



*Compassion Joy Perseverance Respect*

*'Live life in all its fullness' John 10:10*

# **Collective Worship Policy**

**Reviewed – May 2023**  
**Next review – May 2026**

**Achieving Excellence Together**

# Collective Worship Policy

## **How is this policy a reflection of our distinctive Christian vision?**

In accordance with being a Church of England VA school, collective worship is Christian and in sympathy with the teachings of the Church of England. The words of Our Lord Jesus taken from John 10:10 are the basis of our vision statement as we seek to provide our children with 'Life in all its fullness'. Our mission is to achieve this not only every day, but also in the future lives of the children we serve.

## **Vision**

Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life in all its fullness' John 10:10.

Following in Jesus' footsteps, pupils at Hunton are encouraged to make positive and courageous choices to open up the world, challenging themselves by stepping outside their comfort zone in order to 'live life in all its fullness'. We relate to the story of Peter stepping out of the boat and walking on the water. He decided to follow Jesus, and was stepping out of his comfort zone and taking a risk. When he started to sink, Jesus caught him and helped him. (Matthew 14)

This vision helps us day to day enable each child to flourish through the provision of the best education; academically, morally, socially and spiritually; and by living out our faith in God so as to 'Achieve Excellence Together'.

We are aiming to show how our pupils can experience 'life in all its fullness' day by day by developing a thirst for knowledge and a desire to challenge themselves, working together to achieve their aspirations in a safe, caring and secure learning environment. Each child is valued by the members of staff who work with them, nurturing, motivating, inspiring and empowering. We all recognise pupils' individuality and encourage them to become independent learners, make right choices, and fulfil their aspirations which will lead on to success in the future.

## **An Introduction to collective worship in Hunton CE Primary school**

As a Church of England school collective worship is the beating heart of our school life. It brings and gives life to all we do. Collective worship is a sacred and significant time of each school day, where we gather together as a school family.

Collective worship strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of compassion, joy, perseverance and respect and celebrates the central role that each pupil and adult have to play in our community.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and

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.

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality.

Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to ‘do anything’. Rather, worship will 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. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community’s behaviour and actions. Aims of collective worship

To deliver a daily act of worship that draws the whole school together in a common purpose or occasionally a smaller group in circle time. We aim to provide the opportunity to worship God through reflection and celebration and to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children and staff. It is wholly or mainly of a Christian character and helps communicate and develop our Church School Ethos with our values of compassion, joy, perseverance and respect. We describe our school as a nurturing community, achieving excellence together; through worship we can make our values and ethos real and understandable.

Worship, therefore is not stand-alone, but part of our mission. It is a key time when we can link who we are and our knowledge of the world to both our values and the Christian God/Jesus who shapes them; this we believe is fundamental to our children growing into active citizens, shaped through Christian values and will genuinely define our sense of Church and make us distinctive.

It is important that our clearly communicated and lived out values are also understood at home, with the potential for parents/carers to be influenced and changed by them. Whilst we try to provide meaningful ‘all age worship’ opportunities for parents to join us, we aim for the engagement of parents in our values to be through being consistent in everything we do and value.

Thus, pupils are helped to learn and grow in an environment which is safe and caring and, in being so, allows and encourages them to think for themselves and take responsibility for their own life and the lives of those around them. In this way worship genuinely and positively helps shape individual lives and the 'spirit' of the school as a whole. It is significant contributor to who we are an very much asks us to consider who we might be.

Collective Worship offers pupils, staff and the wider school community the opportunity to:

- Gather together to share sacred moments of joy, challenge, grief and love.
- Explore the school's distinctive Christian vision and values in action
- Reflect on the nature of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still, pray and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Explore Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate significant and special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of 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 whether they are engaged in learning in school or at home.
- 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 worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- 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.

- A special place will be created for the duration of collective worship. It may include a focal point, such as a candle, Bible or spring flowers, or it may include a special seating arrangement.
- The sense of a special occasion is created by the attitude of the person(s) leading the worship and the participants joining together for a specific purpose:
  1. The leader will be well prepared with resources, such as visual aids and CDs. Songs and hymns should be carefully chosen to complement the theme of the assembly.
  2. The children will enter the special place in a quiet and calm manner, expecting quality time. Music may accompany the processing in and out of assembly.
  3. All adults and children in school (unless withdrawn) will attend the Act of Worship.

Collective Worship and Assembly are distinct activities. We demonstrate the transition between collective worship and assembly by saying a liturgical greeting, lighting and extinguishing our candle when the act of worship has finished.

### **The Anglican Christian Tradition**

- The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship through invitational and inclusive language:
- 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
- Saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer, our school prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses – Taizé style

### **Implementation**

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors such as the Family Trust in consultation with the collective worship leader. This act of 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. Our school plans systematically and cohesively using Rochester Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity.

Our worship is led by a group of Year 5 pupils and one Year 6 pupil called the Leading Lights.

We meet:

<b>Monday</b>	Collective Worship: Values theme	Head teacher
<b>Tuesday</b>	Collective Worship	Staff Rota
<b>Wednesday</b>	Songs of Praise / Family Trust / St Mary's	Staff Rota
<b>Thursday</b>	Class Worship / Picture News	Class Teacher
<b>Friday</b>	Star of the Week and Christian Values	Headteacher and all staff

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities to enable all to engage in the acts of worship. These include music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

**Gather** – we welcome the community, for example, *(with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle)*

**Engage** – we share, for example, *(a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message)*

**Respond** – pupils, for example, *(discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing)*

**Send** – we share, for example, *(the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning / behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle)*

### **Expectations of pupils**

In Hunton CE Primary School, there is an expectation that all pupils will be involved within worship on a regular basis. This may be opportunities planned ahead of time or unplanned through questioning, asking for volunteers or simply responding to moments of spontaneity.

Pupils are invited to evaluate and reflect on the impact of acts of worship they have joined with. Their voice is integral to improving the structure, content and in shaping future plans for worship.

Our Leading Lights, Pupil worship leaders, are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the collective worship leader to develop their own understanding of worship and to design an act of worship to support the spiritual development of their peers.

## **Developing worship**

Parents, pupils and adults in Hunton CEP School are entitled to be led in worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a Church School context.

Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular Diocesan led training.

The leader for collective worship will:

- Ensure that all pupils have access to a daily act of collective worship, therefore meeting statutory requirements.
- Ensure that collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.
- Attend regular training and network meetings with Rochester Diocese
- Produce and regularly review the collective worship policy to ensure that it remains reflective of current practice and thinking.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of collective worship across the school.
- Ensure all stakeholders know what the expectations of worship are when leading, planning and joining worship.
- Join those who are leading worship to provide supportive feedback on how worship could be developed.
- Evaluate the impact of collective worship on the whole school community by gathering pupil and adult voice.
- Signpost staff to a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and resources, to help develop their confidence in leading acts of worship.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited to lead collective worship.
- Meet with and encourage pupil leaders of worship to enable them to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.

## **Visitors leading worship**

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies: [Hunton Primary School](#). 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.

It is the responsibility of the collective worship leader and senior leaders to ensure that all visitors, who are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and our school's vision. They will be supported and monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation process of worship.

### **Leadership (including pupil led)**

The Head Teacher and R.E. lead provide in-school guidance, where appropriate and monitoring based on the Diocese 'worship observation' criteria. Teachers are also on a rota to lead worship to they are not only attending worship, they are actively involved in thinking what is involved and shaping it.

Pupils constantly tell us how much they enjoy participating in worship or watching their friends. Pupils are also encouraged and supported to take a more direct leadership role. Our pupils take an active role in collective worship and/or assembly through:

- Running the sound and visuals.
- Talking with partners to discuss questions asked.
- Taking part in drama or other performance opportunities.
- Reading Bible Stories.
- Writing class prayers which are used weekly in worship
- Reading Prayers from Class Prayer Book and also reading our School Prayer
- Singing together.
- Creatively reflecting on worship in classrooms
- Giving the older children opportunity to positively influence the younger ones.

### **SEN and Equality of Opportunity**

Special arrangements are made for children with special needs that may include, ear-defenders, alternate seating or support for those who find the 'large group' experience of assembly disturbing. This is in line with the positive commitment outlined in our Disability Access Plan.

### **Consideration of Pupils with other Faiths**

This is always within our thinking and we liaise with our parents of other faiths to ensure we are getting the balance and sense of respect right.

### **Self-assessment and Inspection**

Our school regularly evaluates all acts of collective worship and the impact they have on the school and our 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, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared with our staff and governors during full governing body meetings) and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school.

The impact of collective worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

### **Parental Withdrawal**

Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity. We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship, so would welcome the opportunity to discuss this decision with them. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

Date of validation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors

Date of review: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors

## Appendix

### 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)*

Therefore, collective worship in Church of England schools must be inclusive and invitational of all, to ensure all can be present with integrity.

### The legal requirements of collective worship in Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools.

- Be conducted in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deeds of the school and Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- The Governing Body should ensure that **all** pupils **each day** engage meaningfully in a realact of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church
- Arrangements for collective worship, in foundation schools of a religious character, are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consulting with the Headteacher (*DfE Circular 1/94 para 52 & 53*)
- All acts of worship in Church schools must be Christian in character (based on Biblical teachings)
- **All** registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw)
  - must on 'each school day take part in an act of collective worship'.
- If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, then the school must comply. (*Education Reform Act 1988. s9 (3)*) The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from collective worship.