Whittingham

C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy & Guidance

Date First Reviewed June 2019 Date Reviewed:

February 2025 Date Ratified: March 2025

Date Next Review Due: March / April 2027

Whittingham School Vision

As a school, we take inspiration from the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). In this story, the Samaritan was **kind** by going the extra mile so that all the injured man's needs were met. He was **collaborative** to make sure the man received the best care from him and others. Finally, he was **courageous** in helping someone who was different to him.
These three values are at the heart of the community we seek to be at Whittingham School.

Through our daily worship, we acknowledge the presence of God in our lives.
Through our learning environment, we provide space for everyone to flourish.
Through our broad and balanced curriculum, we aspire for each child to be the very best they can be.

At Whittingham, we are:

Kind 

Caring for everyone's safety, happiness and well-being by treating others how we'd like to be treated ourselves.

Collaborative 

Providing opportunities for all to be involved in the daily life of school; preparing learners to be active in the wider world and fostering a supportive relationship between school, home and church.

Courageous 

Celebrating what makes each of us unique and special; equipping us to make healthy choices in all areas of our life; and empowering us to step out for justice.

Rationale

Our school aims to preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at Local, Parish and Diocesan level. Whittingham C of E Primary School serves the community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values (the values of kindness, collaboration and courageousness are at the heart of all that we do) through the experience we offer to all our pupils.

At Whittingham C of E Controlled Primary School Collective Worship is in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England. The staff and governors see the main purpose of the school as providing an excellent education both academically and socially in a Christian context for all its pupils. Collective Worship has the potential to unite the whole membership of the school and therefore to develop a strong sense of community.

Our school is distinctively different to non-Church schools, as a result of the importance placed on the social, emotional, moral and spiritual life of all members of the school community – pupils, teachers, governors and non-teaching staff. The careful planning and delivery of the R.E. curriculum, and the quality of the worship offered in school make a significant contribution to the all round development of everyone in our school community. Our worship allows children to see themselves

as being unique and special individuals. Such an understanding encourages children to relate one with another in a *kind* and *collaborative* way with understanding of one anothers uniqueness.

Definition

Collective worship and assembly are not the same, although collective worship may be part of an assembly. Collective worship is defined as worship appropriate to a group of individuals possessing a range of beliefs, believers and non-believers. During worship we aim to learn about and praise God. It therefore involves us gathering together to express feelings of *respect* for themselves, to others, our local community and our wider world. It is a time when children can celebrate their social and academic achievements and a time to foster positive values held at the school, the local community and the wider world.

As a school with an Anglican foundation, Collective worship at Whittingham reflects the traditions established within the Church of England, as such there is an extremely strong bond forged with our local clergy and the Church of St Bartholomew..

The Legal Basis of Collective Worship

The Education Acts of 1988 and 1993 re-emphasised the obligation laid on schools to provide a daily act of worship.

In a Controlled School arrangements for collective worship are made by the governing body after consultation with the Head Teacher. Within the governing body, the foundation governors have particular responsibility for seeing that the character of the school is reflected in the worship. Acts of collective worship may be held off the school premises if they are additional to the statutory act of collective worship.

Collective Worship can take place at any time of the school day but it cannot be designated as teaching time.

Objectives

Collective Worship at Whittingham C of E Primary is a thought provoking and enjoyable experience in which children can develop their own beliefs, values and attitudes. We intend to achieve this by providing children with opportunities to:

- *Develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them.*
- *Develop a spiritual dimension to their lives and personal relationships.*
- *Experience thanks giving and to enjoy the unity which derives from sharing love, joy, hope, friendship, acceptance, anguish, fear and forgiveness.*
- *Develop awareness and concern for the needs of others as well as their own personal needs.*
- *Encounter beliefs, prayers, symbols and songs from the Anglican tradition in an appropriate manner.*
- *Reflect on and think more deeply about important issues.*
- *Respond through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered.*
- *Celebrate the Festivals and celebrations of the church year and that of other world faiths.*
- *Share in church life and Christian practice.*
- *Affirm values and commitment and reinforce positive attitudes throughout the school, the local community and the wider world.*

Provision of Worship

There is a daily act of worship for reception Class to Year 6 pupils, currently provided in the following way:
(Following the introduction of 2 year olds we will review our provision for these younger children)

Day of the week	Worship activity	Led by
Monday	Whole school worship - Values led, introduction to the week	Member of SLT
Tuesday	Whole school worship- Open the Book	Visitor rota – all staff attend
Wednesday	Whole school worship – Picture News / Global events	KS1 teacher
Thursday	Pupil Led worship	KS 2 teacher
Friday	Whole school worship – Celebrating God Given Talents - Reflections using IN OUT BEYOND.	Led by Member of SLT – all staff attend.

D. ***The Act of Worship***

Preparing for whole school worship is a significant responsibility as we aim to provide thought provoking responses from all those involved. Given the spread of understanding across the primary age range we constantly review our provision and sometimes if appropriate we may have Key Stage Worship where a subject or theme requires this. Generally, however, through skilful questioning and engagement from all pupils greater depth of discussion and understanding about our worship themes and global issues can be developed .

Worship **begins** with music playing and then a welcome to all present, such as:

- The Lord be with you / *and also with you*
- Peace be with you/ *and also with you*

A candle is lit representing Jesus as light of the world.

During worship opportunities to reflect on wider questions are provided, and often children are asked to talk to one another and share beliefs.

Hymns from a range of genres may be included in worship.

We **conclude** with prayers such as our School Prayer or the Lord's Prayer to reflect and experience a moment of stillness and time to pause and reflect.

Planning

We are proud of how we have developed our planning for Collective Worship as a staff meeting time is designated 1x per half term for all staff to be together and plan, further evaluate and discuss.

We use the Bible, either as a source of knowledge and inspiration for themes and stories.
We observe the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost for example.
We discuss and embed core Christian values including our core values of kindess and courageousness as well as friendship, forgiveness, respect, peace and endurance
We acknowledge significant events- such as transition, bereavement, supporting others through ill health and the importance of courageous advocacy this is done through our chosen charities –

UNICEF, Alnwick and District Food Bank, Alan Shearer Foundation and RNLI (these charities are chosen by each class on an annual basis

Pupil voice

There is flexibility to address local issues as they arise, our Rota Kids and Eco Warriors also may lead worship. In Summer Term KS2 deliver worship and they chose their choice of themes and content.

Those leading the worship then take responsibility for the unique content and style of delivery.

Worship At Other Times

Children are invited to say prayers, or to make reflective contributions at other times, such as at the end of lunch, or visits to church There is a reflection area set out in the school hall where children can interact with resources or leave written messages/ prayers or have a moment of stillness and reflection in an area of the library, outside reflection area and also areas around our amazing natural environment which encourage children to experience awe and wonder on a daily basis.

Visitors

The school welcomes visitors to lead worship and we are pleased to welcome Reverend Rich, our Parish Vicar and Ed and Angela from the local United Reformed Church. We also look to invite whenever we can members of different faith communities. The whole school recently enjoyed hearing about the Muslim Faith from Enis and Mirium.

Partnership With Our Parish

We work in partnership with the congregation at St Bartholomew's to enhance the worshipful experience offered to the staff and children.
We pass on information about worship held in the church to our parents via newsletters, emails, Class Dojo, Tapestry and Facebook Page to invite them to regular services and special events.

Working with Reverend Rich, we have developed our traditional services of Harvest, Christingle, Christmas and Easter to promote links with the wider community , the services are more interective and inclusive and take the style of a 'Family Service'. This has been popular.
We also have our Year 6 Leavers with services led by the children. All our services take place in the church.

Inclusion and SEND

Worship is provided for all children at Whittingham and makes a valuable contribution to their education. Worship has a large part to play in promoting the school's core Christian values which are kindness, collaboration and courageousness. Such values help to establish respect towards others and remove prejudice / misunderstanding when exploring stereotyping, discrimination, sexism and racism, this is particularly important given our rural location. All pupils, irrespective of ability, age, gender or race are entitled to equal opportunity in terms of spiritual development.
We endeavour to adapt our collective worship so that all pupils, including those with SEND can be supported so that they can access learning. This may be through adaptations of resources, adult support or visual / lighting changes.

Monitoring And Evaluation

This is undertaken on a weekly basis through immediate feedback from pupils and staff about the worship themes. Consideration is also given to the following:

- Written evaluation of worship from pupils and staff
- Learning walks and involvement in school life undertaken by Reverend Rich.
- Pupil voice- gathering their opinion on the learning opportunities and their first-hand experience, including an annual questionnaire
- Informal feedback from parents.

Continued Professional Development

We hold staff development in high regard and we also plan staff meetings so that staff can train together. In 2023-4 staff attended virtual training on World Faiths including Humanism, Judisam and Islam. This year 2024-5 staff attended training from Paul Rushby on Collective Worship and plan further sessions on Spirtituality and Courageous Advocacy. The co-ordinator for Collective Worship is supported by the lead for RE and she attends termly co-ordinator meetings which are then disseiminated to staff.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from worship as in any school but it is hoped that the majority of parents choosing a church school would welcome their child taking part in worshipful activity.

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from one aspect of worship, or the range of activities, must request this by writing to the Headteacher on an annual basis, outlining their wishes.

Arrangements For Complaints

As we always work closely with parents, consulting them at every stage, complaints about worship provision are extremely rare. However, should there be a concern; the following procedure should be followed in line with our complaints procedure:

1. Parents are encouraged to discuss the concern with the class teacher. (If the concern is not resolved at this stage proceed to 2).

2. Parents make an appointment to discuss the concern with the Headteacher. The class teacher may or may not be present. (Unresolved concerns move to 3).

3. The matter should be referred to the Chair of Governors. A letter explaining the concern should be given to the school office addressed to the Chair of Governors, Whittingham C of E Primary School.