



Charing CE Primary School

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

(Matthew 13:31-32)

Christian Distinctiveness Policy to include Collective Worship

Document Information	Date/source of Policy	Responsibility
Date of review	September 2019	SLT/ CD Leader
Date of new review	September 2020	SLT/ CD Leader
Source of policy		
Date of Adoption		

Our School Vision:

As an inclusive community built on friendship and love, Christian values inspire us through faith in God and hope for the future. Every one is empowered to recognise their God-given potential and to become lifelong learners. We work together to ensure we achieve our aspirations and encourage independence.

We aim to achieve this by:

- ❖ Reflecting on the teachings of Jesus Christ in our daily lives.
- ❖ Seeing all children as individuals, helping them to reach their potential whilst developing their self-esteem, confidence and independence as God intended.
- ❖ Helping children to become caring and responsible citizens.
- ❖ Fostering a lasting love of learning through creative teaching.
- ❖ Continue to strengthen a close partnership with parents, church, governors and the local community.
- ❖ Modelling the school's Christian values including:
 - Love, Friendship, Kindness, Truth and Hope.
- ❖ As well as developing an understanding of the Church of England's Vision for Education values of: Hope, Dignity, Community and Wisdom and how they link to our own school values.

We develop this through a number of ways:

- ❖ We teach the Christian Values through Collective Worship themes and across our school curriculum, particularly in RE and PSHE lessons. This includes teaching about the value of prayer for different situations.
- ❖ We have developed a range of displays, prayer corners and reflection areas around the school. These areas are all developed each term to link to the termly theme and church celebrations. Children are asked to help develop these boards and are encouraged to add their own prayers or leave their own comments. All display boards, regardless of subject, have a Bible reference linked to the unit of work for that board e.g. a reference for habitats in science.
- ❖ Reflection time allows individuals to reflect on their behaviour throughout the school day, supported by a member of staff. During this session, our Christian values are discussed and used to support the child to make the right choices in the future.
- ❖ We have introduced Worship Warriors. These are a group of children across the school who have a number of responsibilities throughout the school involving both Collective Worship and supporting other children in their understanding of the Christian values and how to action them. They support Collective Worship every day, either by supporting the lead through saying the gathering/ sending as well as the prayer or by planning and leading their own Collective Worship around the termly theme. They are responsible for checking that displays are maintained and developing the Reflective Garden space. They will collect and maintain pupil voice following on from worship, analysing their findings and sharing next steps with the CDL. Each Worship Warrior will be responsible for a class within the school and will accompany them to Collective Worship, discuss themes, support them in picking hymns and writing weekly prayers. We believe in doing this, we give the children a greater responsibility over developing their own faith and the chance to become young church leaders within the school and their community.
- ❖ We encourage the children to support others in a number of ways across the school year. Our children are keen to be part of events that work together as a community or support those in need such as the MacMillan's and Red Nose Day.

Responsibilities of the Christian Distinctiveness Leader:

- ❖ Write new policies to include action plans to support the further development of the school's Christian Distinctiveness.
- ❖ Write the SIAMS documentation and take part in the SIAMS inspection.

- ❖ Support all stakeholders in their understanding of the Christian values and how to promote them in school.
- ❖ Attend relevant courses or meetings and implement outcomes in school, including the Aquilla RE hub.
- ❖ Maintain the relevant areas on the website with updated policies, documents and evidence of our school's Christian Distinctiveness.
- ❖ Maintain the display, prayer corners and reflection areas around school.
- ❖ Plan the Collective Worship for each term, taking into accounts the theme, church or world celebrations and current situations.
- ❖ Invite in visitors to lead Collective Worship as well as support RE lessons.
- ❖ Maintain and update resources for Collective Worship and RE lessons as well as those needed to support the environmental display of the Christian values.
- ❖ Support the development of the Worship Warriors, putting into place an action plan.
- ❖ Continue to strengthen the relationship between the school, St Peter and Paul's Church and the local community through visits, Collective Worship and special occasions or events.
- ❖ Monitor and evaluate Collective Worship, pupil voice and make changes where needed.
- ❖ Carry out pupil and parental voice surveys regarding the Christian Distinctiveness (Collective Worship and RE within school), analysis and make changes where required.
- ❖ Support staff in implementing the new schemes of work for RE.
- ❖ Complete the assessment cycle for RE, evaluating impact and identifying next steps within an open action plan.

Collective Worship:

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of Love, Friendship, Kindness, Truth and Hope and celebrates the central role that each person has to play in our community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found within the Church of England and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. Reference will be made to the beliefs and practices of other faith communities so that the children can develop their respect and understanding of these faiths and cultures. The daily act of Christian worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff members and stakeholders. 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 collectivity 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 children and adults 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 children and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- b) Enables all children 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 children 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 children 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.

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
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses – Taizé style

We may 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
- Using Collects as a focus for worship

Implementation:

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, children, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors (such as Ashford School Assemblies) in consultation with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school or year groups. Our school plans systematically and cohesively using Canterbury Diocesan Collective Worship Planning, which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. We use specific themes throughout the year to meet our Christian Vision and Values, at a level in accordance with differing age groups and levels of understanding within the school. This ensures there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and enables continuity. It is inclusive of all children, and governors and school visitors are invited to join. Teaching staff are expected to attend and all other staff are welcome. It takes place either in the school hall or at St Peter and Paul’s Church.

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 the Christian Distinctiveness Leader in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of children remains the responsibility of school staff.

Weekly Organisation of Collective Worship:

Monday	Led by members from the Church	Whole School @8.55am
Tuesday	Led by SLT/ Worship Warriors	Whole School Worship @ 10.05am
Wednesday	Led by Class Teachers/ Worship Warriors.	Whole School Prayer and Praise Worship @ 10.05am
Thursday	Led by SLT/ Worship Warriors	Whole School Celebration Worship @ 2.45pm
Friday	Led by Class Teachers/ Worship Warriors.	In class or Whole School Worship @ 1.10pm

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including music, hymns, readings and drama.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- *Gather* – we welcome the community with music , liturgy and the lighting of three candles
- *Engage* – we share a Bible reading or story, followed by an activity to engage children and adults with the Christian message
- *Respond* -- children discuss, share , reflect , pray or sing
- *Send* – we share the message of the worship again and ask children and adults to think about how this will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with final prayer, liturgy, music and the blowing out of our special candles.

Expectations of children:

Worship Warriors regularly plan and lead worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader during lunchtime to develop their own understanding of worship and to design a worship to support the spiritual development of their peers. They are responsible for collecting and analysing pupil voice and sharing the findings with the Christian Distinctiveness Leader. Members of the team are responsible for supporting the maintenance of the reflective areas around school. They support a given class and help model our Christian Vision and Values to new children.

Developing Worship:

The school allocates part of its budget to support the daily act of collective worship. The Christian Distinctiveness 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, children and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and children through our suggestion boxes and questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis by the CDL and SLT. These are shared with our staff and governing body 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'

Right of Withdrawal:

Worship is regarded as a special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none.

We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of Collective Worship. However, as Collective Worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents. If a parent or carer wish for their child/ren to withdraw from worship, then a formal request must be made in writing to the Head of school.

Date of validation..... Signed.....

Chair of Governors

Date of review..... Signed.....

Chair of Governors

Appendix 1

See Parental and Children questionnaire

See Visitor and Safeguarding Policies