

Slindon Church of England Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

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| Approved by: | Headteacher (Laura Webb) and Governing Body |
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'Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England/Church in Wales and in partnership with the Churches 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.'

The Ethos Statement of Church of England Schools

1. Introduction

Our Christian Vision

At Slindon CofE Primary school we serve our local community and enable our school family to flourish. We recognise that everyone is *Unique* and want to ensure they are able to *Learn and Develop* in a high quality learning environment. We enrich the spirit in an *Enabling Environment*, in which *Positive relationships* foster creativity and curiosity. In hope we encourage our community to shine brightly and be courageous advocates of our world, shaping their futures for the better.

The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5; 22-23

Let Your Light Shine ~ Matthew 5:16

Slindon Church of England Primary School is led by four overarching principles. These principles run through the ethos of our school and feed into our policy and pedagogy.

Within Collective Worship, we recognise that all children are **unique**. We celebrate each unique individual member of the school community as made in the image of God.

Through Collective Worship, we aim to foster a **positive relationship** between the church and school, and with God.

We respect that everybody **learns and develops** in different ways. Our collective worship is inspiring, inclusive and invitational and uses a vocabulary of worship that encourages the whole school community to attend, participate and lead worship.

The calm climate for learning within our school, along with dedicated prayer spaces and spaces for reflection and response to collective worship, provide an **enabling environment** for children to flourish and to feel connected to God.



As a Rights Respecting School, our Collective Worship Policy is underpinned by the following articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child.

- Articles 3/ 5: The adults in our school community, including our parents/ carers and families will act as role models. The best interests of our children are our top priority in all decisions and actions.
- Articles 2/ 12/ 30: We respect the right to be listened to and listen to others, to give an opinion and have the right to protection against discrimination.
- Article 13: We respect the right to find things out and share what we think with others, through art, talking or writing, unless it breaks the rights of others.
- Article 14: We respect the right to think and believe what we chose and to practice religion, as long as we are not stopping people from enjoying their rights.
- Article 28: We respect the right to learn and let others enjoy their learning.
- Article 29: We respect the right to develop our potential.

2. Aims

At Slindon Church of England Primary School, we are committed to offering high quality collective worship. Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision through the Fruits of the Spirit and celebrates the central role that each child has to play in our community.

We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives...Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.¹

We aim to offer our children a deeper and regular experience of worship that facilitates a strong foundation for further, future spiritual growth. Through our collective worship we aim to:

- Share the central teachings of the Christian faith in order for our 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.
- Encourage our community 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.
- Encourage respect and care for God's created world by promoting a positive attitude to environmental issues locally, nationally and globally.
- Develop a sense of community within the school and community, including St Mary's Church, fostering the sense of being part of a wider community through the celebration of achievements, festivals and special occasions.
- Provide an opportunity to bring personal needs and those of others before God in prayer.

Through Collective Worship, we endeavour to help our children discover their place in a rapidly changing world.

3. Statutory requirements

As a maintained school in England, it is a legal requirement for Slindon Church of England Primary School to hold a daily act of collective worship which is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. As a Church of England school, all acts of our collective worship are conducted in accordance with the trust deed and/or with the tenets and practices of the Church of England, and are Christian in character.

¹ The Church of England Education Office, Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. (The Church of England Education Office 2016) page 10

4. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Collective Worship at Slindon Church of England Primary School is inspiring, inclusive and invitational. It is conducted in a manner that is sensitive and respectful to the individual faiths and beliefs of all members of our school community. Collective Worship at our school contributes to a nurturing of faith, providing a means by which all members of our school community, those of faith and non-faith backgrounds, may understand more about the Christian faith, experiencing and learning about worship and what it means to those who take part. Within our collective worship, we use a vocabulary of worship that encourages the whole school community to attend, participate and lead worship.

5. Right to withdraw

The right of Parents/ Carers to withdraw their children from collective worship, established in the 1944 Act, remains unchanged. Parents and Carers are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal but in line with our culture of open and transparent communication and overarching principle of positive relationships, the Headteacher would endeavour to ascertain:

- the elements of collective worship in which Parents/ Carers would object to the child taking part
- the practical implications of withdrawal
- whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so how much.

Withdrawal from collective worship does not guarantee exclusion from the religious character of our school and the Headteacher and Governors will endeavour to make clear to parents that in choosing a church school, they are thereby committing themselves to their child's participation in the overall religious life of the school, as set out in our school prospectus.

Teaching staff will not withdraw children from collective worship (for intervention groups, music lessons, booster classes, etc) due to the requirement that an act of collective worship must be provided each day for every child.

6. Responsibilities

The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors.

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that all pupils each day engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship, in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church. Arrangements for a daily act of collective worship are the responsibility of the governing body, through consultation with the headteacher. Our foundation governors have

responsibility for ensuring that the character foundation of the school is reflected in worship. The governing body are aware of its legal responsibilities and statutory responsibility to uphold the Christian foundation of the school.

The Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that legal requirements are met. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) requires that:

- for collective worship pupils can be grouped in various ways: as a whole school, according to age, or in groups (or a combination of groups) which the school uses at other times. Pupils cannot be put into special groups just for collective worship
- acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds
- the daily act of collective worship will normally take place on the school premises. Schools are also able to hold their act of collective worship elsewhere (e.g. the local parish church)
- all registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on "each school day take part in an act of collective worship."

Collective worship is separate from Religious Education. Collective worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and should not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum. The act of collective worship must be distinctive and identifiable if it is to meet the legal requirements.

Staff

The expectation of Slindon Church of England Primary School is that members of staff should uphold the Christian ethos and foundation of the school. This is made clear on each staff appointment.

7. Implementation of Collective Worship

Our planning for collective worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and recognises and follows the Christian liturgical year including:

- observing the major Christian Festivals and the cycles of the Anglican year - Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost and Harvest, and acknowledging major Saints' Days
- using the Bible as a source of inspiration and learning
- reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship
- participating in aspects of the regularity and set order of Anglican worship. This recognises the central significance of the Eucharist while acknowledging the variety of other forms of worship, which may be decided locally in order to match, as far as possible, the pupil's experience in school and church. These include special services from time to time e.g. welcoming new pupils to school and school leavers' service in the Summer Term.
- learning traditional responses and prayers, hymns, and psalms to create a framework for worship within our school
- sharing in a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, including recognising their major festivals.

7.1 The Structure of Collective Worship throughout the week

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| School | School | School | School | School |
| Headteacher | All staff | Rvd Dyson | Class teachers | Headteacher |

At Slindon Church of England Primary School, we use a four-stage structure to planning collective worship, including 'gathering,' 'engaging,' 'responding' and 'sending'.

Gathering

Each Monday, collective worship is led by the Headteacher. Within this worship, we consider our current assembly theme and how this links to our school values. There is a feeling of expectation as the whole school gathers for worship. Through gathering in this way and greeting each other, all members of our school community recognise their part in this community as we prepare to meet with God.

Engaging

This is the main part in our act of worship. Children are encouraged to engage with the Bible, Christian teaching, and most importantly, with God through a variety of stimulus. Our children encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible. They are encouraged to listen for God's message to us, through the stimulus and resources used.

Responding

For all members of our school community, response to the stimulus is a central part of the act of worship. Time is set aside for deep thought and for each to respond in an appropriate way. Children respond to what we have heard and seen during both whole school and class based collective worship. All members of our school community respond together and also as individuals, given the opportunity to worship God.

Sending

Throughout the week, after the end of each act of worship, there is purpose, as each member of our school community is 'sent out' to be different and to 'do' differently. Everybody is 'sent out' to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world. Children are 'sent out' with God's blessing.

Collective worship is evaluated each week and contributes to the monitoring schedule in the monitoring of collective worship.

8. Visitors

Visitors must understand the educational aims of Collective Worship at Slindon Church of England Primary School and the need to avoid any proselytising. Attempts to persuade pupils to adopt a particular religious or non-religious belief are not appropriate. The Headteacher is consulted before a visiting speaker is confirmed.

9. Links with St Mary's Church and the wider community

Our school has close links with our local parish, St Mary's Church in Slindon. We are proud of our close connections with the local parish and worshipping community and enjoy its support and encouragement. Both church and school work well together throughout the year and towards special opportunities to promote spiritual and religious development. As a whole school, we attend church services for Harvest Festival, Christingle Service, Easter and Leavers' service at the end of the year. The wider community attend Collective Worship in Coronation Hall for special 'Open the Book' events.