

WEST DEAN C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Policy Review Information	
Reviewed By	Head Teacher, Staff and Foundation Governors
Ratified by	Governing Board
Review Frequency	3 Years
Policy Reviewed and Agreed	Spring 2024
Next Policy Review Date	Spring 2027

At West Dean CE Primary School, our Christian vision, inspired by the Gospel of John is:

We do our best in all we do, with God's love.

'Love one another. As I have loved you, so must you love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.'

John 13:34-35

We help each other to do our best in everything, through our Christian values of Love, Peace, Joy, Hope and Faith, which are central to all aspects of our school life together.

1 Aims and Purpose of Collective Worship

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for pupils to meet together as a whole school
- to provide an opportunity to reflect and to celebrate
- to introduce children to religious worship in a meaningful and honest way
- to enable those pupils who want to worship God to do so
- to encourage and develop a sense of community in the school reinforcing the aims and ethos and celebrating the ideals and values of the school
- to develop children's understanding of the teachings of Jesus and how this shows Christians how to live
- to encourage children to be their best selves in their wider lives

2 Collective Worship

As a church school our collective worship is a special time when we meet together to share what is meaningful and significant in our lives. It is a time to reflect on our spiritual journey and celebrate God's love and creation. It is about affirming the equality of each individual in God's sight, regardless of gender, ethnic background, physical or mental ability. It builds up our common life and develops and reinforces our school ethos and philosophy.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

3 Statutory Duty

All maintained schools provide daily collective worship for registered pupils (apart from those withdrawn by parents). Collective worship will comply with the legal requirements set down in the Trust Deed of the school which is in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England. It can take place at any time.

4 Right of Withdrawal

All children attend collective worship. However, 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. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from acts of collective worship (section 385/356 Education Acts 1966).

5 Organisation of Collective Worship

Our themes are broadly Christian but include topics relating to values and spirituality. We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. Sometimes the whole assembly is an act of worship; alternatively worship forms part of a whole-school assembly.

We conduct our worship in a dignified and respectful way, but inject fun and excitement to engage all. We teach children that worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teaching. Children are invited and encouraged to participate fully in prayer and hymns, but they know and understand that this is a personal choice.

Collective worship is carefully planned to be accessible by all. Thought is given to SEND need, especially any visual or hearing impaired children, ensuring their access and engagement in all aspects of worship.

We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and a variety of visual stimulation. Older children are responsible for preparing the school hall to be used as a worship space.

As we gather for worship and say our school prayer, a child representative from each class places the class tree trunk segment onto the stand to form the sign of the cross. This is a special moment symbolising our coming together as one in God's presence.

A new theme is introduced by the Headteacher at the beginning of the week and it is then explored through a variety of media such as music, story, drama or poetry. All teachers play a part in leading worship during the year and the parish priest leads an act of worship regularly. All members of the school staff are welcome to join in school worship. Parents are invited to attend some assemblies and significant Christian festivals e.g. Harvest, Easter and Christmas, for which we worship in St Andrew's Church, West Dean.

The organisation of a typical week of worship / assemblies is as follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Headteacher led – new theme launched	Led by a class teacher, continuing the week's theme	Act of worship and singing practice, led by music lead	Worship led either by a visitor or the headteacher	End of week celebration of achievement (Acorn Awards) HT led.
The Parish Priest, Rev Sarah Manouch, may attend worship on any day and most frequently joins us on Fridays. Other frequent leaders of worship are Hugo Van Driel from Yapton Free Church and Student Worship Leaders from Bishop Luffa School.				

6 Themes for Collective Worship

- The weekly themes consider the age, interests and experience of the children and include:
- Our school vision and values: Love, Peace, Joy, Hope & Faith
- The broad traditions of Christian belief
- The teachings of Jesus and scripture and how this directs Christian living
- Knowledge of the Christian year
- An appreciation and wonder of the world in which we live
- The example of great lives given in the service of others
- Consideration of other faiths and world views
- Spirituality – ‘The Ows, Wows & Nows’ of life (see [Diocese of Gloucester spirituality definition](#))
- Links to our PSHE curriculum

7 Acts of Collective Worship

The structure of an act of worship could include the following elements:

- Orderly entrance and exit of children
- A focal point e.g. a candle, a picture, a display linked to the theme
- Singing
- Prayers
- Reading/story/poem/drama
- Music
- Time for reflection

Any notices should be given out at the beginning or very end of assembly so as not to detract from the key messages introduced in the theme.

There should be the following throughout:

- A theme
- A purpose
- Spiritual Dimension
- An atmosphere

8 Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

All teachers are involved in the ongoing evaluation of worship and assemblies and children are given frequent opportunity to do so also, in a variety of ways.

It is the role of the Headteacher, along with the Foundation Governors to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship within school. Governors are given the opportunity to regularly attend acts of Collective Worship and regular monitoring takes place.

This policy was reviewed in April 2024.