a special time of day, the purpose of which is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves pupils coming together with a member of staff and participating in a daily gathering. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act which states that collective worship should be wholly or broadly of a Christian character, we base most of this daily gathering on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we aim to conduct our collective worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of school and our wider community. Everyone is welcomed - those with a religious faith or affiliation and those with none.

### **Aims for Collective Worship**

Collective worship contributes significantly to the ethos of Wootton St Andrew' C of E Primary School and it is our aim that it is a time when the school community can:

- share common aims and values, recognising the Christian God and to reflect the Anglican traditions, but also to respect the traditions of others and the value and depth they bring to the world in which we live.
- explore together the world in which we live and foster a sense of wonder and awe at its beauty, mystery and power. allow reflection on the fundamental questions of life, common to all human beings.
- provide an opportunity for celebration and the sharing of successes and challenges in personal, school and community life, exploring emotions such as love, joy, friendship, fear, sadness, forgiveness and humility.

- provide the experience of being part of a caring, Christian community as a firm basis for preparation for life in the richness of modern Britain.

### **The contribution of worship to the school aims and objectives**

At Wootton St Andrew's C of E Primary School we endeavour to:

- help children understand the place that Jesus has in the hearts of those with a Christian faith.
- help children understand more of the world around them.
- help children make judgements and form opinions on important issues.
- to prepare children for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

Assemblies are also used to sustain the natural curiosity of the children. We can surprise them, comfort them, challenge them and inspire them. They can help them to understand something of their place in the world regardless of their own religious beliefs or if they have none.

### **The contribution of worship to children's spiritual and moral development**

The National Curriculum 2014 states that schools should provide "a balanced and broadly based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils".

**Spiritual development** .... the ability to develop and flourish as a human being.....

- be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values;
- foster a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them; use imagination and creativity in their learning; reflect on their own experiences.

**Moral development** .... the personal recognition of right and wrong.....

- readily apply their understanding of right and wrong in their own lives and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- understand the consequences of their behaviour and actions;
- understand that society's views change and that there are contentious issues where there is disagreement;
- contemplate and offer reasoned opinions about moral and ethical issues, and be able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others.

At Wootton St Andrew's, Collective worship is at the intrinsic heart of our distinctive church school. We provide an opportunity for children and staff to worship in a contemporary style but with traditional Christian refrains and responses, which is consistent with the traditional practices of the Church of England.

### **Practicalities of Organisation**

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. This gathering forms part of each morning assembly. The format for these gatherings is understood by all staff, and reviewed periodically.

- We endeavour to conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way.
- We tell children that assembly is special thinking time for calm reflection.
- We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teaching and invite them to participate in prayer and songs.
- We create an appropriate worshipful atmosphere by using music, a cross and candle that act as a focal point for the children.

All members of teaching staff lead assemblies but usually on Mondays, it is led by the Head Teacher for the whole school. Tuesdays through to Thursdays, the class teachers leads assemblies for their own key stages to allow worship to be more age appropriate. Members of our local churches (Anglican, Methodist and Evangelical) lead whole school assemblies from time to time and a range of visitors contribute to proceedings. This brings greater variety to our assemblies and strengthens links between school and the local church. Acts of worship for key points in the Christian calendar are held in church when the wider community are invited to worship with the school. These are mostly planned and led by the children. This promotes the community spirit of the school. We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time. Other opportunities for prayer and reflection are given at lunchtimes and in classes at the end of each school day and prayer stations within school.

### **Content**

Assembly themes reflect the Christian Values, the life of Christ, reflect the Church Year (e.g. Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost) and other key times (e.g. Remembrance Day, Fair Trade Week and Christian Aid week) as well as covering topical issues that arise.

On Fridays we worship is planned and led by pupils (Worship Stars) and this is combined with any awards/celebrations that reflect the achievements and learning of the children both of in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which includes that all children are valued and all achievements recognised.

Worship in school usually follows the lighting of a candle as everyone says, "Let your light shine as we come together in the name of God the father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit," which reminds us of the light that Jesus brings into our world but also of the Holy Trinity. As the candle is extinguished the word 'Maranatha' is said, meaning 'O Lord, come'.

### **Evaluation, Monitoring and Review**

It is the role of the Governing Body to monitor collective worship. As part of this process, Pupil Voice interviews are carried out.

### **Right of Withdrawal**

We expect all children to attend assembly and we highlight this with parents at the time of admission. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending Collective Worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child. Parents can do so without reason. This complies with current legislation. The Head Teacher keeps a record of any children who are withdrawn from Collective Worship.