

Edward Peake C of E (VC) School

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

“Where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them”

Matthew 18:20

Rationale

Collective worship at Edward Peake C of E (VC) School is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian foundation values and ethos of the school.

Worship is central to the life and purposes of our school and will reflect the Christian understanding of God. This will include belief in God the source of all being and life, belief in Jesus who reveals God’s love by his life, death and resurrection and belief in the Holy Spirit who makes the presence of Jesus known in the world.

Aims

Through collective worship in our school we aim to:

- provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God
- introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year
- explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well-known Christian prayers, e.g. Lord’s Prayer
- strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school
- celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God
- encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them
- foster a concern for others within the school, community and wider world. (While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community).
- foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

Legal Framework

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, worship is central to its life and work and is regarded as a very important part of the children’s education.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship in school which may be whole school, key stage, year group or class based.

The Headteacher and other members of staff normally conduct assemblies, in addition to local clergy and other representatives of charities and religious groups. Pupils are also invited to lead and participate in Collective Worship. Classes choose favourite hymns to be used for worship.

Worship themes are drawn from St Alban's Diocesan Collective Worship Plan, which is based on the three-year lectionary, key events in the Church Year and the school's monthly value. Those leading worship create an atmosphere which is conducive for collective worship and may include a variety of stimuli including bible stories, moral stories, poems, role play, artefacts, images, music, singing and sharing of thoughts. All participants are encouraged to show respect and reverence for the act of worship through conduct, reflection and celebration of shared Christian and school values.

Collective Worship provides experiences that contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of individuals and will include times for prayer and reflection.

As a school we encourage active participation in promoting the shared values and ethos of our school community and the whole school is expected to be present for Collective Worship.

The school says a 'grace' before lunch each day and a school prayer has been written by a pupil, which is regularly used in Collective Worship. Reflective areas and displays within each classroom give pupils and staff a focus for class worship and provide a place to offer thoughts and prayers at other times. A spiritual garden with reflective poems, values stones, wind chimes and a cross can be used by staff and pupils during break, lunch and sometimes during lessons.

At intervals throughout the year, the whole school will worship at St Andrew's Parish Church, typically at the end of term: Christmas and Easter. Services are also held for Harvest Festival. Parents and Governors are invited to these and other special worship events from time to time.

Monitoring and review

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor Collective Worship and the policy will be reviewed as appropriate. School Values Ambassadors chosen from each class meet to discuss class worship and liaise between the teacher responsible for organising Collective Worship and each class.

Date reviewed: February 2025

Next review date: February 2027