



**GREAT ROLLRIGHT CE PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

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Head Teacher – Miss Michelle Hastings



# Collective Worship Policy



Reviewed By: Headteacher	
Authorised by: Full Governing Body	
Date for next Review: (or earlier should legislation require it)	

## Our Christian Vision

Like the Good Shepherd, we nurture our children as unique individuals in a safe and secure environment, to ensure they thrive and fulfil their potential. Our Christian distinctiveness can be seen in the way the value of **LOVE** is visible in every area of school life, and our strong inclusive community is strengthened by our other Christian Values of **COURAGE, RESPECT** and **TRUTH**.

We are a thriving village school with a warm and friendly atmosphere and all we are and all we do is founded on the principles of the Christian faith. We nurture every child in a secure and positive learning environment so that each one is a happy, confident learner who thrives in a culture of equality. We enable each child to develop their spiritual growth and moral understanding. Every member of the Great Rollright School community is valued and respected, so that everyone can have a positive attitude to themselves, others and life. We inspire high self-esteem and aspirations, we recognise the talents of all, we value personal and academic achievement and we celebrate the success of each and every individual.

## Our Values

The values we hold for our school Love, Courage, Truth and Respect. Everything we do is rooted in these and so we have a strong inclusive community.

**Love** is our over- arching value and throughout our school life we reflect this value. Children at our school are well known as individuals; we aim to support every child in whatever way they need as well as we can.

***"I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and they know me" John 10:14***

**Courage** is reflected in how we enable children to cope with the challenge of new learning and in the way they are encouraged to express their opinions confidently.

***"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you." 1 Corinthians 15:58***

**Truth** between every member of the school community allows the strong relationships we value to be built, maintained and flourish.

***'Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life'." John 14: 6***

**Respect** is reflected in how we care for ourselves, each other, the environment and our community.

***"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." Matthew 7:12***

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## Introduction

We believe that collective worship should be inclusive and build understanding, respect, and empathy in young people. Pupils, staff, and parents of all faiths or those without a faith, are welcome. Our school celebrates religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other, and that collective worship is an educational entitlement to all. In collective worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live.

## What is Collective Worship?

*Collective worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.* Religious Education and Collective Worship Circular 1/94 (para 50)

**Some definitions taken from Collective Worship guidelines for the Primary School** (Chester Diocesan Board of Education 2009)

**Worship** can be defined as paying homage to (revering) that which is of worth ('Worth-ship.'). Religious Worship is the acknowledgement of 'worth' which is attributable to a supreme being. Therefore, in Church of England schools, opportunities should be provided for children to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ. We can never *make* anyone worship because it is an attitude of the heart focused on God; in a school situation we should seek to lead people to the threshold of worship by providing a setting where they may worship God if they so wish.

**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. In our context it refers to a service of worship which is educational and inclusive in its nature, rather than being a gathering of believers. Opportunities should be provided for children to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ, without losing sight of either the different starting points of each of the children, or the need for the act of collective worship to take account of the developmental ages of the children.

In our school we want to be able to offer our children the best experience of collective worship we can. "Collective worship" is exactly that; it is a collection of differences, faiths, cultures, different ages and different backgrounds; a focal point in the school community where all ages meet one another, share together and establish a common purpose.

### **Collective Worship and the Law**

Arrangements for collective worship in a church school are the responsibility of the governors in consultation with the head teacher. Foundation Governors have particular responsibility for seeing, so far as is practicable, that the ethos of the school is reflected in worship. The act of worship is not included in curriculum time and must be distinctive to meet legal requirements.

There are three main legal requirements for collective worship\*

- Collective worship in a Church of England School should be in accordance with the trust deed or Diocesan guidelines. These include the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words in a church school, it should be clearly Christian.
- The school must provide an act of collective worship for all children every day. Daily collective worship must be provided for all registered school pupils on a daily basis, (unless they have been withdrawn by parental request).
- The act of collective worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class group.

Parents may withdraw their children from collective worship on religious grounds. (The 'religious grounds' do not have to be justified or explained by the parents). This does not mean that we can guarantee an exemption from the Christian ethos of the school. Should children be withdrawn, we will provide adequate supervision to ensure their safety.

Teachers have the right to withdraw from worship on grounds of conscience, although worship is an important part of the ethos of the school which teachers must be willing and able to uphold. It is expected that all teachers will attend daily collective worship with their pupils. This is one way for the school to show that worship is central to its life and is important for everyone, not just children. It also makes sense educationally for teachers to know what their pupils are experiencing in collective worship. Therefore, teachers should not have time out of worship on a regular basis but only in exceptional circumstances.

\* School Standards and Framework Act 1998, section 70 and schedule 20

### **Worship and the Church School**

Collective worship in any school should be an affirmation and celebration of the Christian vision and ethos of the school. For a church school it will have a particular significance and God will be the focus of worship. There will be an explanation of the Christian understanding of God as Trinity. This will include the belief in God as Creator and belief in Jesus as the revelation of God's love for humankind and the whole of Creation.

It will also include belief in the Holy Spirit, who works to show the possibility of renewal, reconciliation, trust and forgiveness.

We are a Church of England school and hold a strong commitment to teaching the principles of Christianity; we aim to enable children to understand the nature of religion, its beliefs and practices. Our collective worship should reflect some of the essential features within the rich traditions of Anglican prayer and worship. These include:

- Using the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning.
- Reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship.
- Observing the cycle of the Anglican year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost and holy days to set the framework for a changing pattern of school worship.
- Identifying a collection of prayers and hymns which might create a framework for worship within the school.
- Providing opportunities to discover the value of silence within the context of Christian worship.
- Experiencing the bond of community which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinion. This could be expressed through the range of visitors who are invited to lead or attend school worship
- Sharing in a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in the welcome we offer to all pupils and the celebration of shared values and beliefs.

There is a close connection with the local parish and its worshipping community and children experience worship both in school and in Church as a quality activity, central to the life of the school and its Christian vision. Worship is therefore an area of the school's life which presents special opportunities to promote spiritual development. It also has the potential to contribute to faith nurture, providing an understanding of the Christian faith that the children can embrace, experience, and learn more about.

At the same time, it is recognized that children come from a variety of backgrounds reflecting the plural and secular nature of our society, including:

- Families with a Christian commitment and belief
- Parents who have specifically chosen a Church school for its ethos
- Members of other faith communities
- Those who have no particular belief
- Those for whom our school is the local school

Our school worship is intended to be meaningful and sensitive to all these needs.

### **What do we mean by 'worship' at Great Rollright C.E. (aided) Primary School?**

#### Our Aims for Collective Worship

There are three principles underlying the provision of our acts of collective worship. These principles are:

1. Collective worship is central to the life of the school having high status and value
2. Collective worship is invitational and inclusive
3. Collective worship is educational

#### Central to the Life of the School

This means that collective worship needs:

- to be coherent with the school's vision and values;
- to be well organised and planned;
- staff, pupils and wider community to participate as well as attend;
- an environment conducive to worship.

### Inclusive

Our understanding of Christianity is that it is an inclusive faith which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels. Therefore, as a Church of England school we welcome students and staff of all faiths. Through our Christian character our acts of collective worship will:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, lifestyles and faiths which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe;
- be appropriate for every child to attend;
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils;
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community – in preparation, participation and leadership.

### Educational

Our acts of collective worship will aim to provide wider opportunities to:

- reflect the aims of the school, and foster ownership of our vision and values;
- assist learners to have increased awareness and to reflect upon fundamental issues about life;
- enhance, complement and extend curricular work;
- develop learners' understanding of the Christian faith and Anglican practice through appropriate Biblical and liturgical content;
- identify opportunities for Christian celebration which can be associated with other school events – so this will include scope to celebrate the academic, social, personal and wider achievements of pupils.

Our worship has a clearly Christian character, recognising the diversity of the school community, and providing occasions when pupils meet in larger (can be virtually), more formal settings where positivity and collaboration is established. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on relevant Christian, moral and spiritual issues, drawn from a variety of sources, thereby enriching their experience of life.

### **Focus and Content of Worship**

Collective worship is seen as a rich opportunity to provide for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For this to be successful worship should:

- have a sense of occasion;
- invite participation;
- be concerned with the worship of God;
- provide an opportunity for pupils to explore their inner feelings;
- provide opportunities for individuals and the community to share what is of importance to them/it;
- celebrate beliefs, values and ideals;
- respect the integrity of all individuals, valuing everyone as a child of God;
- promote Christian moral values;
- promote the moral codes of our school and explore the rationale for them;
- reflect on models of moral virtue in literature and the lives of contemporary people and those of the past;
- foster a sense of community and belonging;
- be varied in style and include different forms of expression e.g. art, music, story, dance;
- celebrate pupils' talents and achievements;
- make use of symbols and imagery.

Collective worship can include material from faiths other than Christianity, for example marking the major festivals of other faiths. Learning about them is part of the general religious and cultural education of pupils. It is also a way of developing a growing understanding and valuing of members of other faiths in the school. The inclusion of such experiences does not mean the worship itself becomes Muslim or Hindu worship. The worship remains Christian.

At Great Rollright, collective worship aims to focus on the following main areas:

- Spirituality – enabling children to express themselves through relevant and appropriate means.
- Inclusiveness – allowing different levels of response, retaining openness and integrity.
- Education – providing context, background and input to religious education and allowing children to participate and contribute themselves, thus making collective worship a valuable learning experience per se.
- A Sense of Occasion – using atmosphere, resources and approaches to create a mood of reflection, meditation and spirituality; and above all, making the experience both meaningful and enjoyable.

Spiritual development is encouraged through the daily opportunities for children to:

- Experience times of mental and physical stillness.
- Feel comfortable being quiet and still.
- Be “alone” amongst a larger group.
- Experience a sense of community.
- Letting go of distractions to concentrate and focus their thoughts.
- Think about the theme and contribute proactively to the worship.
- Be receptive to their own thoughts and those of others.
- Engage on the quest for discovery and learning, through worship and prayer.
- Think about self-worth, self-knowledge and self-identity.

(See Appendix 1 ‘Using prayers within the context of the school’)

In summary, we are promoting **attending, reflecting** and **connecting**, to and with, a spiritual and moral life.

### **Organisation of Collective Worship**

#### **Monday** Key Stage Assemblies

The Headteacher generally leads both of these assemblies.

##### **Key Stage 1**

This worship takes place in a classroom. The classroom Worship Box is opened up with the children to set up the worship space with a worship cloth, candle, cross and Bible. A puppet is used to support this.

The children sing at various points to participate in the stages of the worship eg setting up the space

Each week, a story is shared, following the plan created by the ‘Jack in the box’ series of worship resources plus others when appropriate. The children have a chance to reflect and respond each week.

##### **Key Stage 2**

A child leads the liturgical greeting at the start of this assembly in the hall each week.

A variety of resources are used to create a written termly plan of delivery. These include ‘Roots and shoots’, ‘Big start assemblies’ and a range of other resources as appropriate. Three candles are lit on the worship table and the pupil monitors ensure that the table has the correct cloth for the liturgical season. Each assembly has an input followed by a chance for discussion and reflection.

#### **Tuesday** – Key Stage Assemblies

These are held in KS1/KS2 classrooms and are planned for using our ‘No Outsiders’ resource bank and other appropriate resources based on inclusion. Different assemblies are delivered to each key stage.

Key Stage one assemblies usually follow the pattern of a carefully chosen picture book which provides an opportunity for teaching and reflection around the issues of inclusion and diversity. These assemblies finish with a ‘stilling time where children can consider both positive and difficult moments which they’ve experienced during the week.

Key Stage 2 assemblies usually follow guidance from the ‘No Outsiders’ programme led by Andrew Moffat. These assemblies draw on real life stories and experiences from all over the world to enable children to learn and reflect on other people’s lived experience.

### **Wednesday – Vicar Assembly**

Rev. Janet Faull leads a whole school assembly followed by a singing session. Each month there is a story assembly enacted by a team of community volunteers, led by Rev. Janet.

### **Thursday – Whole school Celebration Assembly**

This is our weekly celebration assembly. At this time we celebrate all kinds of achievements both inside and outside of school. We particularly highlight ties where groups or individuals have shown courageous advocacy.

### **Friday – Picture News Assembly**

KS1 often enjoy worship opportunities when they are outside taking part in Forest Friday. They also have a Picture News assembly each Friday which is a simplified version of the KS2 one.

KS2 have a shared assembly led by a member of staff using the junior 'Picture News' resource. This enables the children to explore current affairs, important news events and also to consider bigger questions in life based on the stories covered. There is a Christian dimension to this assembly and links are also sent home for parents to follow up if they wish to. Children are invited to add their reflections on the assembly afterwards using an interactive display in the school hall.

### Worship at other times during the day

A lunchtime grace is said in the school hall before each sitting. This is usually led by a child. Lunchtime prayers have been written by the children to provide variety to the routine.

Each class is invited to join in with a shared prayer at the end of the school day. The prayer chosen varies from room to room to reflect the ages of the children

### Pupil Involvement

Children are encouraged to play an active role in planning, preparing, presenting, and responding in collective worship. Each term, the children are encouraged to lead collective worship session for our school community.

### **Management of Collective Worship**

The Governing Body should:

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in-regard to collective worship taking account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988/Education Act 1996 and the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. In foundation schools with a religious character or voluntary schools, the arrangements for collective worship are to be made by the governing body after consulting the head, and must be in line with the schools' Trust Deed or Diocesan guidelines in the case of church schools.
- Be familiar with all documentation regarding collective worship issued on their behalf and may be actively involved in the process of collective worship development in the school.
- Ensure that collective worship is appropriately reviewed as part of the Whole School Development Plan.
- Help evaluate Collective Worship and are expected to be part of the inspection of collective worship. They are advised to consult the Diocese for any support needed.

### **The Collective Worship Lead should:**

- Plan, write and keep under review policy documentation.
- Attend appropriate meetings to assist teachers in matching planning with principles and practice of the school policy.
- Order resources as required and keep resources up to date and organised.
- Keep up to date and familiarise staff and governing body with current and future development in collective worship.
- Evaluate the school's involvement in the spiritual development of its pupils regularly, in the light of the Christian foundation of the school and the needs and backgrounds of our pupils.
- Coordinate termly assembly themes and ensure teaching colleagues have appropriate support in organising and delivering daily acts of collective worship.

- Support and advise staff in the implementation of this policy.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Impact of Collective Worship**

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of collective worship, over the course of the year, individuals representing all key stakeholder groups will be asked to complete a monitoring sheet to help assess the impact of worship. Completed survey sheets will be filed in a Collective Worship folder kept by the Leader.

We would seek to consult on a bi-annual basis with the children, staff and parents on collective worship and aim to create a two-way dialogue in order to share the experience of collective worship more widely and encourage debate and participation from all sectors. As a result of monitoring, any implications for further improving the effectiveness of collective worship will be agreed, together with actions for improvement in the annual SDP.

At the start of the year, governors will review any planned actions, regarding collective worship, as part of the school improvement planning cycle. The leader for collective worship will provide governors with a verbal progress report based on the monitoring and ongoing evaluation that has taken place mid-way through the year. Any further recommendations for further development will be included in the school development plan. At the end of the academic year the leader for collective worship will write an annual report to governors on the effectiveness of the policy and impact of collective worship.

Appendix 1:

### **Using Prayer within the Context of the School**

Prayers form one of the means of communication between the believer and the deity whom they worship. But what relevance do they have for those who are uncommitted or who openly declare that they have no belief at all? On the other hand, do we devalue the power of prayer for believers by using them in a way which totally overlooks the personal commitment required to give them religious significance?

**We must assume that prayers can only have a religious significance for some, but they have potential to give spiritual insights for all.** However, for this to happen the following principles should be applied whenever a prayer is used:

- No prayer should be said/read as if all present were active and committed members of that faith community.
- It is appropriate to ask all pupils to shut their eyes and think of or about something; to ask them to hold their hands together is not. The latter is an act of acclamation of faith and is only appropriate to those who believe. Asking pupils to think about some special words is a valid educational activity and one that is suitable for all.
- Prayer does not have to be spoken. Make use of silence by asking pupils to reflect on the issue you have explored.

### **The School Prayer**

To be written as part of Worship Week 2024

### **Approval by the governing body**

**Head teacher signed:      Date:**  
**Chair of governors signed:      Date:**  
**Date of next review:      Date:**