

# **GARSTANG ST THOMAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **POLICY: Collective Worship**



### **VISION**

Our vision is to be an excellent Church of England school which is forward thinking and strives for continual development.

We seek to support all our children in knowing that they are loved by God and encourage them in reaching their full potential academically, physically and spiritually.

We seek to develop in our children a great love of learning and for them to become confident, resilient, independent, inquisitive individuals who are able to both lead and serve others joyfully.

### **OUR MISSION**

Our Christian values flow from the person of Jesus Christ and are:

Love • Courage • Creativity • Friendship • Responsibility • Peace • Compassion • Truthfulness • Respect & Reverence • Humility • Forgiveness • Trust • Thankfulness • Hope • Generosity • Wisdom • Perseverance • Service • Justice

These values underpin the work that we do as a Church of England school. Both adults and children in our school are expected to support and live out these values in order to create and develop a positive and caring environment in which all can grow, learn and work.

We promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our staff and children work towards our vision by focusing on the following every day:

**WE ARE GUIDED BY GOD**  
**WE LOVE EACH OTHER**  
**WE LOVE LEARNING**  
**WE WONDER WHY**  
**WE JOYFULLY SERVE**  
**WE LEAD**  
**WE PERSEVERE**

At Garstang St Thomas Church of England Primary School worship is at the heart of daily life. All acts of worship will be in accordance with the traditions of the Anglican faith.

## **ETHOS STATEMENT**

The school has a trust deed dated 20th June 1845.

The ethos statement of this voluntary aided school is: Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

## **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Collective Worship is central to the life of our school and reflects our foundation as a Church of England school.

Our worship is:

- **Inclusive:** accessible to all members of the school community, regardless of faith or background
- **Invitational:** offering opportunities to engage without compulsion
- **Inspirational:** encouraging reflection, spiritual development and a sense of awe and wonder

Collective Worship provides a safe space for pupils and adults to reflect on beliefs, values and their place in the world.

## **AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Through Collective Worship, we aim to:

- Develop understanding of the Christian faith, including God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Explore the life and teachings of Jesus Christ
- Reflect on key Christian values such as love, forgiveness, compassion and justice
- Engage with the Bible as a source of guidance and inspiration
- Provide opportunities for prayer, reflection and stillness
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development
- Foster a sense of community and shared values

## **NATURE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Collective Worship at our school is:

- Distinct from Religious Education
- Christian in character, reflecting our foundation
- Varied in approach but with a consistent framework and inclusive in delivery

Pupils are invited to participate in ways that are appropriate and meaningful to them.

## **ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY**

Collective Worship takes place daily and may occur in a variety of groupings, including:

- Whole-school worship
- Key Stage Worship
- Class-based worship

Worship is led by:

- School staff
- Clergy
- Pupils
- Invited members of the local community/visitors

Worship is planned to reflect both the Church year and the school's Christian values.

The school's usual approach to daily Collective Worship is:

|                  |                                                                                                            |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>    | Whole-school worship with our vicar                                                                        |
| <b>Tuesday</b>   | Class/ key stage worship with our school staff                                                             |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | Whole-school worship with our school staff and occasionally our Open the Book team/class worship/ visitors |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | Key stage worship with our school staff                                                                    |
| <b>Friday</b>    | Friday Celebration with our Year 6 children                                                                |

For our main-whole school worship we come together for a special time at the end of the school day. The usual timings of worship are 20mins with leaders of worship being mindful of the children, particularly at the beginning of the school year/ start of terms and the wider needs of the school such as dismissing pupils safely and setting up for after-school club.

## APPROACHES TO WORSHIP

A range of creative approaches are used, including:

- Storytelling
- Drama and role play
- Music and singing
- Prayer and reflection
- Use of visual and multimedia resources
- Outdoor worship

This variety ensures engagement and supports different learning styles, while the liturgy and structure provide reassuring consistency for all.

## STRUCTURE OF WORSHIP

The central attributes of collective worship in our Church school can be integrated effectively by following the fourfold structure of: Gathering, Engaging, Responding and Sending.

### Gathering

Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony

## **Engaging**

Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content

## **Responding**

Ensuring there is time and opportunity for individual, group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways

## **Sending**

Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas covered and to conclude the worship

Worship usually includes:

- A welcome and gathering
- Lighting of a candle to create a reflective focus
- Biblical readings or stories
- Teaching or reflection linked to Christian values
- Prayer or quiet reflection
- A sending out or conclusion

Symbols such as the Bible, cross and candle are used to support understanding and provide a focal point.

The lighting of the Trinity candle helps create a calm and reflective atmosphere and may be understood by believers as representing the presence of God.

## **PUPIL INVOLVEMENT**

Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in collective worship by:

- Actively listening
- Planning and leading worship particularly in key stage 2.
- Writing prayers
- Contributing ideas and themes
- Evaluating worship experiences

## **Question and Answer**

In our school, we prioritise inclusive participation in worship by encouraging all pupils to engage actively with questions and reflections. A "talk to your partner" approach is used to ensure every child has the opportunity to formulate and share their ideas before selected responses are taken. The worship leader then repeats and clarifies these responses so they are clearly heard and understood by all.

We recognise that class-based worship provides valuable opportunities for individual engagement, where staff can use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion. However, in whole-school worship we avoid extended question-and-answer sessions, as these can disrupt the flow and impact the pace and overall message of worship. They may also unintentionally result in the same pupils responding repeatedly, rather than ensuring broad participation across the school.

## **PRAYER AND REFLECTION**

Prayer is an important part of Collective Worship.

Pupils are invited to:

- Join in spoken prayers

- Listen and reflect quietly
- Use the time for personal reflection

Silence is valued as an opportunity for stillness and spiritual growth.

## **INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION**

We recognise that members of our school community come from a range of backgrounds and beliefs.

We ensure that:

- Worship is accessible and meaningful for all
- Pupils can engage at their own level of comfort

All are encouraged to reflect, while participation in prayer remains a personal choice.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Collective Worship is regularly monitored and evaluated by:

- The headteacher and senior leaders
- Staff team
- Governors
- Pupils (through pupil voice)

Evaluation focuses on:

- Impact on spiritual development
- Inclusivity and engagement
- Alignment with school vision and values

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Collective Worship is provided in accordance with legal requirements and the school's foundation.

- Worship takes place daily for all pupils
- It is in line with the school's Trust Deed
- It reflects the Christian character of the school

## **PARENTAL RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL**

In view of the Christian ethos and distinctive Christian character of our Church of England school, we hope that all children admitted will participate in collective worship.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from acts of worship. If any parent is considering using this right to withdraw, we ask them to make an appointment to meet the headteacher to discuss. As a school we will respect any request from a parent to withdraw their child.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Concerns about Collective Worship should initially be discussed with the headteacher.

If unresolved, the school's formal complaints procedure should be followed.

## **CONCLUSION**

Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life. It supports the development of our values, strengthens our community, and provides meaningful opportunities for reflection, spirituality and growth.

## **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains compliant and reflects best practice.

## APPENDIX A – HALF TERMLY WORSHIP VALUES

**GARSTANG ST THOMAS**  
Church of England School

### Christian Values & Worship Themes

|                  | <b>Autumn 1</b> | <b>Autumn 2</b> | <b>Spring 1</b> | <b>Spring 2</b> | <b>Summer 1</b> | <b>Summer 2</b> |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>2025/2026</b> | Generosity      | Compassion      | Courage         | Forgiveness     | Friendship      | Respect         |
| <b>2026/2027</b> | Service         | Trust           | Perseverance    | Justice         | Thankfulness    | Truthfulness    |

2026/2027 is a year of service school

Our Christian Values: Love • Courage • Creativity • Friendship • Responsibility • Peace • Compassion • Truthfulness • Respect & Reverence • Humility • Forgiveness • Trust • Thankfulness • Hope • Generosity • Wisdom • Perseverance • Service • Justice

## APPENDIX B – NORMAL LITURGY

[Welcome followed by lighting of the Trinity candle]

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

And also with you

Lord, direct our thoughts, teach us to pray, lift up our hearts to worship you in Spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ.

Amen

To God our Father we say:

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| For making us          | Thank you |
| For loving us          | Thank you |
| For all of creation    | Thank you |
| For being here with us | Thank you |

Prayers

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.



[Wednesdays] Let's remind ourselves of our mission:

WE ARE GUIDED BY GOD  
WE LOVE EACH OTHER  
WE LOVE LEARNING  
WE WONDER WHY  
WE JOYFULLY SERVE  
WE LEAD  
WE PERSEVERE

The Peace of the Lord be always with you  
And also with you

Going with God we say

Fill my mind  
Speak through my lips  
Live in my heart

Go in peace in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

In the name of Christ Amen

A child in year 6: The message doesn't end here because it continues with you. As we leave, think about it, talk about it—*but most importantly, live it.*