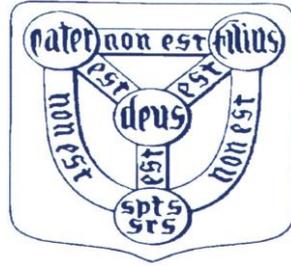


Shellingford CE (A) Primary School

Headteacher: Miss Judith Terrell



"Inspiring hearts and minds"

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Introduction

Collective Worship is at the very heart of our life as a Church of England school and offers an opportunity for values, stories and principles in the context of our Christian vision and ethos to be reflected upon and affirmed. It is an expression of our vision '**Inspiring hearts and minds**', and is focused on our four key values of **Creativity, Respect, Belonging and Spirituality** which permeate our approach to others and to what we do in school.

It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements (and learn from our mistakes) together. As such, we warmly welcome all members of our school community to join in worship and the contributions of adults, children, church clergy and other visitors are highly valued. For children whose families belong to different faith communities, it offers the opportunity to worship God in their own way.

Aims

- To encourage a sense of awe and wonder and foster a respect for the world, its peoples, and their faiths.
- To develop a sense of the values on which we build good, strong and happy lives.
- To create an atmosphere in which those who wish can pray, reflect or meditate and worship God.
- To encourage many forms of communication and expression including music, singing, prayer, rituals, story, poems, drama, dance, and symbol.
- To enable children to learn from Christianity and other faiths in a way that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural and cognitive development and prepares them for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Our Collective Worship aims to provide pupils and staff with '**Roots and foundation in love**' (*Ephesians 3:17*) and the opportunity to:

- Celebrate
 - Christian seasons and festivals
 - Our school values associated with our vision
 - pupils' and adults' achievements
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship

- feel safe and affirmed
- worship God on their own terms

Our worship reflects aspects of the school's curriculum and in particular:

- nurtures spiritual growth;
- enables participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context;
- enhances social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy;
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today;
- encourages participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage;
- reflects on the teaching of Jesus and a trinitarian theology.

The Pattern of Collective Worship

The whole school gathers together mid-morning in the Community Hall for Collective Worship. On occasions worship takes place in classrooms or outside in the school grounds. We follow the Church's liturgical year and within this significant festivals and other special days are observed. This always includes the celebration of Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Ascension when services are held at the Parish Church of St Faith's Shellingford, together with other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service. Members of the community are also invited to join us at significant times, such as at our Act of Remembrance and Dedication.

Leading Collective Worship

Collective Worship is led by staff and pupils, by the Vicar of the Uffington Benefice and the Ministry Team. Opportunities are planned for pupils to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are also welcome to contribute to Collective Worship and are given guidance from our worship policy.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned around different Christian values. Themes are chosen to reflect the Church's liturgical year, our school vision and ethos and current events to ensure a balance between content and experience. The themes are directly linked to stories and references from The Bible. Stories from different religions are also used to promote spiritual development across the whole school community. Leaders, including children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to the appropriate theme. Worship includes a song, story, short reflection and time of prayer. Sometimes a poem, an image, dance or drama may be shared.

Every act of worship begins and closes with a reflective piece of music. A visual display provides a focus point for worship, with a cross, candle and our school prayer at the centre.

The candle is lit at the beginning of worship and extinguished at the end with the words: '*Jesus is here*' (said by the person leading the worship) '*His Spirit is with us*' (given as a response by children and adults).

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Legal Requirements

The Education Reform Act 1988 requires "*The arrangements for the collective act of worship be made by the Governors after consultation with the Headteacher*". The act specifies "*All pupils in attendance shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship*" unless parents request that they are excused. We seek to provide an assembly each day which is central to the life of the school, reflects our school's trust deed and includes an "*Act of collective worship*."

We wish to encourage all the children to take part in Collective Worship taking account of individual integrity. Our policy sets out our aspiration that Collective Worship will be a valuable

and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Requests for withdrawal should be granted without delay. The 'religious grounds' do not have to be justified and explained by the parents. Should children be withdrawn, the school must provide adequate supervision to ensure their safety. Children should not be withdrawn from Collective Worship for other purposes, e.g. reading, music lessons, to do so is to break the law.

It is expected that staff will act in accordance with the contract made with the governors on their appointment to the school.

Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. Staff are sensitive to children who are accustomed to differing practices and in worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in our lives and the communities in which we live.

Links with Religious Education (RE)

We believe that Collective Worship is strengthened by our RE curriculum which enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practices. (see Religious Education Policy).

Resources and Training

Our Collective Worship resources are kept in the Staffroom. All staff also have access to the Oxford Diocese Board of Education (ODBE) online resources.

The school works closely with the advisory team at the Diocese of Oxford. Staff and Governors attend training when suitable courses are available.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of Collective Worship is reviewed regularly by the Headteacher with the Foundation Governors in conjunction with the 'Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools' (SIAMS) Framework and our SIAMS SEF.

Feedback involves the whole school community and informs our future planning. Discussions with participants, observation and reflection take place by staff, governors and pupils who evaluate worship on a termly basis as part of the school's monitoring process. Collective Worship is a standing agenda item at School Council meetings for children to discuss its impact and to offer any improvements. Parents, classes, staff and governors are also given the opportunity to reflect on worship and express their views as part of our annual questionnaires.

Written by: Judith Terrell

Date written: March 2026

Review Date: March 2029

Policy Agreed by the Governing Body on 12th March 2026

Signed Chair of Governing Body

Signed Headteacher