



Chess Valley  
Primary  
Learning  
Trust

***“What we nurture today, flourishes tomorrow.”***

***“I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.” John 15***

***love | joy | peace | patience | kindness | goodness | faithfulness | gentleness | self-control***

## Collective Worship Policy

**Date: Summer 2023**

**Review: Summer 2025**

### Introduction

Christ Church School observes the legal requirement that a daily act of worship should be provided for all children. In keeping with our trust deed of this Church of England school, collective worship is Christian in character and ‘reflects the principles and practices of the Church of England’ (Trust Deed).

Within this overall ethos and framework, the content of assemblies, although predominantly Christian in approach and content, draws on a wide range of material, including other faiths and non-religious sources. This reflects the advice from the DfE that ‘acts of worship which are broadly Christian need not contain only Christian material.’ So, for example, topics will at times reflect appropriate festivals such as Diwali and Sukkot, and also non-religious topics which reflect our Christian values.

As all our ‘assemblies’ are ‘acts of collective worship’ we use the terms as interchangeable and synonymous. Whilst all acts of worship have a distinctively Christian character, we recognise that a school community is broader than a church community and we aim to be inclusive in the assumptions and use of language, so that all children and staff will feel included, whether their backgrounds are religious or not.

Our assemblies provide opportunities for worship, whilst recognising that not all participants will be at the same stages of spiritual development or belief. At all times respect is shown to the backgrounds of children and staff and to the communities from which they come. We recognise the distinction made in the Education Reform Act between ‘Collective’ and ‘Corporate’ worship: Collective worship responds to the diverse backgrounds and spiritualities of a school community. Corporate Worship would assume a unified belief stance among all participants.

In addition to acts of worship provided in school, we also hold acts of worship in Christ Church. These include services for Christingle, Remembrance Day, new entrants and leavers. At least every term school assembly takes place in the church. Sometimes an assembly is convened to mark an important event in the life of the school e.g. an assembly which followed the death of the Queen.

The Headteacher is responsible for the planning and delivery of Collective Worship. Assemblies are seen as key occasions for establishing the spiritual ethos and character of the school and a main contributor in the Personal, Social, Spiritual, Moral, Cultural and Emotional development of both the school community and individuals.

The way we worship may vary from time to time but the purpose remains the same:

- To recognise, affirm the values and ethos of our school family.
- To celebrate all that is good and express thankfulness.
- To share what is meaningful and significant to the children.

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- To provide opportunities to reflect on some of the questions and personal dilemmas of life.
- To provide time for silent reflection.
- To share common concerns and responsibilities.

## Organisation

The majority of assemblies involve the whole school (not nursery) on a daily basis, but at times when it is more appropriate to address specific age groups, the infants and juniors meet separately. Assembly times are at a fixed time each day.

The current timetable of worship & assemblies is:

Monday – Christian Value

Tuesday – Biblical Theme led by Christ Church worship team

Wednesday – Singing/Songs of Worship

Thursday – Sharing of learning. Parents to be invited once during the term

Friday – Achievements and Awards

Assemblies and acts of worship are led by a range of staff members and on occasion children lead worship. On occasion, visitors come to school to lead or take part in an assembly. Assembly themes follow an agreed range of themes and values for the week, in consultation with the church team from Christ Church. A wide range of resource material is incorporated including Diocesan Year plans, a plan of Values for each week and a variety of published and online material and resources.

We choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

## Success Criteria

At this school we evaluate our acts of worship against some of the following:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- Positive response to shared experience
- An atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well being
- A sense of occasion
- Good order
- Staff affirmation
- A sense of challenge
- A place in the overall PSSMCE strategy of the school (Personal, Spiritual, Social, Moral, Cultural, Emotional)
- Enrichment of pupils' experience

## Roots and Fruits Christian Values – 'A tree is known by its fruit' (Matthew 12:33)

It is our belief that our Christian values programme offers expression to all that is of worth and indeed all that is sacred in our school community. It is inspirational and keenly relevant to the children's lives.

The Roots and Fruits programme of distinctly Christian values is a collective worship resource that provides a basis for class and whole school worship over a two year period. Rooted in Bible teaching, twelve Christian values represent the fruit that grows as the teaching is lived out in everyday life. The values are published on the school's website and form part of the collective worship timetable issued on a termly basis.

There is a distinct pattern to Roots and Fruits worship as set out below:

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Welcome – everyone gathers, and a candle is lit to signal the start of worship. The root of the worship is introduced.

Learning – using the symbol of a window, new possibilities/perspectives are 'opened up' through different resources/material, e.g. drama, images, poetry or Biblical texts.

Reflecting – symbolised by the mirror, searching questions and periods of silence allow for personal reflection.

Responding – symbolised by a door; the final element allows those present to 'step out' and take the message of God with them wherever they go.

Parents are informed of the Roots and Fruits theme via the newsletter.

### **Stories**

Storytelling plays a major part in collective worship. We draw stories from a wide range of religious and nonreligious sources, but especially from the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Storytelling styles include straight readings, dramatisations, video clips, poetry, and musical narratives. They may be told by staff, pupils or visitors. The stories, which are chosen, are appropriate for the age and experience of the children. They both reflect and extend their life experiences and generally raise questions to encourage individual responses, particularly about spiritual, ethical, and religious matters.

### **Music**

Music plays an important part in Collective Worship. Opportunities for singing and listening are always included. At times instrumental playing encourages participation and 'ownership' of the occasion by children. A planned collection of different styles/composers/musicians/instruments are played as children enter/leave the hall.

In each assembly, the opportunity to focus on chosen hymns/songs practice and reflect on the words and the impact of the music. Individual children occasionally perform on instruments they are learning.

### **Reflections and Prayer**

In Collective Worship we use prayers which reflect the Christian foundation of the school. Some may be traditional prayers, some are written by the children and at other times children are given the opportunity to reflect and form their own prayers. Care is taken to use language which is age appropriate. By experiencing prayer children are also learning about it and from it. The Lords Prayer and Christ Church School prayer is taught children. Candles as an aid for prayerful reflection are used.

### **Links with RE**

Whilst Religious Education is delivered as a discrete curriculum subject, at times themes which are being covered in RE are shared and celebrated in Collective Worship. For example, festivals such as Harvest and Sukkot are taught in RE and, at about the same time, form the main focus for assemblies.

### **Links with PSHE & Citizenship**

The weekly themes and values can also be linked, where appropriate, to those found in our Personal, Spiritual, Social, Moral, Cultural and Emotional Development curriculum. Whilst the themes/values forming our worship are in line with our Christian principles, we do have assembly themes for special events, e.g., Anti-bullying Week, Safer Internet use, etc.

### **Links with the community/visitors**

Through a school year there are many occasions when visiting speakers are involved in acts of collective worship. A number of these are members of the local community who come either as individuals or in some representative capacity e.g. local librarians, police officers, parents with a particular interest, Charity representatives such as Chorleywood4Refugees during Refugee week, etc.

### **Links with the worldwide and local Christian communities**

Links are established by, among other things:

- Clergy and church staff participation
- Celebrating key times in the Church's year
- Local and global charitable initiatives are expressed and encouraged in a variety of ways: for example finding out about and supporting Christian projects in other parts of the UK and other countries. (E.g. Love in a Box Christmas gifts for developing countries, Children in Need and The Children's Society etc.)

### **Monitoring and review**

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We are aware of the need to monitor and update the school's collective worship policy on a regular basis, so that we can take account of improvements made in our practice. The policy will be reviewed every two years.

Education Committee review – Summer 2023

Next review: Summer 2025