



Little Gaddesden Church of England Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Approved by Governing Body	January 2022
Review by	October 2025

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT OUR SCHOOL

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship daily. These acts of worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' for the majority of the time. They must also be 'appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family back- grounds of the pupils'. Therefore, as a Church school, our acts of worship are explicitly Christian although we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school community.

Many families who send their children to this school are largely 'nominally' Christians. In addition there are children who are from non-religious backgrounds and families who celebrate other faiths. In asking our children to worship we consider the background that our children come from. Collective worship is not a time to convert but to give children a balanced, educated understanding within a spiritual setting. The faith background of both the staff and the child's family is respected at all times.

The Headteacher is responsible for arranging the daily act of collective worship after consulting with the Governors and with guidance from our church partners.

VALUES AND AIMS

We believe that collective worship is a special time where all members of the school community come together. We believe that it both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life.

Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

Through our worship we aim to provide a caring and supporting environment which provides an opportunity for the school community to:

- Provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- Teach children how to worship and reflect
- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Enable the children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- Enable children to explore their own beliefs and those of others
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Encourage participation and response

- Celebrate the values of the school as a Christian community

CONTENT OF WORSHIP

We believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. We choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupils' contributions - this may include reading, acting, sharing a prayer, welcoming people to worship or asking/answering questions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings - these may be from the Bible or linked to other themes
- Artefacts/focal point for prayer/reflection - this may include a piece of artwork, a photograph and most often a lit candle
- Dialogue/silence - we may explore a question through dialogue, we may ask children to use their words in the form of a set of words used in Christian tradition or we may give children time to reflect and to be silent
- Visitors are invited in, where they can contribute from personal experience/faith or their work. This forms part of the act of worship with the school adding other important elements
- Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. We aim to create a balance of music, speech and silence; and choose songs or hymns appropriate for the pupils and the theme
- Prayer. Our collective worship always includes a prayer. This can either be the School prayer, the Lord's Prayer, a prayer written by the children or another way to fit with the theme of the worship. We feel that prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. Nevertheless, pupils are not required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

At this school we evaluate our acts of worship against some of the following:

- the purpose and the theme of the worship being clear to all those present
- involvement, enjoyment, attention and reaction of pupils
- positive response to shared experience
- the growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- a contribution to the spiritual development of individuals - offering pupils/adults something to think about and take into the life of the school
- a sense of occasion
- staff being present and taking part
- a sense of challenge
- a place in the overall plan of the school

PLANNING

Our worship themes reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar and are linked to the Diocesan Collective worship scheme. We use the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning. However, we also respond to local situations and need, both within the school and outside. We aim to use a range of resources and materials appropriate to the pupil's ages and stages of development.

Simple plans are kept each week by the leaders of collective worship and evaluations are made to inform future plans.

SINGING AND MUSIC

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. We have a bank of music from which to draw, taken from a variety of cultures and types. Likewise with the songs we sing. We are careful with our songs to recognise that there might be some words which some of our children would find offensive to sing. We have changed the words of some songs to make them more inclusive. We select our songs/music carefully to match the theme.

ASSEMBLY PLAN

We combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. We ensure that the difference between our worship and assembly is clearly marked by the use of a lit candle. Our daily act of worship is held at 10.15am from Monday to Friday. The whole school assembles in the school hall. Several times a year we visit the church of St. Peter & St. Paul for collective worship, including end of term services.

Monday - Whole School led by Headteacher

Tuesday - Key stage music assemblies (Songs linking to the themed word for the half term)

Wednesday - Whole School led by the Headteacher

Thursday - Whole School led by Headteacher

Friday - Whole School led by the Headteacher and Vicar – classes, visitors and celebration. Celebration offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, in that all children are valued.

CONSULTATION

The Head teacher, Vicar and PSHE co-ordinator are responsible for planning the themes for worship.

PARENTS

Parents are invited to class led worship and to services held in church. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school the school will comply. Any parent who wishes this should consult the Headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from collective worship.

MONITORING

Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is within the role of the governor's monitor- ing, and reports are given to the governing body.