



THE DWASTRE
Education Trust

Collective Worship Policy



Thurston CE Primary Academy

Approved by: **John Bayes (Headteacher)**

Date: October 2023

Last reviewed on: October 2023

Next review due by: October 2026

You will never have this day again so, with the guidance of God, make it count!

In God's hands we are
Truthful, we **P**ersevere and we **A**spire
Let all that you do be done in love

1 Corinthians 16:14

Thurston CE Primary Academy's vision is to empower all pupils through its Christian ethos, to embrace a love of learning, love for the world and a love for themselves and each other. We want pupils to achieve their personal best and build on their emotional, social and physical well-being in a fully inclusive environment.

Our vision for Collective Worship

As a Church of England Academy, we hold to a vision that worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos where staff and children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves within our school community. Collective Worship enables pupils and staff to gather together to respond to the presence, power and peace of God through prayer, reflection, singing, celebrating and sharing feelings. Worship should enable participants to develop an understanding of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We recognise that not all staff or children have a Christian faith. We welcome everyone to Collective Worship and offer it as a shared space for reflection and spiritual growth where our communities grow together in love and respect.

Policy Statement

In Thurston CE Primary Academy worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform to support and explore the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At Thurston CE Primary Academy collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive.

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and

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experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Pupils are given the opportunity to understand and reflect on world events and their impact, both positive and negative. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

Legal Requirements

All Church of England schools must take note of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- 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.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the schools' Trust deeds and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- 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 but all schools may hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a special role in ensuring the Collective Worship is linked to the schools' Trust deeds.
- The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure all arrangements for CW are secured.

The governing body of the Academy have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

Anglican Faith and Practice

In addition to the above, we provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England as a part of the heritage of our schools. We use the following indicators: BIBLICAL- the Bible is used as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture.

LITURGICAL - aspects of Anglican liturgy, such as greetings, are used to create a framework for worship; pupils are also introduced to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

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EUCCHARISTIC – we introduce children to the central act of Anglican worship, either in RE or through our own school celebration with the local priest.

SEASONAL - we observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals .

SYMBOLIC – we use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection.

ECUMENICAL – we work with other local Christian denominations.

DIVERSE – we provide opportunities to discover the variety of worship in Anglican churches e.g. through work with other diocese schools, through valuing both meditation and silence, quiet songs and louder expressions of praise, etc

We seek to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with thought given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We have fostered links with the local parish church (St Peter's) as well as other Christian organisations and involve clergy in leading/joining us for Collective Worship and providing coherence with worship in church.

We regularly visit St Peter's Church to celebrate Christian festivals throughout the year as part of the Christian calendar.

We recognise that some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, some worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which no-one's integrity is compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves, and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

The right of withdrawal

At Thurston CE Primary Academy we recognise that there are pupils whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non- religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced in this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, it is hoped that no one will feel the need to exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act. We will seek advice from the Diocesan Schools' Adviser with regard to legal requirements and the management of withdrawal.

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Aims and Purpose

In relation to the issues of withdrawal, it is helpful for parents to be aware of the aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and reinforce positive attitudes

Within our provision of Christian Worship, we try to meet these aims for all children.

Planning

Planning for Collective Worship must be led by the headteacher, but may be delegated to an appropriate member of staff. Members of the Local Governing Body should also be involved in the planning.

Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year, celebrating festivals and saints' days as appropriate. Each half-term explores a Christian value in a variety of ways, through story, song, prayer and reflection. At Thurston CE Primary Academy, 'Roots and Fruits' are used as the basis of these plans. We share home-school values with our families to explore at home which reflect the current collective worship value.

Our preferred approach for individual acts of worship is to follow the pattern of Gather, Engage, Reflect, Send – this approach offers a pattern which both staff and children can use and is useful for evaluation as well.

Organisation

Throughout each week Collective Worship is led by different members of staff to include singing, celebration and links to SMSC themes, as well as visits from organisations such as Open The Book and visiting guests. The act of Collective Worship is always held daily, which may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups meeting together.

Typically, the whole school meet in the school hall. The Altar is positioned at the front of the hall and covered by an Altar cloth in the appropriate liturgical colour linked to each festival and season. Each class has a reflective area which includes a candle that is brought into Collective Worship and placed upon the Altar. Candles are lit as part of the routine for gathering to worship. Collective Worship Leaders, pupils from upper key stage 2, play a key role in Collective Worship throughout the week. New leaders are chosen each term.

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Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

At Thurston CE Primary Academy, we recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Contributions to SMSC made by acts of worship may be inspected by Ofsted.

Monitoring and Evaluation / SIAMS Inspection

We use simple ways of monitoring and evaluating the impact of Collective Worship. Advice is given by the Diocese on this area. The questionnaires provided for staff and pupils are useful indicators on the positive impact of CW and are used annually to help monitor this impact.

Staff have opportunity to discuss the requirements of the SIAMS inspection and use its criteria as one way of moving CW forward in the school.

The Senior Leadership Team, pupils and the LGB should routinely monitor acts of Collective Worship.

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years and updated as necessary during this time.

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