

# **Great Wishford C of E (V.A.) Primary School**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **Philosophy**

Great Wishford C of E (V.A.) Primary School is a Community school, making worship an important part of the school day. It gives us the opportunity to come together as a school community to think more deeply about God, about our relationships with others, about God's world and about ourselves. Visitors and parents are regularly invited to join us, and the school takes worship into the local church for special festivals in the church calendar.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that Collective Worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our worship on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

### **Aims of Collective Worship**

Our aim at Great Wishford C of E (V.A.) Primary School is that worship should:

- provide members of the school community with the opportunity to praise and reach out to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- reflect and underpin the school's Mission statement, values and Christian ethos;
- instill a sense of awe and wonder in the children;
- be inclusive and an occasion where each individual's integrity is respected;
- offer opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- reflect some of the practices and traditions of the Church;
- be regularly monitored and evaluated;
- celebrate and give thanks for the achievements of all within the school, local and international communities, and occasions of significance, including festivals;
- help children explore and develop their own spirituality;
- enable children to consider and evaluate their own beliefs;
- offer a time of stillness and quiet;
- show appreciation for the God given gifts and talents of the school community;
- provide a basis for understanding the nature and purpose of worship.

### **Monitoring of and responsibility for Collective Worship**

The governors hold the overall responsibility for ensuring that the legal requirements for worship are met and the RE/Collective Worship governor monitors policy and practice. Further evaluation is undertaken by those leading the worship, and the views of other staff, the pupils for whom the worship is intended or members of the governing body are also sought. Link and Foundation governors visit both whole school and classroom Collective Worship to monitor use of Christian symbols and prayer, pupil engagement, setting/atmosphere/tone, and the relevance/appropriateness of content.

## **Organisation of Collective Worship**

The school's Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for organising and planning the worship. Our weekly Collective Worship routine includes Open the Book, teacher or HT-led whole-school Collective Worship, Key Stage worship in classrooms, and celebration Collective Worship. Parents are invited to whole school and special Collective Worship via Newsletter or text.

We conduct our Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way, creating an appropriate atmosphere through music and candles, or sometimes other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

We take the themes of our Collective Worship from our school values, which are drawn from the traditions of the Christian faith. Sometimes worship is based on the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Celebrations of special festivals or occasions may take place outdoors, for example at Easter, or in the village church, when we invite parents and members of our local community to attend. We also use the Roots and Fruits Resource to support the planning of worship, together with Values for Life.

Once a week, Collective Worship includes the children's achievements, offering an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for effort and progress. In this way, we continue to promote the ethos of the school, whereby all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

All classrooms have a prayer chair or a Collective Worship focus area, which includes a candle, lit for classroom worship to indicate the presence of Christ as the light of the world.

We welcome governors' attendance at any time.

## **The Character of Collective Worship**

The school works closely with the local parish clergy in planning, maintaining good school and church relationships and joining together as appropriate, for instance to celebrate Christingle, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas. We aim to include the children in the planning and delivery of our Collective Worship, wherever possible. For major festivals, much of the content is created and led by children.

All those leading are asked to plan their act of worship in as much detail as they would any other learning activity. Our acts of worship take account of the children's ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds. At the beginning of the whole school worship, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of a candle.

## **Right of withdrawal**

We expect all children to 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, but withdrawal will only be made after discussion between parent and head teacher, followed by written confirmation of withdrawal. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Head teacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from Collective Worship.

**Date: January 2020**

**Review Date: January 2021**