

## **Wormley C of E Primary School Collective Worship Policy**

**Have Faith, Show Respect, Take Responsibility and Achieve**

### **Aims and purpose**

'Worship' is not defined in the Education Reform Act 1988 but the following principles are the main framework for Collective Worship.

#### **Collective Worship is important because:**

- children come together to share, to celebrate, to show concern, to explore and review different values, attitudes, standards and beliefs;
- children come together to reflect upon dimensions of human life, eg. the wonderful, the beautiful, the joyful, the heroic, the humorous, the tragic, the ugly, the sorrowful, the solemn;
- children come together to consider the deepest longings and aspirations of mankind and the variety of ways in which they are expressed, eg. through the creative arts, scientific discovery, religions and philosophies, through worship, prayer, ritual and celebration and through the service of God and other people;
- children come together to be still, quiet and to think.

Collective Worship is 'mainly of Christian character' and reflects the 'broad traditions of Christian beliefs'. However, collective worship "should not be distinctive of any particular Christian denomination." (The Education Reforms Act 1988 and Education Act 1993) and staff should take this into consideration:

- the age, stage of development and ability of the child
- the various beliefs and religious ways of life that are accepted and practised in Britain today.
- local community faiths
- other religious beliefs and festivals throughout the world

#### **The aims and purpose of collective worship are:**

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs
- to encourage participation and response
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- to teach children how to worship
- to promote racial harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination

#### **The objectives of Collective Worship**

We see school worship as an educational opportunity with clear objectives. We use this time to encourage pupils to:

- show interest in, and a concern for, members of the school community
- celebrate special occasions together
- show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community, the wider world
- share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by groups within the school
- explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards, manifested in religions and society
- reflect upon dimensions of human life – the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic etc.
- reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship will involve all members of the school coming together and participating in a whole school worship or class groups may gather individually. We invite everyone to take an active part in any act of worship.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base our worship on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we educate our children to respect that other faiths worship in different ways and this is reflected by encompassing the beliefs of all members of the school and the wider community.

### **Organisation of Collective Worship**

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship in our school. On Mondays the whole school attends worship led by the clergy.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children attempt to behave in an appropriate way as best they can. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The head teacher or other members of staff normally conduct worship, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups conduct them instead.

We take the themes of our worship from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our worship as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

Our worship reflects the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in worship by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Worship offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. Wormley Cof E Primary School is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all the children in worship.

We invite parents to worship on special occasions and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

We welcome governors' attendance at our worship at any time.

### **Right of withdrawal**

We expect all children to attend worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was reinstated in the 1998 Education Reform Act. The head teacher and R.E. co-ordinator keeps a record of all children who withdraw from Collective Worship

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the role of a named school governor to monitor the policy and practice of Collective Worship. They liaise with the subject leader before jointly reporting to the governors on Religious Education and Collective Worship within the subject reporting schedule.