



Greatham
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
+
Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

November 2023

Review November 2026

Greatham Church of England Primary School Collective Worship Policy

Life and learning at Greatham School is firmly rooted in the message,

Love each other, just as I have loved you: (John 15:12)

Central to our school ethos is love and respect for God, each other and all of creation and we value the positive partnerships with the church, families, governors and the wider community.

We love each other because we believe that each person, from youngest to oldest, is unique and created in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1.26).

We aim to provide a loving and nurturing environment that enables pupils to fully develop their skills and talents. We encourage children to take risks, make mistakes and through perseverance, learn from these to achieve in a loving and supportive environment.

We support pupils to become independent, resilient and reflective learners through a creative, broad and balanced curriculum.

We support all our school family to live out the message Love each other, just as I have loved you: (John 15:12) through our core Christian values of love, hope, peace, forgiveness and trust which are deeply rooted in all aspects of school life.

Rational

Collective Worship at Greatham C of E Primary School takes place daily in accordance with provisions of the School Standards and Frameworks Act, 1998. The contents of all our collective acts of worship are in accordance with the aims of the trust deed and its Anglican Foundation.

Definition of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is a core activity each day and it is a special time when we come together to listen, think, participate and spend time in God's presence.

Aims

The school provides collective worship which reflects the Anglican traditions of the Church of England. Worship is inclusive and school members, who do not come from Christian families, are able to join the daily act of collective worship, even though this, in the main, reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief. Our Greatham family encounter worship as truly welcoming, inclusive and exemplifying the principles of Christian hospitality. This is an approach that seeks to meet the needs of all, wherever they may be on their journey of faith and belief.

We aim to provide collective worship that provides pupils with the opportunity to;

- worship which is considered worthy
- consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues
- explore their own beliefs
- develop their spiritually
- participate and respond
- to promote a common ethos and shared values
- to help pupils develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others

- promotes respect, tolerance and understanding for those with differing beliefs and background

Worship in Greatham Church of England Primary School encompasses our school values of Love, Peace, Forgiveness, Trust and Hope.

Inclusive

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. Our pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all. Pupils and staff in our school come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many of our pupils are naturally at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils are given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There is space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. Care is taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching. Collective worship is not 'done to' but involves meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that our pupils bring their own experience to worship.

Invitational

Our parents, pupils and adults encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship provides 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. The metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors' captures this idea. The warmth of the fire derives from the clarity and authenticity of the Christian message at its heart. There is no value to an encounter with a watered down, lowest common denominator version of faith. Importantly our door is open, all are welcome to come in and sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable. Pupils and adults are always invited to pray if they wish to do so and are invited to pray in their own way. Prayer is always accompanied by the option to reflect. Music and liturgies used in worship reflects the best of traditional and modern Anglican worship, it connects with the theme and explores the sacred to educate and engage. Music used reflects the diverse worship experience of the wider Christian community. Care is taken with the music and liturgy: the traditional and modern riches of Christian hymns and music is drawn upon and we think about what is most appropriate, at a given time, for the spiritual life of our community.

Inspiring

Pupils and adults encounter inspirational worship. Worship is formational and transformational: it enables pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It motivates pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently, and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. As a result of inspirational collective worship, they are inspired to become courageous advocates of causes. It encourages them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions. There will always be those who are uncomfortable to enter through this open door of worship in our school and so the Church of England recognises the right of withdrawal from collective worship for those parents or pupils who wish to exercise this option.

Pattern of Worship

- Monday Whole school worship led by the Headteacher
- Tuesday Worship reinforcing the previous day's worship through activities and discussion. Led by the Headteacher
- Wednesday Class Worship reinforcing the theme of the week
- Thursday Class worship led by Rev Bullock
- Friday Celebration worship led by Miss Finnigan. This is a review of the theme and a reflection of how children have been living out the theme in their daily lives. Awards and certificates are also presented. Special events and achievements are brought to the attention of the children. We celebrate our children's achievements. At Greatham the core of our school worship is belief in God the Creator. It is also an affirmation and celebration of the Anglican tradition and of the values and ethos of our school.

Good practice for Collective Worship before worship begins

- Candles should be lit to signify Christ's presence
- Music should be played
- Children should enter quietly as Worship is a special time. Teachers need to enforce this and set excellent examples.

Beginning Worship

- The leader should greet the children and staff and say together, Let's begin by making the sign of love to one another.

Concluding Worship

- Prayers should be said
- Music should be played.
- The leader should signify the ending of worship with The Lord's Prayer
- Children should leave quietly. Teachers again need to enforce this by actions and gestures rather than words.

Class Worship

- A candle should be lit, if safe, to signify Christ's presence.
- Include prayers.
- Class Teachers to follow the suggestions from the Collective Worship overview.
- Prayers

Class Led Worship

The parents of the children taking part in the Class Led Worship will be invited to come to the assembly. Each class teacher will have a supply of invitations to give to the relevant children in good time. A text message can also be sent to reinforce the invitation. These worships will include a hymn and a prayer.

Prayer and Reflection

Worship in all forms are planned to include a variety of opportunities for children to engage in prayer and reflection. In order to provide the right atmosphere we use elements from the Anglican traditions such as the Bible, candles, artefacts and liturgical colours. These

elements help children to have something to focus on as they are invited to move closer to God, for example, a lit candle helps children to reflect on Jesus as the light of the world. Collective Worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including hymn practice. A range of prayers is used including the Lord's Prayer and 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. At the beginning of the whole school worship led by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of candles. A cross is also displayed above the altar table in our mural and mosaic.

At the end of morning lessons before lunch, grace is said by either an adult or child in each class. Prayers are also said at the end of the school day. We also encourage it at times when children need comfort or have suffered loss so that they can turn to prayer at any time in their own lives. All of this contributes towards an understanding of personal prayer as a part of an individual's own spiritual development.

Every classroom has a prayer/reflective space where there is a weekly based prayer space activity focussing on the weekly worship theme. Children can use these spaces if they need a moment to reflect during the school day, to pray, engage in a prayer space activity or to be still.

Leadership and Management of Collective Worship

The governors of Greatham C of E Primary, in consultation with the Head Teacher, are responsible for Collective Worship. Worship is co-ordinated by the Head Teacher but the whole school is encouraged to take ownership of it because of the central place of it in school life. The worship team- 'The Good News Gang' discuss the planning, resourcing and development of worship. They alongside other pupils evaluate our worship.

Children lead parts of our worship. Every year group will plan and lead worship yearly for their families. At Easter and Harvest, all children are involved in planning and leading Harvest, Christingle and Easter Worship for our families.

Withdrawal of pupils from Collective Worship

In accordance with legal requirements, parents have the right to withdraw their children, from acts of collective worship on religious grounds. Parents should make their wishes known to the Head Teacher who will ensure that any pupils, who are withdrawn, are appropriately supervised while the act of collective worship takes place. Collective Worship time is not used to withdraw pupils to take part in other activities.