

Whitstable & Seasalter Endowed Church of England (Aided) Junior School




Collective Worship Policy

This policy reflects our schools vision

LET YOUR LIGHT *Shine*
Matthew 5:14-16

Love ★ Joy ★ Goodness ★ Resilience ★ Trust

Reviewer	M Bowles and E Taylor
Reviewed	September 2025
Date of Next Review	September 2027
Headteacher Signature	

This Policy was approved by the Headteacher

Our Values
Love ★ Joy ★ Goodness ★ Resilience ★ Trust

Matthew 5:14-16

'You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead, he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.'

At the Endowed, as a Church school, we believe Collective Worship to be at the heart of the school day and something that every child (and adult), those with a faith or with none, are invited to engage with.

Collective worship offers all the school community the time and space to think deeply, to ponder, to be still, and the opportunity to reflect on our world and their place in it. It provides the opportunity to articulate, affirm and celebrate shared values and concerns. It aims to evoke a sense of awe, of beauty, of compassion, to encourage thankfulness, to demonstrate wonder and promote peace.

Within the love of God, Collective Worship aims to nurture aspirations, celebrate individuality enabling all to flourish so that their 'light will shine' in school, the local community and the World beyond.

'You are light of the world' – *This aspirational perspective reminds children that the world is their oyster, and they are each capable of changing the whole world by the choices and actions they take. Each of our children is an Agent of Change – making the World we live in a better place for everyone.*

Such an approach is offered here at the Endowed, through a whole school commitment to generous hospitality, by being true to the Christian Values which underpin our school's ethos, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom and personal choice of each child.

'A city built on a hill cannot be hidden' – *through the invitation to engage with Collective Worship, we aim for the children to feel they are valued as one of God's children. We believe in celebrating each person in their unique identity, demonstrating how each individual can flourish and be treated with dignity and respect, celebrating all our precious diversity. Understanding that each of them has something to offer the world and their interests, talents and beliefs are celebrated and shared.*

Let your light shine before others – *We want the children to not be afraid to shine their light and tell their story in front of others, including those with power and influence. To know that their perspective is valid and important, and to be ready to voice that with courage. As Agents of Change*

the children will be supported to exercise courageous advocacy, and our staff and leaders' will model that by listening carefully to all the children and to accept the challenge to keep thinking, reflecting and growing through the invitation to worship. We want them to use resilience to keep their lights shining even when it is difficult to do so and trust in God to help them do this.

As a Church of England (Aided) School, Collective Worship is an integral part of our school life and the main emphasis will be the Christian faith. Our ultimate reference points are the traditions of the Church of England based on scripture and the creeds guided by Canterbury Diocesan schemes for Collective Worship. Whilst worship reflects the traditions found in the Church of England and follows the liturgical calendar, we ensure that worship is non-confessional, invitational, inclusive and inspiring.

Worship in our school is viewed as a means of acknowledging and exploring the spiritual dimension of experience and of giving meaning to those experiences. It strengthens and supports the Christian character of our school and reaffirms our values: Love, Joy, Goodness, Resilience and Trust drawing strength from an awareness of our group identity and fosters a sense of belonging.

The experience of Worship will be different from one day to the next, depending on the theme and the person leading worship and the needs of the school. There will be opportunities for prayer and reflection, there may be times of silence or of song, reading and drama, movement and stillness, ritual and free expression, symbols and imagery, speech and other forms of address and presentation.

All of these aspects may be reflected in our Collective Worship, although on each occasion the emphasis and content will vary according to the context. It will always be relevant in the sense that it will aim to deepen pupil's understanding of religion and their awareness of the spiritual dimension of life, providing opportunities to explore, share and express what is meaningful and significant to them.

As a school we recognise and acknowledge that we live in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society and we strongly believe that we must develop in our pupils, a knowledge and awareness of other world religions and faiths, to foster tolerance and understanding. We seek to strengthen our inclusiveness. There will therefore at times be a reference to other religions and faiths.

Our daily Act of Worship is not designated as curriculum time and is distinct from Religious Education which is regarded as a National Curriculum Core subject.

Assemblies are special occasions in our school and children and staff are encouraged to be active participants. The very important distinction between 'Assembly' and 'Worship' is acknowledged and discussed.

Worship reaffirms our school Christian Values 'Let your Light Shine' Matthew 5:14-16 and encourages all participating to be thoughtful, comfortable and desiring to be involved.

Planning for Worship

Planning for worship is done in co-operation with the Anglican Team Ministry and children benefit from the contributions of a variety of vicars and youth ministers and use Diocesan plans as a starting point.

The Headteacher and the Collective Worship Co-ordinator meet every two terms with the incumbent, Reverend Rachel Webbley or a member of the Whitstable Team Ministry.

At these meetings planning for two terms is completed. Weeks are broken down into separate related themes and these are forwarded well in advance to those who will lead worship. Music for the week is chosen with the support of the music co-ordinator. Planning endeavours to cover themes that help children explore their inner and outer worlds; including the community of the school; their own locality, the nation and the wider world. Planning for worship throughout the year always includes the major Christian festivals.

We aim for worship to contribute to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our school community with thoughts, themes and challenging conversations flowing into our daily lives.

Monday: Whole school

Tuesday: Whole school music-based worship

Wednesday: At St Alphege Church led by Whitstable Team Ministry

Thursday: Whole school 'Good News' celebration assembly

Friday: Class based worship

Children are invited to pray daily. Prayers are included within each act of worship and include those written by the children. Moments for self-reflection are also encouraged.

Spiritual Agents

Children are encouraged to be active participants in worship and will have the opportunity to take a more active role in worship. The children are able to apply for a Spiritual Agent Role. Spiritual Agents take an active role in all whole school worship. Training and support are provided by appropriately trained staff to assist the children in this role using materials from Canterbury Diocese.

Their roles include:

- Being positive role models during Collective Worship.
- Helping the school evaluate and improve Collective Worship both in school and at our weekly worship in St Alphege church.
- Gathering our school community for Collective Worship through greeting, lighting the candle, opening the worship and sending off with a thought and a prayer at the end.
- Contributing to worship through readings, songs, prayer, music, story and drama.
- Supporting our school as we learn about, and live out, our Christian values: Love, Joy, Goodness, Resilience & Trust
- Managing and operating IT during worship

- Designing and maintaining our prayer table and other areas around the school.

Our website includes a Collective Worship page which is updated regularly.

Staff Training

Worship is discussed at staff meetings. We believe Collective Worship should be regularly evaluated in order to make it as meaningful and relevant as possible. This will be completed by senior leaders with the support of the Collective Worship governor and school lead. Staff are encouraged to share ideas on arrangements, themes, delivery and organisation.

Whole school or individual needs for training and support will be provided, if identified as a need and will form part of the School Plan. We believe it is important that we continue to improve worship and to recognise its importance to school life. Worship training for all teachers has been led by our local vicar, alongside ongoing support from Canterbury Diocese. Staff responsible for the monitoring of Worship (currently Headteacher and C.W. Co-ordinator) have attended external inset and the C.W. Co-ordinator attends Diocesan CW Leaders network meetings.

Withdrawal

Parents and Carers have the legal right to withdraw their children from our daily Acts of Collective Worship as stated in *School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20)*.

The Headteacher asks that any parent or carer who wishes their child to be withdrawn from Acts of Worship discusses this with her first to see if an agreement can be reached. Although parents/carers are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal, the school retains the right to emphasise to them that in a Church of England School, with Aided status, acts of Collective Worship are at the heart of our aims and vision and are seen as integral to the life and ethos of our school.

If withdrawal is requested it will be for the period of the current school year, and parents/carers will need to reapply at the beginning of the next if they wish for it to be continued. Parents can request for withdrawal to be rescinded at any time.

Withdrawal is deemed as being absent from all acts of worship, and thus the child will be provided with an appropriate activity, by the school or if requested by the parents/carers and allocated a safe and suitably supervised environment.