

Chevening (St Botolph's) CE Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

This policy was reviewed: Spring 2024

Governor Approval:

Review Date: Spring 2027

Chevening St Botolph's Primary School

In line with our Biblical Vision (Matthew 13: 31-32),

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

this policy has been developed being mindful of our aim to provide an excellent education and to

- Be true to Christ and His teachings.

- Be known for kind and thoughtful actions and attitudes.

- Be inclusive in serving, sharing and showing God's love to benefit all.

Our vision is lived out through the structure and pattern of our worship. Everyone is welcome to the act of worship and both staff and children are invited to take part in the organisation and delivery of worship sessions. Kindness and thoughtfulness are celebrated and identified throughout and the truth of God's word is used as the basis for our teaching. A selected group of children act as our worship leaders, showing support for the other children and aiding staff with delivery. Class worships at regular times through the year enable all children to take a part in leading the act of worship. The whole school community places importance on the act of worship and everyone is included in this significant and special time of the day

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of Honesty, Perseverance, Courage, Respect, Faith, Love, Forgiveness and Compassion and it celebrates the central role that each child has to play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. 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.

Our school is a nurturing school and our policy is also developed in line with the six principles of Nurture reflecting the school's understanding that:

- Children learn developmentally
- The classroom is a safe base for every child
- Nurture is important to the development of well-being
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- Transition marks important stages in a child's life

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies used in worship at Chevening (St. Botolph's) CE (VA) Primary School.

Collective worship at Chevening (St Botolph's) is

- 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.

Our Aims:

Collective Worship at Chevening gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Gather together to explore moments of joy, challenge, grief and love
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still, pray and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes and explore them in action
- Celebrate significant and special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship

- a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.
- e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

The Anglican Christian Tradition

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection

We may also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using prayers from Common Worship
- Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship

Implementation

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors from local churches in consultation with the collective worship leader. We encourage all staff at the school to lead acts of worship where they are confident. Our act of worship is timetabled to take place each day in any regular school groupings e.g. whole school, key stage or class. Our school plans systematically and cohesively use Rochester Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity. Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply safeguarding policies: (*See safeguarding policy*). This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are provided with the Rochester diocese plans and encouraged to use these as the basis for their act of worship. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

We meet in our school hall:

Monday: 10.25 whole school; Headteacher or visiting clergy

Tuesday: 10.15 Whole school; Class worship led by pupils in classrooms using adapted plans created by the collective worship leader. These plans are based on the Rochester plans

Wednesday: 10.25 whole school; Prayer and praise led by the music lead

Thursday: 10.25 whole school; visiting clergy, pupil worship leaders; SLT

Friday: 2.30 Whole school celebration led by member of Senior Leadership team

Services marking special occasions and events in the church year are held at St Botolph's, the local parish church (eg. Harvest, Christmas, Easter. Leavers' Service, also services at the end of each term these are pupil led with support from clergy and other adults. Each class celebrates an event in the church calendar through the year and parents are invited to attend in school on these occasions

We are mindful of the variation in personal styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including:

- Music
- Silence
- Drama
- Role play
- Use of IT
- Symbolism

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- **Gather** – we welcome the community, for example, *(with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle)*
- **Engage** – we share, for example, *(a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message)*
- **Respond** – pupils, for example, *(discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing)*
- **Send** – we share, for example, *(the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle)*

Expectations of pupils

Pupils regularly plan and lead worship on a voluntary basis. We have worship leaders who are selected from our Year 6 class who work with the collective worship leader to develop their own understanding of worship and develop worship to support the spiritual development of their peers. The pupil worship leaders meet regularly with the school worship leader and work through a programme to develop their understanding of worship in school. Volunteers to write and lead prayers are selected from across the school at the beginning of the act of worship.

Developing Worship

- Ensure that all pupils have access to a daily act of collective worship, therefore meeting statutory requirements.
- Ensure that collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.
- Attend regular training and network meetings with Canterbury Diocese
- Produce and regularly review the collective worship policy to ensure that it reflects current practice and thinking.
- Liaise with the HT and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of collective worship across the school.
- Ensure all stakeholders know what the expectations of worship are when leading, planning and joining worship.
- Join those who are leading worship to provide supportive feedback on how worship could be developed.
 - Evaluate the impact of collective worship on the whole school community by gathering pupil and adult voice.
- Signpost staff to a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.

- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and resources, to help develop their confidence in leading acts of worship.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited to lead collective worship.
- Meet with and encourage pupil leaders of worship to enable them to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact that they have on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. On a weekly basis children from different year groups are asked to complete a monitoring sheet about the act of worship. The comments on these are regularly reviewed by the school collective worship leader and appropriate action taken in response .

Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) in consultation with the Diocese of Rochester.

The contributions of parents are welcomed and their comments play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of our school.

Parental Withdrawal

Worship is regarded as a special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and of none to be present with integrity. We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship. As collective worship is central to our ethos, we welcome the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

FORMAT FOR WHOLE SCHOOL ACT OF WORSHIP CHEVENING (ST. BOTOLPH'S) CEP SCHOOL

Preparation

1. Bible at front. Candle ready to be lit.
2. Music playing – this may be quiet and reflective, the song that will be used in the act of worship or invitational to welcome the children to the act of worship.
3. Words of welcome chosen and ready to be shared with the school

The following is one way in which the worship may proceed although there will be a range of ways to worship used throughout the year. Most often the format will be:

1. Greeting
2. Light candle
3. Open the Bible
4. Invitation to worship
5. An opening prayer may be used
6. Theme (normally a Bible reading will be included and the Bible opened to the relevant page)
7. Hymn/song (related to theme where possible)
8. Prayer (The Lord's prayer and other traditional prayers will be frequently used) - these will often be written by children, but may include staff
9. A time of reflection may be used
10. Blessing(Incumbent) or 'Sending out' statement
11. Candle out
12. Leave in silence/singing/listening to music

FORMAT FOR CELEBRATION ACT OF WORSHIP CHEVENING (ST. BOTOLPH'S) CEP SCHOOL

CELEBRATING LEARNING ASSEMBLY

Preparation

1. Closed Bible at front, or candle ready to be lit
2. Music playing – this may be quiet and reflective, the song that will be used in the act of worship or invitational to welcome the children to the act of worship.

Action

1. Greeting
2. Light candle/open Bible

3. Reference to the act of worship theme of the week and review of the foci.
4. Celebrate good learning and demonstrations of the school values / Award values certificates and Values Cups / Award good work certificates / Celebrate whole school or individual successes / House points / merit points.
5. Prayers
6. Leave in silence/singing/listening to music

FORMAT FOR CLASS ACT OF WORSHIP CHEVENING (ST. BOTOLPH'S) CEP SCHOOL

Preparation

1. Bible at front, or candle ready to be lit

Action

1. Greeting
2. Light candle/open Bible
3. Theme of the act of worship which will generally include reading from a specific text from the Bible.
4. Prayer
5. Activity – this will often be carried out while music is played
6. Candle out/close Bible