

Horsford Church of England VA Primary School



Collective worship Policy

January 2024



COMPASSION COURAGE RESPONSIBILITY

Collective worship Policy

Rationale

All acts of collective worship are in accordance with the founding Church of England Trust deed and the Ethos Statement in the school's Instruments of Government. School collective worship is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian values and ethos of the school.

Collective worship is central to the life and purposes of our school. It is an inclusive act, which encourages reflection in all present, of all faiths and none, rooted in the Christian understanding of God as Trinity.

Vision

Our vision is to create a school where everyone is encouraged, challenged and given the opportunity to be the best they can be. We are a community of care, built on Christian principles, where children and adults have a sense of belonging, are valued and their individuality is respected.

A place for all to flourish

'I have come, so they may have life, and have it to the full' John 10:10

Our vision and values are embedded in the story of The Good Samaritan

The Good Samaritan was a man of compassion, courage and responsibility, who saw it upon himself to always do the right thing by others. Even in times of austerity, when it felt scary to do so, he was courageous in the choices he made. He helped more than just his friends, because he believed it was important to value everybody, whoever they were. In the moment, he took responsibility when another was in need, because it was just the right thing to do. He made a difference, not just to one person, but to scores of communities who heard of the humility he showed.

Inspired by this story, it is our vision that Horsford Church of England VA Primary School will foster the values of **compassion, courage** and **responsibility**.

Introduction

As a Church school we want our children to have the opportunity to learn to worship and to grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Collective worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. We believe that we are all made in the image of God and that worship should form an integral part of our lives.

We believe that at its heart collective worship should provide an opportunity for pupils and staff to come together to learn, reflect and pray, sing, share and communicate their feelings with one another and to God.

As a Church of England VA Primary School, we see our collective worship as a central part of school life. Our collective worship policy fulfils the statutory requirements common to all schools according to the 1988 Education Reform Act (and consolidated in the 1996 Education Act). It also fulfils the Diocesan requirements for a voluntary aided church school which states that worship will be Christian in content with an Anglican emphasis.

At Horsford CE VA Primary School we are committed to valuing and nurturing each child as an individual who will achieve their best and develop an enthusiasm for lifelong learning. Our vision is for the children in our school to grow into responsible, caring and fulfilled adults who actively and positively contribute to the society in which they live. We are committed to raising standards, values and self-esteem for all those involved with our school through cultivating a secure, yet exciting environment that is positive, supportive, stimulating and enriching.

The Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude (Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. Since this is a church school, however, collective worship is central to its life and work and is regarded as a very important part of children's education.

Anglican Faith and Practice

We seek to provide acts of collective worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England therefore:

We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other passages of scripture. We provide opportunities to discover the value of silence and quiet reflection. We observe the major Christian festivals and celebrations.

In our school, we aim to provide a worship space that is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to space, seating, ambience and music.

Aims

Our aim is that our worship contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children and staff.

Our policy for collective worship supports this by:

- Recognising that collective worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our pupils' and staff spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Ensuring the daily act of collective worship will be distinctly Christian in content and will follow the liturgical calendar
- Providing a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which enables them to:
 - ▲ worship God
 - ▲ strengthen and support the school community, giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school to develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
 - ▲ celebrate the gifts that each person brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God
 - ▲ consider spiritual and moral issues, reflect on personal development, multi-faith festivals and curriculum aptitudes
 - ▲ respond to the worship offered
 - ▲ be introduced to and respond to Christian language, symbolism and major Christian celebrations and experience stillness and quietness

- ▲ experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation. These might include praise, seeking forgiveness or quiet reflection
 - ▲ begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship
 - ▲ encourage reflection on the puzzling questions that life poses and response to the wonder and mystery of the world around us, fostering an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.
 - ▲ enable children to explore their own beliefs.
- Ensuring collective worship, whether in assembly or class time, will:
 - ▲ be inspiring and transformational
 - ▲ be led by senior leaders, staff, children, clergy and visitors.
 - ▲ develop the Christian vision, values and ethos of the school and focus on our school Christian values
 - ▲ include a range of creative opportunities e.g. music, silence, symbol, drama
 - ▲ involve pupils through members of the Worship group opening and closing worship and through pupils writing their own prayer
 - ▲ celebrate and give thanks for the achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals
 - ▲ provide a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future
 - ▲ take place in the school hall, outdoors, in classrooms or the church
 - ▲ respect the right of parents to withdraw their children for collective worship

Content of daily worship

As a Church of England School, the content of our worship is organised to:

- follow a half termly, 3 year cycle to cover 18 Christian Values
- cover all the major Christian festivals including Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.
- be rooted in Bible teaching
- use the Lord's prayer and other prayers written by pupils and led by the worship group
- follow an order of service
- be presented using a variety of styles and to include music, story, drama, enthusiastic singing, reflection and reverence in prayer time.

Collective worship will generally follow the structure below and include a prayer:

- ▲ **Gather**
Coming in to music, lighting of the candle, call and response
- ▲ **Engage**
Story, music, visual aids, drama, puppets, quizzes or activities.
- ▲ **Respond**
Reflection, prayer, discussion, questioning or singing
- ▲ **Send**
Prayer, blowing out of the candle or final thought

Any whole school notices will be given at the start of the session before the act of collective worship begins.

Singing is often part of Collective worship and thus can also be when new hymns and songs are introduced and taught.

Collective worship may also take the form of a 'Celebration Assembly'. This is a celebration of the children's work through the week and an opportunity to recognise individual achievements.

Special Services and Visitors

We value our links with the staff and congregation of Horsford All Saints Church. We hold some of our services in church. The Rector and the Open the Book Team of All Saints Church regularly lead collective worship. The Rector regularly takes and supports our whole school worships at Christmas, Easter, Advent and Y6 leavers' service, in the church as well as in the school. Where possible we also invite other members of the community in to lead worship. All visitors are welcome to attend our collective worship.

Inclusion and withdrawal

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. However, parents/carers do have a legal right to withdraw their children from all or part of worship. Before making the decision to exercise that right parents /carers are encouraged to discuss the issues with the head of school. Teachers are generally required to take part in collective worship, and to uphold the Christian ethos upon which it is based. However, at the discretion of the head-teacher and governing board teachers may request permission to withdraw from worship.

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make collective worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of collective worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We monitor and evaluate collective worship by keeping records of collective worship and informally questioning adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. More formally, Governors are invited in to monitor collective worship and record their findings. Feedback is shared and any action points implemented. The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

