



# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

## WINSLOW CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

**Approved by:** [Name] **Date:** [Date]

**Last reviewed on:** [Date]

**Next review due by:** [Date]

## **Our Vision**

At Winslow Church of England School, our vision is 'Let your light shine'. Every person in our school community has been made in the image of God and is loved unconditionally by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to 'let their light shine' in a loving and inclusive community.

## **Context**

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. Reflecting our school vision, 'Let your light shine' (Matthew 5:16), it helps to build a sense of community and promotes our core school values, courage, care and consideration (Bishop Steven, 2017).

Our aspiration is that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Collective worship follows a series of themes throughout the academic year and includes celebrations and from the Christian calendar, as well as those from other religions and important national events. Themes are adapted or changed to respond to significant events (within or beyond school) as necessary.

## **Aims**

Our collective worship provides our school community with the opportunity to,

- To affirm and celebrate our vision and the Christian values at the heart of the life of the school, developing and sustaining a sense of community.
- To foster spiritual-awareness and self-awareness, reflecting on our own feelings and those of others.
- To acknowledge the presence of, and to provide an opportunity to experience stillness, to pray and to worship, God - providing a safe space in which to respond.
- To provide a safe an open space in which to explore experiences of ourselves as individuals, of relationships with others and of creation.
- To respond to events in the life of the school and the local, wider and national community, providing a space for participants to reflect, celebrate, give thanks or support one another.

## **The Pattern of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is organised to take place in the school hall. Daily acts of worship will usually last for approximately 15 minutes and always include a prayer or period of quiet reflection and a song.

Themes are planned to follow the seasons of the Church year and within this significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost and other days are celebrated occasionally. The theme or focus is displayed and an 'altar' table, covered with coloured cloths relating to the seasons of the church and a three-wick candle (symbolising the trinity), provides a focal point.

Collective worship is led by school staff, clergy or members of the local church and pupils. The liturgy begins with pupils and staffing joining in spoken responses followed by a story or other activity relating to the current theme. Occasional visitors from other faith groups and

local organisations ensures that all pupils feel represented and helps to develop an understanding of how they relate to the local community. Weekly celebration assemblies are attended by parents and pupils visit the local church for worship at least twice each year.

Worship is enhanced through the use of artefacts and symbols during daily acts of worship and within the school environment. Reflection areas in classrooms and displays/artwork throughout the school provide opportunities for the school community to explore and engage with collective worship themes and the school's values on a more individual/personal level.

### **Planning Acts of Collective Worship**

Acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme, and the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils. Pupils encounter a wide variety of activities including the use of contemporary media, alongside more traditional elements of worship.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to Jesus and God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection. and our evaluations feed into the planning for future worship.

### **The Legal Context**

Fulfilling the statutory requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act, collective worship takes place daily and is *wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character*. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the headteacher.

### **Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body every 2 years.