



Petersfield Church of England Aided Primary School Collective Worship Policy

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God teaches us we are all equal, valued and unique. We are a small rural school with deeply held Christian values which motivate and inspire us to provide a rich and diverse education. **"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10.**

Love: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 It is integral in all our decision-making. This equips our children for all aspects in life, as they grow and reach their full potential.

Trust: Isaiah 26:4 It encourages the whole school to work together for the mutual benefit of all, promoting an excellent working relationship

Peace: Thessalonians 5:13 It helps us to respect each other, recognising all opinions to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that encourages discussion of all ideas, so promoting a deeper understanding of each other and the wider world.

Friendship: Luke 6:31 We constantly strive to build and foster the positive relationships so providing a safe and caring environment in which to learn.

Creativity: Romans 12:6 Each one of us has a unique talent, we all have inherent creativity, and we actively encourage this in all aspects of school life.

Love - Trust – Peace – Friendship – Creativity

1. Introduction and Aims

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- 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
- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God

Petersfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School is a Voluntary Aided, Church of England Primary School. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty as, additional to the national legal requirement that there should be daily worship, as a church school, our Trust Deed ensures Collective Worship is 'in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England'. In addition, our School Ethos Statement in the statutory Instrument of Government states: '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.'

The specific aims of Collective Worship are linked to the school's vision, values and overall Christian aims as a Church of England School and are for those participating to:

- provide a sympathetic introduction to the Christian faith for all pupils
- acquire knowledge and understanding of religion, with an enquiry-based learning approach, particularly as expressed in Christianity and the other principal religions in Great Britain
- develop the ability to explore, reflect on and respond to the variety of human experience, so strengthening our pupils' spirituality and ability to appreciate and respond to the awe and wonder of the world around us

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

policy reaffirms our values, supports the Christian identity of our school and celebrates the contribution that each child makes to our community. The policy outlines the vital part played by Collective Worship at Petersfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteachers and all teaching staff.

2. Legal Requirements

Collective Worship is a legal requirement. Each school must provide a Christian act of Collective Worship for all pupils every day. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class.

We comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70) which requires that:

- We ensure that each pupil (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) takes part in Collective Worship on each school day.
- Parents have a right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, and students over the age of 16, and teachers, can withdraw themselves.
- Collective Worship takes place on school premises, except where it is held elsewhere, for example in church, on special occasions.
- Collective Worship is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school
- Collective Worship is consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- Pupils can be grouped in various ways: whole school, according to age, or in groups (or a combination of groups) the school uses at other times
- The school prospectus includes information about Collective Worship.

The Collective Worship Policy is determined by the Governors including Foundation Governors who have a particular responsibility because they are appointed for the purpose of ensuring, as far as is practicable, that the character of the school as a voluntary school is preserved and developed, and that the worship is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deed. The Headteachers have a responsibility to ensure that all arrangements for Collective Worship are secured.

3. Implementation

Collective Worship at Petersfield reflects Anglican faith and practice and enable pupils to explore the key beliefs of the Christian faith. We seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England which traditionally has the following traits. It is:

Biblical – we use the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers - many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages. We explore the central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and as a source of inspiration and guidance.

Liturgical – we use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship – gathering, engaging, responding and sending – and use responses and other traditional aspects of liturgy (e.g. The Lord be with you / And also with you). Pupils are encouraged to learn and say prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer, and the candle lighting prayer (which was written with pupils).

Trinitarian – through the use of symbols and teaching, we explore the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, unity in trinity and the Holy Spirit as the power of God available to help us to become more like Jesus - who through his life, death and resurrection broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God.

Eucharistic – we do not have a school Eucharist, although this has been under discussion. We are, however, 'Eucharistic' in the sense of thanksgiving. We fill our worship with thank you prayers, we readily thank pupils and staff for all they do in school. We encourage intercessory prayer for individuals, those in positions of authority, the needs of the local community and the wider world.

Seasonal – we observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals, which take place at St. Andrew's Church, Orwell.

Symbolic – we provide opportunities to use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and to enable pupils to discover the value of meditation and silence.

Ecumenical – we invite not only members of the local parish church to lead and join in worship but members of other Christian denominations.

Diverse – so we try to use a variety of music and song from different Christian traditions and cultures and to encourage different Anglican and other Christian visitors to reflect both the unity of Christianity but also its diversity in some way.

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This usually involves the whole school in the hall and sometimes smaller class or key stage groups e.g. in individual classrooms. Since 2020, technology may be used to facilitate gathering virtually for Collective Worship. Where Collective Worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of the gathering.

We ask those present to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and invite everyone to participate in prayer and songs, giving time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, candles and sometimes other objects that act as a focal point for everyone's attention. We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way, ensuring that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of those present. We regard it as a special time and teach children the expectations for respectful behaviour during Worship.

When Collective Worship takes place in the hall, the Year 6 children take turns as Worship Leaders, responsible for preparing the environment. We aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music. Collective Worship begins with a lighting prayer at the gathering. Pupils are invited to lead and join in with the lighting prayer, which embodies our school values, as the gathering candle on the Worship Table is lit by Year 6 Worship Leaders. Pupils are invited to lead prayer with prayers they have written (or a prayer written as a class) to the assembled group. Pupils of all ages are included in the opportunity to lead the gathering and sending prayers on a rota basis.

The Headteacher and other members of staff, together with groups of children, take turns to lead Collective Worship. Our parish Vicar will lead Collective Worship during the term as well as local Christian groups (e.g. GenR8) and other local church leaders.

During the week, usually, one Collective Worship includes Choral Worship, where children have an opportunity to sing a diverse range of music in the Christian traditions, including traditional hymns, songs linked to seasonal events in the Christian calendar and more modern hymns and songs.

One assembly each week is an opportunity to share children's achievements and to celebrate their successes. These culminate in an act of Collective Worship and play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school to 'Live Life to the Full'. Parents are invited to class assemblies and special Church services (Lent, Easter, Leavers' Service, Harvest, Christingle, Nativity) as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and school work together to support the achievements of our children. Governors are also welcome to attend acts of worship.

As stated in our aims, we seek to develop pupils' ability to explore, reflect on and respond to the variety of human experience through Collective Worship. A key feature of Collective Worship at Petersfield is our use of the analogy of 'windows, mirrors and doors' to support pupils to reflect on themselves, the world around them and their actions.

As a Church of England school, we foster strong links with our parishes and local Methodist church regularly involving its clergy in leading Collective worship. We visit St. Andrew's Church in Orwell for celebration of Lent, Easter, Harvest, Christingle and the Nativity, and providing coherence between the worship in church and school. We make students aware of wider links with Ely Diocese and beyond that to worldwide churches, making links abroad where possible, such as with Machemba.

The Anglican Church sees itself as part of a much wider church and promotes ecumenism. Accordingly, we promote close links with other local churches and Christian organisations, e.g. GenR8, and welcome their clergy and leaders as regular contributors to acts of Collective Worship. We recognise that, while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican

churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations and others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and accepted in worship without any pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe. Hymns and songs are carefully selected to be inclusive for all pupils.

4. Planning

Collective Worship is planned termly by a planning team of the Leadership team, Rev Felicity and the head teacher from Barrington Primary. Music that supports the focus of the Collective Worship planned is then added to the planning. A rota is planned for which class will lead the gathering and sending prayer. The planning has a focus for each half term which will be either a traditional value from the Christian faith (forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity), a theme such as the Trinity, parables, commandments, an event in the church calendar or narratives from the Bible. We will also include teaching about other faith festivals or secular events. Sometimes the themes of our Collective Worship will reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. Individuals and groups leading Collective Worship are then responsible for using the termly plan as a basis for developing their own plans for individual acts of worship.

5. Resources

We have a good collection of assembly books and artefacts which we aim to regularly update and improve. We also access short term plans from the internet. We have an extensive collection of CDs which are used to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. We seek to replenish resources to as required to enhance the hall environment and maintain an effective focal point for Collective Worship to take place.

6. Contribution to SMSC development

We recognise and promote SMSC development across the whole curriculum at Petersfield. However, acts of Collective Worship provide especially rich opportunities to foster SMSC development, and so this policy should be read in conjunction with the SMSC Policy.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Co-headteachers are responsible for this policy, which will be reviewed at least every three years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship. We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. Evaluation is undertaken by pupils, staff and governors on a rotation. Those attending, such as parents and visitors, are encouraged to contribute. We make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead. The Co-headteachers and all who attend, including Foundation Governors, will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria.

8. Rights and Responsibilities

Collective Worship is central to our ethos and at all times aims to be invitational, inspirational and inclusive for all. As established by the 1944 Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship on grounds of conscience. Where parents are considering this right, they should contact the Headteacher to discuss this. As required, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

All staff are encouraged to participate. It is made explicit at interview that staff should be in sympathy with the Christian ethos of the voluntary aided school. The expectations for religious instruction and Collective Worship are stated in teachers' contracts of employment in line with SSFA s.60(6).

The Foundation governors have a particular responsibility to ensure the character and foundation of the school are reflected in Collective Worship but the actual arrangements are made by the co-ordinator. The governors concerned liaise with the headteachers before reporting to the governors on religious education and Collective Worship.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

Other policies will be linked to Collective Worship including SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural) Policy, Personal, Social and Health Education Policy, Behaviour Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, RE Policy, Equality Policy and Statement.