



THE VALLEY PARTNERSHIP

Collective Worship Policy

Signed

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Chair of Governors

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The Valley Partnership Collective Worship Policy

Our Vision within The Valley Partnership is to ‘Climb to your highest for yourself, for others and for God’.

Across The Valley Partnership, we believe that ‘together, we can build a safe community, that is connected valued and respected, having an encouraging and positive impact upon all’.

Through our Christian Core Values, Trust, Truthfulness, Responsibility, Perseverance, Forgiveness, Courage, Compassion and Creativity we teach children to Love first; we show children how to forgive and reconcile.

We aim to inspire children to learn with curiosity, enthusiasm, and positivity, whilst striving for excellence in all that we do.

Worship Policy Statement

This policy has been written within the context of the school’s Vision and supports the aims of The Valley Partnership Schools. The ethos of The Valley Partnership is reflected in and expressed through Collective Worship. Collective Worship, within a Christian context, plays an important part in the life at The Valley Partnership. We conduct Worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school. It is a time in the day where all children and members of staff meet in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and are given the opportunity to reflect and participate.

Definition of ‘Collective Worship’

‘School Assembly’ is a gathering of the school community; it is often used to celebrate and focus on the life and values of the community itself. ‘Collective Worship’ is a gathering of a ‘collection’ of people of diverse, religious, agnostic, and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment. Collective Worship and Assembly are not one and the same thing. They are, in essence, different from each other, but in practice they often overlap.

Legal Rationale

Collective Worship is in accordance with the ethos of the school. This requires Worship to be consistent with the principles and practices of the Church of England and will, therefore be wholly Christian in character. The 1988 Education Reform Act states that all Collective Worship should be part of a broad and balanced curriculum, which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, and mental and physical development of pupils and society. All maintained schools, including church schools, must provide a daily act of Collective Worship for all registered pupils.

Ethos

Recognising the historic foundation of both schools in The Valley Partnership, we aim to preserve and develop their religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at Parish and Diocesan level. The schools aim to serve their communities by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. They encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promote Christian values through the experiences they offer to all pupils and staff.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship gives children the opportunity to enter experiences which lie at the heart of religion, helping them to learn about religious worship, providing a framework for later understanding. We encourage children to consider fundamental questions about the purpose of being and about moral and ethical stances. It provides an opportunity to participate in religious worship and allows us to learn and celebrate values we hold to be important. Collective Worship brings children together, enabling them to experience the security of belonging to a community with an identity of its own. It is the source of interesting and thought-provoking knowledge and makes an important, though not exclusive contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Aims and Purpose

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship are:

- To provide an opportunity for everyone to worship God.
- To enable individuals to appreciate their worth and value to God.
- To offer opportunities to celebrate together the love of God, including opportunities for self-expression and creativity in worship.
- To offer space for reflection, prayer, meditation, and silence.
- To encourage participation and response.
- To give memorable and positive experiences.
- To foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery, and joy.
- To give an opportunity to bring before God in prayer personal needs and those of others, locally and globally.
- To share with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level, and thereby give them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework.
- To give opportunities to celebrate festivals as a community.
- To provide a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery.
- To establish, explore, and reinforce the common Christian values and ethos of the school community such as love, peace, kindness, compassion, forgiveness.
- To encourage respect and care for God's creation by having a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues.
- To share some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level, and to encourage children to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework, offering opportunities for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.
- To develop empathy and search for meaning.
- To underpin the Christian values.
- To develop a sense of community spirit.
- To reflect the aims of the school.
- To celebrate gifts, talents, and achievements.

The Legal Requirement for Collective Worship

Collective Worship must be daily and is a legal entitlement of all children in school. It is the legal right of parents to withdraw children from Worship; Collective Worship is conducted “in accordance with the founding Church of England Trust Deed and the Ethos Statement in the school’s Instruments of Government”. Should a child be withdrawn, a voluntary rota of adult supervision will be drawn up, including the parents as much as possible, or indirect supervision will be given through careful positioning of chairs in other areas. If the service is to be in another venue, other arrangements will be made with the parent.

Worship in School

Worship is the fulcrum of The Valley Partnership. It is about prayer in action, reflection, celebration, and thanksgiving in order to promote spiritual development and foster a sense of community, identity and self-esteem. Worship in school is organised around themes. Some of these are based on experience, as children learn best from first-hand experience. It allows opportunities for praise, cheering, saying sorry, being thankful, wishing, hoping, being still and wondering, sharing, and offering and reflecting.

Organisation of Collective Worship

Timings

We hold a daily act of Worship in both schools, which is normally whole school, although sometimes we also hold acts of Worship in separate Key Stage groups or classes.

What we do

We conduct Worship in a dignified and respectful way. We demonstrate to everyone that Worship time is a period of personal reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect everyone to respect one another in an appropriate way. We ask children to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer, hymns, and responses. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using a variety of approaches for example, music or art. As well as the school cross, we use candles and other symbolic objects to act as a focal point. We use Anglican based responses and have an altar table with the appropriate Church colours at the front of the Worship together with lighted candles to remind children that “Jesus is the Light of the World”.

The Worship Coordinator has the responsibility of managing the Worship on a day-to-day basis, ensuring that all legal requirements are complied with and keep a close eye on National developments in school Worship. They act in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues.

Monitoring and evaluating is an on-going process so that an effective review can take place by the appointed date. However local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups also conduct Worship in school on a regular basis. This is timetabled termly.

In addition to our daily act of Worship we hold special services of thanksgiving, for example, Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Mothering Sunday, family services as well as for our Leaver’s in July.

Some of our services are held in local churches:

- All Saints Church, Holcombe Rogus which is situated in Holcombe Rogus village.
- St Mary’s Church, Burlescombe which is situated in Burlescombe village.

Role of Collective Worship Leader

- To write the Collective Worship Policy in consultation with the Executive Head Teacher and the Ethos Committee.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of and use the policy document.
- To review the policy on a regular basis.
- To plan a balanced overview of Worship based on Diocesan guidelines, to include reference to the main festivals in the Christian year.
- To draw up a Collective Worship Schedule.
- To involve colleagues, pupils, and visitors in Worship.
- To ensure that Collective Worship maintains a high profile in school.
- To monitor and evaluate, with the Ethos Group and Committee, Collective Worship in all its forms.
- To report findings to the Executive Head Teacher and Link Governors.
- To arrange CPD for staff, where deemed necessary.
- To keep up to date with recent publications, attend Diocesan courses and disseminate information and feedback to staff.
- To liaise with the LSC and Diocesan Officers on matters relating to Collective Worship.

Planning

We plan in advance our Worship, as part of a series of themes on a termly basis. This is done by the Worship Coordinator in discussion with the Executive Head teacher and guidance from the Diocese.

We take the themes of our acts of Worship from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our Worship reflect and build on topics that link to the school curriculum. Our themes also incorporate a variety of approaches using themes developed from the Diocese, known authors, SEAL materials as well as bible stories and staff inspiration.

Our Worship also reflects the achievements and learning of the children in both the weekly Celebration assemblies, stars of the week, and the performance and celebration assemblies that are at least every half term.

Act of Worship

We encourage the children to participate in Worship in a variety of ways. This may be through dance, drama, music, prayer, leading planning reviewing. We also offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. All aspects play an important part in promoting in God's eyes everyone is important, all are valued, and all achievements are recognised.

We have Collective Worship Monitors to support the Worship Leaders. They light candles, prepare the music and invite and deliver responses in our Worship Programme.

Examples of responses are:

The Lord be with you...
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts...
We lift them to the Lord.

We light the candles...
To remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World.

You are the Lord...
And to you we pray.

Songs are chosen from a wide variety of traditional and modern hymns. Some are learned by heart and actions are incorporated. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words. They also provide a real source of pleasure.

Prayer and reflection are the most personal part of an act of Worship. Collective Worship in school provides opportunities for children to be taken to the threshold of prayer, and to cross it if they wish, in a way that respects the integrity of all present. Participation in prayer can never be imposed but we stress the need for stillness, reflection, and respect from everyone. Silence, written prayers, impromptu prayers, The Lord's Prayer, and children's prayers may be used. At the start of Worship, a candle may be lit to provide a focus for pupils' thoughts. Reflection and thinking time are given. Some direction by the leader in order to focus pupils' responses may be required.

Scripture verses may be quoted from the Bible and longer passages may be used as readings.

Presentation sets the tone within the act of Worship. In keeping with the reverent atmosphere, use is also made of visual aids, artefacts, drama, and demonstration.

Content planning and the responsibility for planning lies with the Religious Education and Collective Worship Subject Leader. Plans and schedules should be approved by the Executive Head Teacher. Suggestions and requests from staff are welcome.

Extending Beyond the School

We welcome Governor's attendance at our Worship at any time, and frequently invite parents and community members to join us. We work closely with the Parochial Church Council and Dioceses to develop the Christian community in which we live and work to be sustainable and expanding spreading the "Good News"

Monitoring and Reviewing

We welcome Governor's attendance at our Worship at any time, and frequently invite parents and community members to join us. We work closely with the Parochial Church Council and Dioceses to develop the Christian community in which we live and work to be sustainable and expanding spreading the "Good News".

And the Future

We are developing our knowledge and understanding linking to the Church of England's most recent document and their Vision for Education.

Deeply Christian, serving the common good:

Educating for WISDOM, knowledge, and skills: enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talents in all areas of life.

Educating for HOPE and aspiration: enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.

Educating for COMMUNITY and living well together: a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.

Educating for DIGNITY and respect: the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth

We will be considering how these will impact our Collective Worship Policy, our practice and our effectiveness to all that we serve.