



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

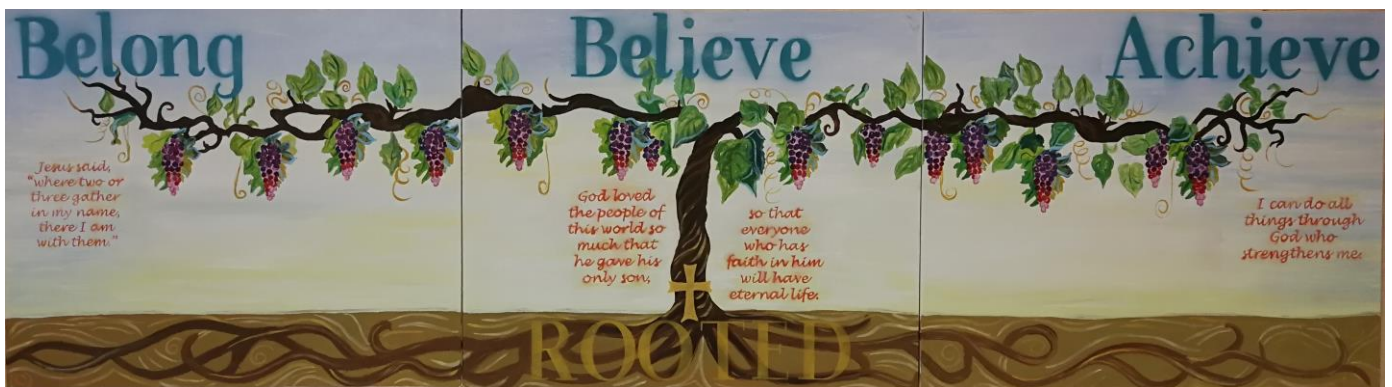
Policy reviewed and agreed by: Ethos Committee  
Date: January 2025  
Next review: February 2027

### Introduction

Collective worship is an expression of our school's Christian vision:

***I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.***

John 15:5



Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian vision in which we:

**Belong** Jesus said 'where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them'.  
*Matthew 18:20*

**Believe** God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life. *John 3:16*

**Achieve** I can do all things through God who strengthens me. *Philippians 4:13*

## Aspirations

At Goring Church of England Primary School we believe that collective worship should be central to the life of the school having high **status and value**. This means it needs:

- to be coherent with the school's vision statement
- to be well organised and planned
- pupil's to participate and to lead
- staff to attend and to participate
- an environment conducive to worship

We believe that collective worship in schools should be an **educational and inclusive** experience. This means it should:

- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils
- extend the learning opportunities offered to pupils
- reflect what goes on across the curriculum – not just RE
- promote the fundamental British values

At Goring Church of England Primary we recognise that there are pupils with widely differing experiences of worship. Some:

- go to Church regularly
- have no such experiences beyond school
- belong to and worship in the context of another faith

Worship at Goring Church of England Primary is collective worship as opposed to corporate worship. The school community is a community engaged in an activity which, no matter how valuable, is a legal obligation. It is not a faith community. These are not people sharing one faith who have chosen to gather together for worship. The organisation and language of collective worship at Goring Church of England Primary School allows for different levels of response. It invites, not coerces.

Collective worship at Goring Church of England Primary School includes material from faiths other than Christianity. We mark the major festivals of other faiths as we believe that learning about them is part of the general religious and cultural education of pupils. It is also a way of developing a growing understanding and valuing of members of other faiths in the school. The inclusion of such experiences does not mean the worship itself becomes Muslim or Hindu worship, for example.

At Goring Church of England Primary School, collective worship is seen as a rich opportunity to provide for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. For this to be successful worship must:

- have a sense of occasion
- invite participation
- be concerned with the worship of God
- provide an opportunity for pupils to explore their inner feelings
- provide opportunities for individuals and the community to share what is of importance to them/it

- celebrate beliefs, values and ideals
- respect the integrity of all individuals, valuing everyone as a child of God
- promote Christian moral values
- promote the moral codes of the school and explore the rationale for them
- promote personal qualities such as thoughtfulness, fairness, respect, honesty, etc
- reflect on models of moral virtue in literature and the lives of contemporary people and those of the past
- foster a sense of community and belonging
- be varied in style and include different forms of expression e.g. art, music, story, dance
- celebrate pupils' talents
- make use of symbols and imagery

### **Anglican Roots**

In all Anglican schools worship should reflect some of the essential features within the rich traditions of Anglican prayer and worship. At Goring Church of England Primary School some of the following elements of the Anglican heritage are drawn upon over a period of time and are used in school worship:

- Using the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning.
- Reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship (for example, bread, wine, chalice, cross and crucifix are symbols which lead to an understanding of the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection).
- Observing the cycle of the Anglican year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. This, with holy days, can provide the framework for a changing pattern of school worship.
- Participating in the regularity and set order of Anglican worship.
- Identifying a collection of prayers, hymns and psalms which might create a framework for worship within the school.
- Learning traditional responses and prayers which express the essential beliefs of Christians throughout the ages, including the Lord's Prayer
- Providing opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship.
- Recognising that the Anglican Church has a strong commitment to ecumenism which may be expressed when members of other churches are invited to lead worship.
- Experiencing the bond of community which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinion. This could be expressed through the range of visitors who are invited to lead or attend school worship.
- Sharing in a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in the welcome we offer to all pupils and the celebration of shared values and beliefs.

### **Organisation**

Collective worship is planned on a termly basis by the Headteacher in consultation with the Vicar or Curate from the local Anglican Parish Church: St Thomas of Canterbury in Goring.

Termly themes, which are taken from a variety of sources, are used as a focus for acts of worship. Key aspects of the general curriculum are incorporated into the planning of acts of collective worship. Collective worship itself contributes to the other areas of the curriculum.

Once a week collective worship is led by the Vicar or Curate from St Thomas of Canterbury Church. Church leaders and representatives from other local churches are also invited to lead collective worship during the year on a regular basis. Children are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship and are given a copy of this policy for guidance.

Key Stage 2 children are involved with the delivery of collective worship including the lighting of the candle, reading the Bible, delivering the call and response and introducing the hymns. All children are involved with delivering prayers and have an opportunity to play music during the sending out.

Key Stage 1 children attend a service at Church every year for Harvest. Various year groups of Key Stage 2 children attend services either at school or at Church for Harvest and Christmas, and there is a special service for School Leavers in Year 6. The whole school joins together with Streatley C of E school to celebrate Easter.

Group activities (such as recorder groups, choir, etc) may take place during collective worship as long as these group activities start with an act of collective worship (for example, beginning with a prayer or discussion ideally relating to the theme being explored).

### **Legal Requirements**

Arrangements for collective worship in Church schools are the responsibility of the governors in consultation with the Headteacher. Church schools must fulfil three main legal requirements for collective worship:

- provide an act of worship for all pupils every day
- ensure that collective worship is in accordance with the trust deed of the school
- make it clear that parents may withdraw their children from all or any part of collective worship.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of collective worship – whether undertaken at school or in the Parish Church – is undertaken during each academic year by the Vicar or Curate and Headteacher in consultation with all other interested parties, including the Collective Worship Coordinator, the 'W Squad', teachers, pupils, parents and governors.