Dilton Marsh Church of England Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Philosophy

Our school is designated a *Voluntary Controlled School*. Worship is an important part of the school day as it gives us the opportunity to come together as a school community to think more deeply about God, about our relationships with others, about God’s world and about ourselves.

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in our 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 base our worship on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies 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 may also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community. In addition to daily school worship, special celebrations take place in Church.

**Aims of Collective Worship**

Our aim at Dilton Marsh C of E Primary School is that worship should:

* reflect our Mission statement and values of the school;
* instil a sense of awe and wonder in the children;
* provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
* be inclusive and an occasion where each individual’s integrity is respected;
* will have a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit enabling all learners to embark on an understanding of the Trinity;
* offer opportunities for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
* reflect some of the practices and traditions of the local church;
* be regularly monitored and evaluated;
* underpin the Christian values and ethos of the school;
* celebrate the values and worth of the school community;
* help children explore and develop their own spirituality;
* enable children to explore and evaluate their own beliefs;
* celebrate special occasions in the Churches year and the life of the community
* show appreciation for the God given gifts and talents of the school community
* celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.

**Responsibility for Collective Worship**

The governors hold the overall responsibility for ensuring that the legal requirements for worship are met. The Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for organising and planning the worship. Collective Worship is led by a variety of people including the Headteacher, members of the SLT, teachers, visiting clergy and other visitors to the school including the Open the Book team.

**Organisation of collective worship**

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. We meet as a whole school every day except Fridays where we meet in our Key Stages usually in the hall but sometimes in a classroom.

We conduct our Collective Worship times in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that collective worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate manner. 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 candles or sometimes other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children. Our worship usually take place within the school hall, however a number of services a year are held in the church itself and then a larger congregation of parents can join in the worship. We also have the grounds to hold worship outside.

We take the themes of our Collective Worship times from our monthly Christian Values, the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our Collective Worship times reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We use the Roots and Fruits Resource to support the planning of assemblies together with the SEAL resources.

Our Collective Worship times also reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Our Celebration Collective Worship times offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. Dilton Marsh C of E Primary School is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of all the children.

We welcome the input of visitors to our Collective Worships eg `Wessex water`, `Fair Trade` ‘The Dogs Trust’ assemblies. Our Church Team involves pupils when acting out Bible stories during our `Open the Book` times. We invite parents to our celebration worship on a Wednesday afternoon, 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.

Once every term, the Year 6 House Captains lead their House Assembly. This includes elements of worship and allows each of the houses to meet together and discuss relevant issues and events. The School Council will also lead some assemblies during the school year, largely to share the work that they have been doing.

Celebrations of special festivals or occasions may take place in the village church and we invite parents and members of our local community to attend.

We welcome governors’ attendance at our assemblies at any time.

# The Character of Collective Worship

The head teacher works closely with the clergy of Holy Trinity Church, Dilton Marsh, in order to plan together and to maintain good school and church relationships and to join together as appropriate, for instance to celebrate Christingle, Easter, Harvest and Christmas. We aim to include the children in the planning and delivery of our Collective Worship, wherever possible.

Collective worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation. The content and methodology of Collective Worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning. All those leading collective worship are asked to plan their act of worship in as much detail as they would any other learning activity.

Our weekly worship routine is as follows:

Monday – worship led by the head teacher or SLT member

Tuesday – worship led by visiting clergy or the Headteacher

Wednesday – Awards worship in the morning and a Celebration worship with Parents in the afternoon.

Thursday – hymn practice

Friday – Key Stage worship

Worshipful Responses from the children and staff may include:

* Silent reflection
* Thoughtful spoken response
* Spoken prayer
* Singing
* Liturgical responses (for example: Lighten our hearts Lord – Be with us today)

The school has a Prayer Tree, in the entrance area of the school. Children are encouraged to write short prayers and stick them onto the tree. Sometimes these are related to the Value for the Month, on other occasions this could be a personal prayer. Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including Celebration Worships and hymn practice. A range of prayers are used including the Lord’s Prayer, prayers written by the children and others. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. The school is actively developing the children’s confidence in reciting simple liturgy. When prayers are read to the children they are invited to make the prayer their own by joining in with ‘Amen’ (I agree) at the end.

At the beginning of the whole school worship led by the Headteacher or Deputy Head, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of candles.

**Right of withdrawal**

We expect all children to attend collective 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 restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

**Recording and Evaluation**

Acts of Worship are evaluated in terms of children`s responses which are given by pupils once a term. Evaluation sheets are used to record children’s reflections on the worship and their potential actions as a result of their understanding of the topic. A schools Hall Crew team work together to improve and enhance our worship. The Collective Worship leader, collates all these responses and feeds back to the teams involved.

**Monitoring and review**

Collective Worship is evaluated by those leading the worship, other staff, the pupils for whom the worship is intended or members of the governing body.

The governor responsible for RE, has a role monitoring Collective Worship in school. It is the role of the school governors to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.

**Date: March 2017**

**Review Date: March 2018**