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## Great Gaddesden C of E (VA) Primary School



*'Treat others exactly as you would want to be treated yourself'. (Luke 6:31)*

# Collective Worship Policy

Review date: 25.09.25

Review cycle: Every three years

Signature:

Date: 25.09.24

Headteacher

Date approved by governing body: 30th September 2024

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At Great Gaddesden School, collective worship is at the heart of school life. We gather together daily to worship. The aim of collective worship is to express our vision, explore Biblical teaching and provide rich opportunities for spiritual reflection as well as encourage our children to become biblically literate, reflective and confident leaders of worship. This culture driven by collective worship provides a platform for our children to become agents of change.

### **Our theologically rooted vision**

At the core of our distinctive Christian vision is The Golden Rule: “Treat others exactly as you would wish to be treated yourself” Luke 6:31 (World English Bible). This provides a beacon of light in navigating our interactions with kindness and understanding. At its core, the Golden Rule is a call to empathy. It encourages us to step into the shoes of others and consider our actions from their perspective. By treating each other with the same level of respect and kindness we wish for ourselves, we create a culture of mutual respect, where productivity and collaboration soar. We aim to grow a school community that values learning and humanity towards others which is underpinned and guided by the life and teachings of Jesus, our Christian values and inspired by the Ubuntu philosophy.

### **Policy Statement**

As a Church school, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos where children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. It is the heartbeat of our school life – a time to gather together, reaffirm our vision and associated values (see monthly values/appendix A) and celebrate the central role that each pupil and adult have to play in our community.

Our acts of collective worship reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. At the heart of our school values is love, respect and forgiveness. In addition to this, each month we provide a spotlight on a specific value that is known as the ‘value of the month’. However, our core Christian values are threaded through and provide the fabric of school life.

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 (see agreed definition of spirituality/Appendix B)

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

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## The Legal Requirements

We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere. At Great Gaddesden School, children worship at the parish church, St John The Baptist, each Friday and on other special occasions throughout the year.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Local Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

## Principles of collective worship

Each adult and pupil will experience worship that is truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality (see Church of England's Collective Worship Guidance).<sup>1</sup> Collective worship therefore will be:

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.
- **Invitational** – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.
- **Inspiring** – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

## Implementation

In addition to the above, 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

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>

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Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.

We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship (*gather, engage, respond, send*). We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.

In Great Gaddesden School, we aim to provide worship spaces which are attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.

We foster links with St John the Baptist Church, involving the Reverend John Russell and Mrs Heather Tisbury (Lay Reader) in leading collective worship and providing coherence between worship in church and school and visit the church weekly and at other times of the Christian calendar.

We recognise that different members of our school community spiritually reflect in different ways. Music, story, silence, prayer, drama and other approaches are incorporated within a varied collective worship offer.

### **Connections with other Christian denominations and faiths**

The Anglican Communion sees itself as part of a global church and promotes ecumenism. At School, we work to promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations and welcome their clergy and leaders as contributors to acts of collective worship. We recognise that while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations, while others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised, where everyone finds something positive for themselves and there is no pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to School, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

### **Planning**

Planning for Collective Worship is led by the headteacher and RE leader, the children as well as supported by the local clergy. Collective worship plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year, and support the PSHE of the school community, all of which is underpinned by the Christian Values. The colours associated with the liturgical year are used for the focal point of collective worship (see appendix C). The purpose of this is to mark distinctively Christian special seasons/events throughout the year.

The Headteacher provides a collective worship planning overview and ensures each act of worship is documented. Each week, a 'Big Question of the Week' is introduced which is linked to the theme for collective worship. Adults and children are invited to contribute and share their reflections.

## Organisation

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school or smaller class or key stage groups. Where collective worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering.

The headteacher and other members of staff together with groups of children take turns to conduct Collective Worship. The local vicar, Reverend John Russell/Mrs Heather Tisbury lead our weekly Friday Collective Worship, held in church.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point (as deemed appropriate).

Collective worship happens daily at 9:00am. We have chosen to implement this in the morning to provide every member of the school community an opportunity to reflect, be inspired and come together at the start of each day.

Weekly collective worship timetable:

Day	Focus/Theme	Location	Leader
Monday	Value/Topical & Big Question of the Week	School hall	Headteacher/SLT
Tuesday	Open the Book	School hall	Class Teachers
Wednesday	Child Led Worship	Classrooms/Hall	Children
Thursday	Celebration Worship	Classrooms/Hall	Headteacher/SLT
Friday	Value/Topical Evaluation of the Big Question fo the Week	St John's the Baptist Church	Reverend John Russell and/or Heather Tisbury (Lay Reader)

We strive to ensure that collective worship provides opportunities for all members of the community to flourish spiritually. Therefore, we invite parents to our Friday morning assemblies in church to join us in our Collective Worship. Parents, extended family and friends and Governors are also welcome to attend acts of worship, including significant services marking key times of the liturgical year.

## Child-Led Worship

Each week, children have the opportunity to lead their peers in an act of child-led worship. Using the gather-word-respond-mission structure cards, and a special set of artefacts the children plan, deliver and evaluate a time of worship. Older children help their younger peers in this process.

## Resources

There is a wide selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly ensure are sufficient. We have a selection of music which is used to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. Those leading worship also access professional development opportunities.

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### **Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural 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 aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. The children are invited to reflect and if they choose provide a written response on the impact of collective worship spiritually. The coordinator and others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria.

### **Inclusion**

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.

### **Implementation of Policy**

The headteacher and RE leaders are responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

### **Links to Other Policies:**

- RE policy



**Appendix A**

Our school values

<b>Month</b>	<b>Value</b>
September	Responsibility
October	Respect
November	Courage
December	Hope
January	Thankfulness
February	Community and Service
March	Forgiveness
April	Acceptance/Patience
May	Honesty
June	Trust
July	Love & Friendship

## Appendix B

### Spirituality Definition

At Great Gaddesden CE (VA) Primary School, we define spirituality as a holistic journey, offering a space to develop, reflect and explore the depths of our being.

It involves the realisation and revealing of something innately within, a profound understanding that goes beyond the material world.

It encourages individuals to become aware of the world in all its wonder, embracing the interconnectedness of the world and our place within it.

Central to spirituality is empathising with others and cultivating inclusivity, recognising the shared humanity that binds us all together.

We provide opportunities for spiritual, moral and cultural development across the curriculum, through our collective worship and also providing space and time to reflect spiritually throughout school life as well as ask and answer 'big' questions.

## Appendix C

### Liturgical Year

