



Westcott Church of England School  
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Headteacher: Mr Barry Grace

## **Westcott Church of England School**

### **Collective Worship Policy 2022 – 2025 (Review Date July 2022)**

#### **Introduction**

Collective worship is central to the life of our school, worship offers the pupils and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian vision and ethos. It is an expression of our vision and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. We warmly invite all members of our school community to join our worship.

Collective worship at Westcott is planned to reflect and explore the school's Christian vision and associated values\*. Acts of worship are times for the school community to develop our understanding of these values within the context of the overarching vision we have for everyone. At Westcott collective worship aims to be inclusive, invitational and inspiring.

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- Celebrate:
  - Christian seasons and festivals;
  - school values associated with our vision;
  - Pupils' and adults' achievements;
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed;
- worship God on their own terms.

Worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- enable participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context;
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy;
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today;
- encourage participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage;
- reflect the teachings of Jesus and a trinitarian theology.



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### **The Pattern of Collective Worship**

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings, in the school hall, in classrooms and on occasions outside. Collective worship regularly takes place in the parish church of St Mary the Virgin's next to our school. We follow the seasons of the Church year and within these significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost; other days such as Candlemas are celebrated occasionally. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Leavers' Service also feature in collective worship. Whenever worship takes place, it is planned to promote participants' thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

Monday	The theme for the week is introduced in class based worship
Tuesday	Worship through music and singing
Wednesday	Year 5 and 6 lead the worship
Thursday	Continuation of the theme with clergy leading worship
Friday	A celebration assembly for presenting certificates

### **Leading worship**

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church Community. Pupils are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths. Collective Worship in the sacred space of the church building can help children connect with the awe and wonder of God.

### **Planning Acts of Collective Worship**

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. The themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values. Throughout their time at our school children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside more traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song. We will also introduce pupils to a range of approaches to worship.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.



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Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

### A legal note

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day
- reflect the school's Trust Deed

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance, parents who may wish to exercise this right should make an appointment to speak with the headteacher.

**\*Our vision and Values:** Westcott is a learning community that includes pupils, parents and carers, staff and Governors. **Learning in faith** and growing into all God wants us to be. Westcott's aim is to provide a happy, secure and Christian learning environment in which every child can achieve academic and personal success. Each child is valued and encouraged. We recognise that all children have potential and do our best to provide a caring and well-ordered environment in which they can learn and develop.

Values	Bible Roots
Forgiveness	"Bear with each other and forgive one another" Colossians 3:13-14
Friendship	"A friend loves at all times" Proverbs 17:17
Perseverance	"Let us not be weary in doing good, for we will reap in due season, if we do not give up" Galatians 6:9
Thankfulness	"Give thanks always to God for everything" Ephesians 5:20
Trust	"Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock" Isaiah 26:4