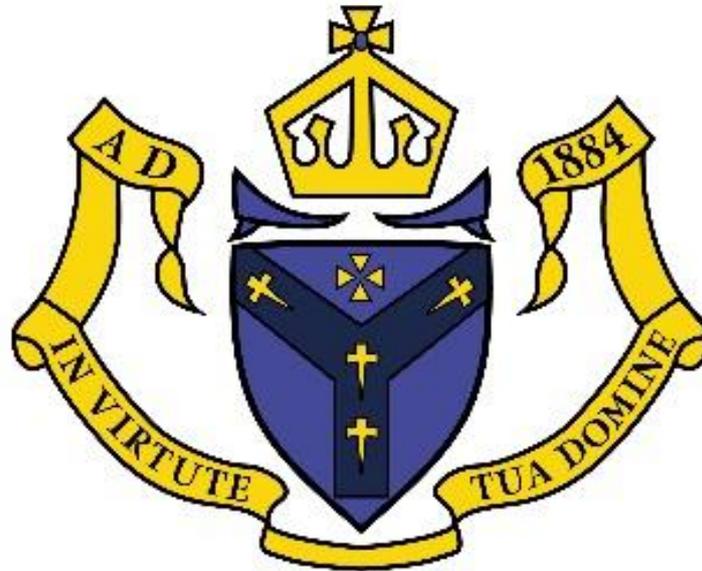




**Sissinghurst VA Church of England Primary School**  
*Enjoy, Achieve and Celebrate Together in Faith*



The Governors and Staff of Sissinghurst (VA) Church of England Primary School believe the policies and procedures we write help us to continuously improve the school and develop our pupils to become life-long learners and valuable citizens of the future.

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our values of Endurance, Koinonia, Friendship and Wisdom and celebrates the central role that each child can play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Collective Worship Policy</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>March 2020</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>March 2022</b>
<b>Reviewed By:</b>	<b>FGB Team</b>

*In partnership with the Board of Education – serving children, schools and young people*



## **Introduction**

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of Wisdom, Endurance, Friendship and Koinonia and celebrates the central role that each child has to play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

## **What is Collective Worship?**

Legislation requires schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools, to conduct daily acts of Collective Worship. However, the legislation does not define what is meant by the term 'Collective Worship'.

*"... Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'collective worship' rather than 'corporate worship'.* (DfE Circular 1/94 Para 57)

Corporate worship assumes a shared set of beliefs and values, i.e., a worshipping congregation meeting on a Sunday, where the worship is confessional and evangelistic (to spread the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness).

Collective worship, in recognising the collectivism of all participants, can make no such assumption that all have the same beliefs and values.

### **Collective Worship should be:**

*"Appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes."* (DfE Circular 1/94 p.22)

Collective Worship gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.

- d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.
- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

## **Aims**

Collective worship at Sissinghurst VA Church of England Primary School will support the school's distinctive vision and Mission Statement, by providing opportunities for members of the school community:

- to consider spiritual and moral issues and, through reflection, raise awareness of the ultimate questions of life
- to reflect on their own beliefs
- to develop an enquiring mind and express and explore their own views openly and honestly
- to encounter God in Jesus Christ
- to reflect in ways that are of a broadly Anglican Christian tradition, whilst recognising the validity and importance of other Christian denominations, religions, belief systems and other world views.
- to nurture a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- to foster an awareness of the world around them and a sense of their place within it
- to take responsibility for their own conduct, charitable giving, and social actions so that they might contribute positively to a multi-diverse society
- to develop a sense of sharing and belonging through different groups of students coming together
- to experience silence in a busy world
- to encourage inquisitive engagement with, and reflection on, the teachings of the Holy Bible

## **The Anglican Christian Tradition**

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning e.g., cross, crucifix, bread and wine, candles and other appropriate artefacts such as music, film and art
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses – Taizé style

We also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using prayers from Common Worship
- Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship
- Peace be with you/ and also with you
- Go in peace to love and serve the Lord / In the name of Christ,
- Amen
- Using Collects as a focus for worship
- Learning about Eucharist

- Encouraging links with the worship of the local Parish Church, Trinity Church, Sissinghurst

## **Implementation**

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors in consultation with the Collective Worship Leader. Our school plans systematically and cohesively using the Canterbury Diocese Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures there is a shared understanding of the long- and short-term planning of worship and enables continuity. Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This includes discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

<b>We meet daily at 9.00am.</b>	
Monday	Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher
Tuesday	Class Teachers/ Pupils/ Class
Wednesday	Songs of Praise, Music Co-Ordinator
Thursday	Open the Book – Church Community
Friday	Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher Celebration which includes the elements required for an Act of Worship as well as an opportunity to recognise and celebrate achievement, together with an award recognising the current term’s Christian value for children who have lived this value consistently during the previous week.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including (e.g.: music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT).

### **Our worship consists of 4 stages:**

- 1) Gather – we welcome the community with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle
- 2) Engage – we share a bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message
- 3) Respond -- pupils discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- 4) Send – we share the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle.

Care is taken to make the setting for the act of worship special for the occasion. Music is played as the children enter and leave quietly, an altar is placed centrally at the front displaying liturgical colours and a candle is lit as part of the initial welcome to worship. The four-part structure of gather, engage, respond and send is followed with prayer usually (but not always) at the end. The atmosphere is reverent and children are expected to be quiet and respectful, even as they lead out and the hall prepared for the next activity.

### **Children as Leaders**

Pupils regularly plan and lead worship on a voluntary basis. Our leading lights group work with the Collective Worship Leader during lunchtime to develop their own understanding of worship and to design a worship to support the spiritual development of their peers. A group of children are chosen to support collective worship by setting up seating and running audio-visual facilities in the hall. Children write and read prayers which are

read in worship each day. Indeed, children play an active part in daily acts of worship and have opportunities to plan and lead in school and for church services such as harvest and Easter.

A predominant display area is outside the hall in the main corridor with an interactive section for children to add comments to for further reflection and prayer.

### **Developing Worship**

The school allocates part of its budget to support the daily act of collect worship. The collective worship leader attends regular professional development with Canterbury Diocese and accesses a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.

### **Self-assessment and Inspection**

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils through our suggestion boxes and questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared with our (worship committee, during full governing body meetings) and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury (SIAMS).

### **The legal requirements of collective worship in Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools:**

- Be conducted in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deeds of the school and Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England
- The Governing Body should ensure that all pupils each day engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church
- Arrangements for collective worship, in foundation schools of a religious character, are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consulting with the Headteacher (DfE Circular 1/94 para 52 & 53)
- All acts of worship in Church schools must be Christian in character (based on Biblical teachings)
- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw) must on 'each school day take part in an act of collective worship'

### **Parental Withdrawal**

Worship is regarded as special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none and is in no way intended to evangelise or proselytise.

We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship on grounds of conscience. However, as collective worship is central to our ethos. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents.

## **Appendix A** What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community? **Inclusive Inspiring Invitational**

After engaging in and observing Collective Worship, make comments against each of the prompts below to consider: *In what ways and to what extent is collective worship inclusive, invitational and inspiring?*

<b>Date and Time:</b>	<b>Leader:</b>	<b>Bible verse/ Theme:</b>
<b>Were the statutory obligations met?</b> Yes / No	<b>Joined by:</b>	
<b>How was it inclusive?</b> Were there opportunities for the whole school community to engage with Worship today? (E.g., Staff, AEN, EAL, other faiths)	<b>How was it Inspiring?</b> Describe the variety of creative experiences used to enable the children to encounter God.  Liturgy/ Music/ Biblical story/ Passage/ Drama Deep/ Wondering Questions/ Prayer Time/ Stillness and Reflection	<b>How was it invitational?</b> What (planned or unplanned) opportunities were the pupils given to take part in the act of Worship today?
<b>Gather</b>		
<b>Engage</b>		
<b>Respond</b>		
<b>Sending</b>		
What was the key message of the act of worship?		

Was it clearly delivered and understood by pupils and staff?	
How did the pupils discuss and explore the school Christian values?	
How did pupils encounter the teachings of Jesus and explore the relevance of his teaching in today's world?	
<p>How did worship inspire the pupils into action?</p> <p>What opportunities were the staff and pupils given to reflect on their behaviour, values and attitudes?</p>	
What opportunities were there for the pupils to become aware of the different traditions and styles within the worldwide Anglican church?	
Reflect on the impact of the act of worship on the whole school:	
Reflect upon the pupil voice collected – does it match your observations from the act of worship?	
Reflect on any actions to be taken following the act of worship. ( <i>Informal feedback, Collective worship arrangements, inclusion of children etc.</i> )	

Collective Worship - Pupil voice

What did you learn about in Worship today?

Will you **do anything** in response to what you have learnt about today in Worship?



How did Worship make you feel today?  
Tell me more about why it made you feel this way.

If you had been leading Worship today, what might you have done differently?

What did you enjoy about Worship today?

What did you not enjoy about Worship today?

Name:

Class:

Date:

Candle lit	Bible verse / story	Song	Prayer and reflection time	Children involved	Sent out with a thought
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