

Collective Worship Policy

...they were all with one accord in one place...

Acts 2:1

Lythe School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School and a daily act of Collective Worship is held in accordance with our Trust Deed and with the principles and practice of the Church of England.

Collective Worship plays a central role in our school's life. As well as providing a focus for consideration and affirmation of the Christian values that underpin the school's work and an opportunity to further spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and make links with the wider curriculum, it is a time of day when our whole school community is invited to come together in friendship in order to join in with worship and share joys, achievements and ideals as well as disappointments and sorrows. Collective Worship is conducted in a dignified and respectful way which encourages children to be reflective and consider issues of a spiritual nature, and provides a peaceful time away from the hustle and bustle of the school day which is appreciated by children and staff alike.

Collective worship takes place in a supportive, inclusive environment which recognises, and seeks to develop, the personal worth of each person. It does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment or affiliation, and the different experiences, beliefs and starting points of individuals are recognised and valued. Individual integrity is always cherished.

...abounding with deeds of kindness and charity...

We have close connections with our parish and the wider community and the values that we promote through our worship are acted out through our service to others and through our (and our families') involvement in church festivals and sacraments.

Aims

Opportunities are provided for children to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ. Our aims are that Collective Worship will:

- enable the school community to explore and celebrate the differences and diversity found in the variety of forms of worship in the Anglican Christian tradition;
- share the central teachings of the Christian faith in order for the school community to make an informed choice about their own involvement and to consider their own personal relationship with Jesus Christ;
- seek to deepen and widen the experience of those of 'faith' and encourage those of 'no faith' so that they begin to feel for themselves something of what it means to worship;
- use celebration, silence, stilling, reflection, contemplation, meditation, prayer, song, symbols and imagery as vehicles for worship and spiritual growth;
- provide opportunities for the whole school community to address God directly through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit through acknowledging his presence, reflecting upon his character and giving Him praise and honour;
- use a vocabulary of worship that encourages the whole school community to attend, participate and lead worship;
- encourage all present to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework by learning more about the Christian faith and by encountering Christ through worship;

- raise awareness through reflection of the ultimate questions of life and human existence relating to matters of faith;
- explore the school's key Christian values and celebrate each unique individual member of the school community as made in the image of God;
- Encourage respect and care for God's created world by promoting a positive attitude to environmental issues locally, nationally and globally;
- seek to provide opportunities for spiritual, social and moral development that is characterised by feelings such as awe, wonder, being uplifted, elation, appreciation, gratitude, respect, and reverence;
- develop a sense of community within the school, the locality, (e.g. local church) and foster the sense of being part of a wider community through the celebration of achievements, festivals and special occasions, including considering the beliefs and values of others;
- provide an opportunity to bring personal needs and those of others before God in prayer;
- help children discover their place in the world.

Organisation of Collective Worship

...when you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up...

Worship is always planned to be appropriate to the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all children and respectful of the personal integrity of adults. The majority of worship takes place as a whole school in the school hall or as a class in individual classrooms, but other locations in and out of school may be used.

Worship may be led by staff, children or school visitors and follows a termly plan based on an overarching Christian Value taken from the "Roots and Fruits" Collective Worship resource, which clearly roots our worship in the Bible and the church year. Leaders may draw on stories, fables, art, music, current events or personal experiences to develop a weekly theme related to the value for the term. Class collective worship gives staff and pupils the opportunity to discuss issues in more depth.

Stories from other traditions and faiths may be included at appropriate times. Collective worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation and although written planning is not required, daily evaluation should show that worship has been planned to the same standard, and with the same considerations for pupils, as curriculum lessons. Staff should encourage children to take increasing amounts of responsibility for different sections of the act of worship.

Worship reflects the practices and traditions of our local church. Both the hall and classrooms make use of liturgical colours and symbolic items such as altar cloths, crosses and candles, and a team of children is responsible for setting up the space for worship. Children and adults are expected to enter and exit the worship space quietly and calmly, and to listen and respond respectfully.

Whole-school and class Collective Worship is structured to include a time for:

- 1) Gathering together
- 2) Engaging
- 3) Responding
- 4) Sending out

These include the use of traditional Anglican prayers, hymns, phrases and responses, and actions such as sharing a sign of peace. Children are encouraged to take an active role in each section of the worship and positive, well-mannered contributions are always welcomed.

Timings are arranged so that all staff have the opportunity to attend, and all staff and visitors are invited to attend. Parents are regularly invited to worship and are encouraged to attend school/church services. Collective Worship takes place in church to celebrate festivals such as Ash Wednesday, Ascension Day, Harvest Festival, Christmas.

Children have the opportunity to participate in a clergy-led service of Holy Communion on a regular basis. A short time for stilling and prayer as a class is included before lunch and before the end of the school day.

There is a clear end to the act of worship, and any announcements are made as a clearly separate activity.

Responsibility

...for where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them... We take responsibility for this gathering together very seriously. The governors hold overall responsibility for ensuring that the legal requirements for worship are met and for ensuring the provision of daily worship of distinctively Anglican character. Day-to-day planning, monitoring and evaluation are undertaken by the Headteacher and CW Co-ordinator, in consultation with members of the school community and clergy, and half-termly plans can be seen on the school website. Visitors are welcome in line with our Visitors' Policy, and must be aware that their leading of worship should ensure that all present are able to take part in it with integrity. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that visitors leading CW are suitable and properly briefed.

Foundation governors have a particular responsibility for ensuring that the character or foundation of the school is reflected in worship. Our current Foundation Governors are Rev Josephine Evetts-Secker and Mrs Wendy Norman. Rev Josephine frequently leads worship in school and church, and helps the school make meaningful links with the liturgical year. Preparation for confirmation is also promoted to interested families.

Evaluation of individual acts of worship is carried out by adults and children present and can be seen in the evaluation file in the school office. The impact of Collective Worship as a whole is evaluated and monitored:

- through conversations with children, visitors, parents, staff
- by scrutiny of planning and daily evaluations by the Headteacher and CW Co-ordinator, and carefully tracked using the SMSC GridMaker
- by discussion of provision at staff meetings
- through scrutiny of pupils' work
- through visits from Governors and our Diocesan Adviser which may include observations and conversations with children, staff and parents.

Evaluation is used to inform future planning, including investigating resources, activities, visitors.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All pupils, regardless of need, ability, background or belief are welcomed and included in Collective Worship. The school acts at all times in line with policies for SEND, Inclusion and our Equality Statement.

Right of Withdrawal

As Collective Worship is such an integral part of the life and work of the school, we hope that all members of the community will feel comfortable and find some degree of personal value in attending, and also see their contribution as valuable. However, staff and pupils are free to withdraw without giving a reason. Parents should inform the Headteacher in writing that they do not wish their child to attend, and proper supervision will be provided during times of worship.

Children who are withdrawn will join the rest of the group for any announcements following worship.

Resources

All resources are kept on a dedicated shelf in the school staff room and include:

Roots & Fruits resource book

Fischy CD

Collective Worship planning materials

Books of stories and suggested worship activities

RE Today magazines

Diocesan guidance

Complaints

Any complaints about Collective Worship should be directed to the school in accordance with our complaints information documents. If parents make a formal complaint about school worship and fail to be satisfied by their appeal to the governing body, in this Diocese there is a right of appeal to the Diocese. Initially, this appeal should be directed to the Diocesan Board of Education.

Conclusion

The Headteacher and governors of Lythe School believe that our distinctively Anglican Collective Worship is of value to all members of our community and that all members have a valuable role to play in its provision.

Last Reviewed: January 2017

Next Review: January 2019