



# Worship Policy

## Debden CE Primary Academy

Reviewed by: Matt Hawley

November 2019

Shared with staff:

November 2019

Shared with Governors:

November 2019

Review date:

November 2021

### POLICY STATEMENT

At Debden Church of England Primary Academy, our school vision and values underpin all aspects of school life, including our approaches to collective worship. Our school vision is to enable our children to:

- Progress exceptionally well academically, across a broad and knowledge-rich curriculum;
- Develop into confident, compassionate, well-rounded individuals, in a safe, caring, Christian environment;
- Become equipped with the learning skills needed to deal with future challenges;
- Hold happy, positive memories of their childhood.

Central to the realisation of these goals is the development of children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural skills, which we aim to nurture through our collective worship programme. Through embracing Christian values and the core teachings of the Bible, we enable children to develop as people, and thus have the best possible opportunity to reach their full potential.

### AIMS

At Debden Primary CE Academy, the aims of our collective worship are to:

- Share and celebrate school values;
- Explore together the world in which we live;
- Explore the Christian faith in greater depth;
- Develop a community spirit;
- Celebrate achievement both within and outside of school;

Collective Worship that is personalised and worthy also contributes greatly to the development of a pupil's SMSC development by providing opportunities to:

- Worship;
- Consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues;
- Explore their own beliefs and the beliefs of others;
- Develop their own spirituality;



- Reinforce positive attitudes;
- Participation in whole school and group discussions;
- Reflection on their role in the wider world;
- Develop a broader understanding of British Values;

The *Breathing Space* document compiled by the Diocese of Chelmsford suggest that acts of collective worship should encourage children to 'explore', 'encounter' and 'experience.'

### **Explore**

- Human stories which raise questions about meaning and purpose in life
- Spiritual and moral issues
- The part played by religion in everyday life
- Ideas about God and the way people of faith relate to God
- The Bible and its teachings and other religious texts
- Christian values

### **Encounter**

- Christianity as a contemporary, diverse and world-wide tradition
- Christianity in action
- People of faith
- Worship and prayer as part of the natural rhythm of the day
- The annual cycle of feasts and festivals of the Christian year
- The Bible as a source of inspiration

### **Experience**

- Gathering together and building community: sharing achievements, disappointments, joys and sorrows
- What it means to be part of a community
- A sense of awe wonder, mystery and silence
- A community where faith is taken seriously
- Worship that is enjoyable, creative and imaginative

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

We comply with 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 in a church school should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, 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.



- For Collective Worship, 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. 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 but all church schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in VC schools rests with the Governors in consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility because they are appointed for "the purpose of securing, as far as is practicable, that the character of the school as a voluntary school is preserved and developed, and, in particular, that the worship is conducted in accordance with the provisions of any trust deed. The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that all arrangements for Collective Worship are secured.

## ANGLICAN FAITH AND PRACTICE

As required therefore in C of E schools, 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** – so 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.
- **Liturgical** – so we use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship - see below- and other traditional aspects of liturgy such as the Lord's prayer on occasion.
- **Eucharistic** – We do not have a school Eucharist. 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.
- **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.
- **Diverse** – 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.

As a C of E school we foster strong links with our parish church regularly involving its clergy in leading Collective worship and providing coherence between the worship in church and school.



For some pupils the experience of worship will be tentative and exploratory. For those who have already developed a growing Christian commitment, worship will be the natural outcome of belief, and a place where their deepest thoughts and emotions can be expressed in communion with God.

## **SCHEDULING/ THEMES**

Collective worship takes place each day at 9am for 20 minutes (except Fridays – see below). The Collective Worship Leader is the Head of School, and is responsible for the scheduling of collective worship. In scheduling collective worship, we ensure that:

- There are a variety of groupings over each week (whole school, class, group);
- A range of stakeholders are involved in the leadership of collective worship (the Head of School, senior teacher, teachers, children, etc.)
- We regularly invite visitors to lead collective worship (for example Church leaders);
- There is staff and pupil involvement no matter what their personal beliefs;
- Collective Worship is aligned with, and is used to enhance children's understanding of, Christian events and celebrations;
- There is substantial forward planning in terms of themes, leaders, curriculum connections etc.

We have adopted twelve Christian themes that form the basis of our worship and wider school life. They are:

1. Compassion
2. Creativity
3. Thankfulness
4. Honesty
5. Peace
6. Generosity
7. Humility
8. Celebrating Differences
9. Joy
10. Patience
11. Forgiveness
12. Endurance

The twelve themes are each focused on for a period of two weeks over the first two terms of the academic year. All worship is planned around this value, as well as being promoted throughout the school. Care is taken to ensure that understanding of each value is rooted in the Bible and the example of Jesus. In the third term, we deepen understanding of themes as appropriate, and focus on key biblical characters/ stories.

We also recognise and commemorate significant dates in the Christian year and days of particular importance such as Remembrance Day. We are also able to respond to local, national or world events (or a need from the children), that merit reflection and prayers.

We use Friday assemblies as an opportunity to share children's work and to celebrate their successes. These play an important part in promoting the positive ethos of the school.



## **PLANNING/ FORMAT**

**In planning collective worship sessions, leaders should ensure that:**

- The session is in keeping with the school's vision and ethos;
- They have a clear idea of the goals/ objectives of the session;
- Subject matter is presented appropriately and imaginatively to engage children;
- Suitable, interesting resources have been sourced beforehand;
- Efforts are made to generate the right atmosphere;
- Children are actively involved in the discussion (perhaps through discussion, reading, presenting or role play)
- A variety of methods and presentation-styles are utilised over time.

**The agreed format for collective worship is that:**

- At the beginning of the collective worship, a candle upon our dressed table is lit;
- Where appropriate, children will listen to a Bible story or a reading linked to the Collective Worship theme;
- Children collectively engage in considering the subject matter of collective worship;
- Children have a moment of reflection;
- Where appropriate, children sing a hymn.

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

As established by the 1944 Act and explained in the School Prospectus, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having sent their children to a church school, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Teachers have the right to withdraw from Collective Worship.

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 Collective Worship Leader, who is the Head of School.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

The Collective Worship Leader is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.