



William Westley Church of England  
Primary School

# Collective Worship Policy

Last reviewed: May 2021

Next review due: May 2023

## **William Westley Church of England School Collective Worship Policy**

***“Collective Worship implies the offering of personal devotion respect and honour”***

### **Introduction**

The staff and governors of William Westley Church of England Primary School, in partnership with the Diocese of Ely, aim to enable children to develop as honest, caring and thoughtful members of both the school and wider communities. We believe that they should understand the difference between right and wrong and know that each person is a unique individual whose well-being is important to all.

### **The Nature and Purpose of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is distinct from meeting together to exchange information or deal with organisational issues, although all these aspects may together form assembly. Worship involves us gathering together to learn about and to praise God, and to express feelings of worth and respect for ourselves, others, our local community and our world as gifts from God. The involvement of children, e.g. through drama and music is central to our worship; their contributions enable us to build up our ‘focus wall’ in the hall, where artefacts, pictures etc. are displayed, in order to encourage children’s continued reflection as they move around the school. Stillness and quiet are essential elements of our time together, and enable all participants to develop awareness of the purpose of this special time.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Collective Worship at William Westley Church of England Primary School complies with our trust Deed and the ethos statement in our Instrument of Government and the legal requirements set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

### **Organisation**

Provision is as follows:

Monday: Collective Worship, led by the Headteacher.

Tuesday: Collective worship in key stages led by teachers and children.

Wednesday: Collective Worship led by a visitor from church.

Thursday: Collective Worship, led by the music co-ordinators.

Friday: Collective Worship led by Headteacher or member of staff or led by classes; parents are invited. Children’s birthdays and other achievements are celebrated.

After collective worship on a Wednesday there are timetabled visits from our Minister who will visit classrooms to discuss further the collective worship themes. Other visitors are also invited to give pupils the opportunity to learn about different forms of Christian worship. The school holds a service in Church for Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter and Ascension Day each year. The William Westley Service is held on the school day closest to the anniversary of his death, July 13<sup>th</sup>. In addition, our Leavers’ Service on the final day of the summer term is held in the URC.

Each time of worship begins with children coming into the hall listening to the music for the fortnight. The special ‘thinking candle’ is then lit, followed by the signed responses. The school prayer is said regularly, as is the Lord’s Prayer. Each child’s birthday is recorded in

the birthday book and on the following Friday the birthday candle is lit, the child is presented with a school bookmark and the school birthday song is sung.

### **Learning Expectations and Intended Outcomes**

Education, celebration, praise and hope are essential features of our worship at William Westley. We aim to make children aware of what it means to be a community committed to serving and caring for each other, God and our environment. In so doing we hope to create an atmosphere in which pupils are invited rather than compelled to explore issues for themselves, reflect upon and learn from their own and others' experiences, develop sensitivity and a sense of wonder, awe and mystery for the world of which they are part.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives, along with our common concerns, responsibilities and values, we affirm the equality of each individual, regardless of gender, creed (or lack of one), ethnicity, physical or mental ability.

### **Special Educational Needs**

The staff and governors at William Westley are committed to ensuring that every child in the school will derive benefit from collective worship, whatever her or his ability. Every attempt is made, therefore, to ensure that materials used are appropriate to a range of abilities, aptitudes and interests.

### **Withdrawal of Pupils**

We aim to ensure that collective worship is meaningful and relevant for all children and staff, for those with a faith background and those with none. Our school exerts no pressure on children to become worshipping Christians, or to participate in any activity that will compromise their own family faith or belief. However, Christian values are built into our ethos and are reflected in the themes of our worship. It is an expectation that all children and all staff will attend collective worship. Should parents wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from collective worship, this is discussed with the Headteacher. Parents should inform the Headteacher if they wish to exercise this right. Alternative arrangements will be made to ensure the welfare of these children during the time when collective worship takes place. We aim to make all children and their parents feel that attendance does not compromise their own feelings and that collective worship is an important time when the school comes together as an "extended family".

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Evaluation strategies used by staff for assessing the outcomes of collective worship are:

- ◆ observation of the children's interest level and attentiveness;
- ◆ feedback from pupils, parents and visitors;
- ◆ observation of the children's general behaviour in and around school, and to one another;
- ◆ a written questionnaire for all children
- ◆ a focused visit by Foundation Governors.

### **Programme Elements**

Themes for collective worship run for a term and are planned by the Headteacher and Worship Committee which consists of the Headteacher, Minister and Collective Worship Music Co-ordinator. The school explores this theme through stories, hymns, prayers, responses, adult-led discussion and a variety of art forms. Children are encouraged to think of the occasion as a special time, with discrete codes of appropriate behaviour. The Headteacher keeps detailed plans and records of collective worship.

## **Conclusion**

At William Westley we offer pupils opportunities to explore and share beliefs and consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence. We encourage them to consider the relevance of ideas, beliefs and values to their own lives, to think about the needs of others and what it means to be part of a community. The opportunity is given to put into practice the values of the school. Collective worship offers a time to celebrate achievement and worthwhile or positive behaviour, thus building up our common life.

***This policy was ratified on :***

***May 2020***

***and will be reviewed by:***

***May 2022***

***Signed by the Headteacher:***

***Paul Bryant***

***Chair of Governors:***

***Mark Norman***

***Foundation Governors:***

***Mary Sutcliffe***

***Judy Quarrie-Roberts***

***Caroline Wilson***