

# **St Luke's Church of England Primary School**

## **Worship Policy**

Policy produced by the school

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## **Our School Vision**

**Go, shine in the world and live as Jesus lived, with compassion, honesty and integrity.**

**Our School motto is based upon Philippians 2:12-16**

### **Vision and Values**

Our school offers a distinctly Christian education in an inclusive environment, welcoming children and staff of all faiths and none.

*'Our schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value.'*

The Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

### **The Four Foundations of the Vision**

1. **Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills (value link-excellence):** enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talents in all areas of life.
2. **Educating for Hope and Aspiration (value link- determination and inspiration):** enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.
3. **Educating for Community and Living Well Together (value link-compassion, integrity, friendship):** a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.
4. **Educating for Dignity and Respect (value link- honesty, integrity, respect):** the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

### **Background**

Our school is situated within an increasingly diverse community, reflecting a multi-faith and multi-racial community, which we recognise and value. The school aims to reflect the local community while ensuring that the Christian foundations are still maintained.

While our school is a Church school we are committed to respecting individual beliefs. Upon entrance to the school, parents/ carers are made aware of the Christian basis of our teaching. It is therefore unlikely that parents/ carers would wish to exercise their legal right of withdrawal. However, should such a case arise, the parents/ carers concerned should consult the Head of School.

Our school aims to provide a caring, stable, stimulating environment where all children can develop to their full potential. Staff are committed to ensuring that the children's time at school is productive and successful. We aim to raise achievement in all aspects of the curriculum; developing self-confidence, motivation, self-reliance and co-operation.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and serve the local community by welcoming children from all backgrounds and faiths. Whilst our ethos is positively Christian, we value and respect the diversity of our community and aim to set all children on life's path through compassion, thoughtfulness and understanding of one another and respect for one another's differences.

Our school offers a distinctly Christian education in an inclusive environment, welcoming children and staff of all faiths and none.

The position of a Church of England school such as ours was well phrased The Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, when he stated that, *'Our schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value.'*

As a community, we have identified **nine core values that stem from our Vision and** are woven in to the very fabric of the school. We expect all members of the school community-pupils, staff, governors, clergy- to model these.

**Determination** This means resolution, resolve, willpower. **"Stand firm, and you will win life."** (Luke 21:19)

**Respect** This means regard highly, value, honour. **"And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them."** (Luke 6:31)

**Friendship** This means mutual trust and support. **"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."** (1 John 3:18)

**Inspiration** This means the process of being given passion and/or ideas for a task **"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."** (Philippians 4:13)

**Excellence** This means being outstanding or extremely good **"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord."** (Colossians 3:23-24)

**Community** This connects us with each other. **"We who are many, are one body in Christ."**(Romans 12:5)

**Compassion** This means having a deep awareness and sympathy for another's suffering. **"When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things."** (Mark 6:34)

**Honesty** This means truthfulness, loyalty, fairness, sincerity. **“The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy.”**  
(Proverbs 12:2)

**Integrity** This means having strong moral principles e.g. honesty, decency, fairness, equality; having pure and balanced moral character. **“Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”** (Philippians 4:8)

As a Church of England school, we believe **every** child is made in the image of God, and therefore we want the best for them. We value our school community as a place where love can flourish.

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. In order for us to think about and understand how Jesus lived his life, we underpin our teaching and learning with the stories and parables from the Bible. We also provide an environment which fully prepares the children to be confident, compassionate, honest and happy human beings so that they can:

**Go, shine in the world and live as Jesus lived, with compassion, honesty and integrity.**

**Our School motto is based upon Philippians 2:12-16**

**Where does our school vision come from?**

St Paul wrote a letter to a small group of early Christians who lived in a city called Philippi.

The early Christians of Philippi were a diverse group and St Paul wrote the letters to encourage them. He is positive and optimistic, despite being in prison. Our Christian vision is based on the part of St Paul’s letter to the Philippians which is below. It can be found in the New Testament.

*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, after it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.*

*Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the work of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labour in vain.*

*Taken from Paul’s letter to the Philippians.*

## **Collective worship in Church of England Schools**

Church of England schools are committed to offering high quality collective worship. They are places that recognise and value collective worship as central to fostering a sense of community and to expressing the school's Christian vision. In practice this means that structure, planning, evaluation, participation, collaboration, and inspection of worship are all taken seriously by the school and by diocesan authorities.

In Church of England schools, collective worship is an essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10.

In Church of England schools, collective worship is seen as more than a daily 'awe and wonder' moment. It is the unique heartbeat of the school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together.

*We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives...Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this.*

*Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. (The Church of England Education Office 2016)*

This form of encounter through worship should be 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.

### **Collective Worship and the Law**

Collective worship in community schools is grounded in the historical past and enshrined in educational law to be '*wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character*'. In Church schools the requirement instead to reflect the Anglican status of the school as expressed in its trust deed liberates those leading collective worship to build on the rich, lived diversity of Anglican tradition and identity. In the same way as worship in churches is aspirational, constantly evolving and being re-imagined there is an expectation of a continuous, dynamic reimagining of what collective worship means in the Church school.

The bible is used to inform and direct our Collective worship. Through careful planning children are introduced to a range of stories from the New Testament and Old Testament. Age appropriate bibles are used to enrich stories and children often read aloud to the whole school.

## **Inclusive, Invitational, and Inspiring**

**Inclusive:** Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. In the Church school pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all. Many pupils and staff in our schools will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Pupils should be given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There should be space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. It is an expectation that care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

Collective worship should not be 'done to' but will involve meaningful contributions from the whole school community, including pupils. It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion requires pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship. Although part of a national legislative framework, collective worship in the Church school grows out of the local context and out of pupils' experience, including their cultural backgrounds.

**Invitational:** Parents, pupils and adults can expect to encounter worship that is consistently invitational. There should be no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship should provide 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 the 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 should always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and should be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer should always be accompanied by the option to reflect.

Music and liturgies used in worship should reflect the best of traditional and modern Anglican worship, it should connect with the theme and explore the sacred to educate and engage. Music used should reflect the diverse worship experience of the wider Christian community.

**Inspiring:** Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter in a Church school to be inspirational. Worship should be formational and transformational: it should enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It should motivate 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 should be inspired to become courageous advocates of causes.

It should encourage them to think searchingly about their faith, beliefs and/or philosophical convictions.

### **School aims of worship**

Collective worship in a Church of England school will do the following:

- Explore the school's vision and how that underpins shared values and virtues. In doing so, it will reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.
- Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

### **Provision**

The rhythm of daily worship allows pupils and adults to step away from the business of life, creating a space for an encounter with faith in God. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on larger questions of meaning and purpose. Pupils and adults can expect that the school's collective worship practices will provide a shared set of symbols, signs, words and actions which give the community a language upon which it can draw, in times of joy and grief. Such an experience is key to fostering a sense of fellowship and cohesion within the school community. Whether in times of crisis or celebration, this time set aside in the school day provides staff and pupils with the opportunity to gather and support one another as a community.

Throughout the year, Church school communities may meet to celebrate and mark certain seasons in the Church calendar, such as Lent and Advent. Other important events in the school year, such as the start and end of the academic year, may be marked by formal acts of collective worship. Pupils and adults will encounter the practice of regular prayer and worship as a normal part of the life of the school. These activities will help provide a rhythm and stillness as a pattern of community life.

Parents, pupils and adults can expect that worship in a Church school will follow a recognisable structure that will help focus worship on one idea. This helps to give organisation and clarity to the unfolding of that idea, as well as helping the leader to ensure that worship is age-appropriate and moves away

from making it a performance art. This could take the form of a welcome or prayer followed by a consideration of a Bible passage or story that the group can then reflect on through discussion, prayer, silent reflection or music. It will be something that pupils and adults may want to share and discuss with others in school, in the community and at home.

### **The Weekly Pattern of Collective Worship**

Children take part in at least one act of collective worship every day.

Children say a prayer together as a class three times during the day: start of day, before lunch and end of day prayer.

Christian Meditation - this takes place in all year groups every day after morning break times or lunch times.

Monday worship is led by members of the clergy and senior leadership team. This is our Gospel assembly - following up on the gospel teaching in church from the previous Sunday. Pupil prayer leaders take part in leading prayers in this worship.

Friday worship is where we celebrate achievement in the school from the past week. Headteacher's special mentions are given which include a celebration of children demonstrating our core Christian values. Learning Heroes are given as a recognition of hard work in lessons. A 'Person of the week' is celebrated from each class.

On other days of the week, across the academic year the following acts of worship take place:

- Christian Values assemblies – They focus on one of our core values each week and are related to gospel stories.
- Teacher led worship in class – whole class worship led by the class teacher. This may follow up on the gospel teaching from Monday's Gospel Assembly or a theme linked to their RE learning.
- Children Leading Worship in class – children prepare and lead an act of worship for the class, supported by the class teacher.

In addition to this, regular class worship sessions supported by our parish clergy take place throughout the year. Parents and carers are invited to these.

We also celebrate the major Christian festivals throughout the year. Parents/ carers are invited to join us, either at school, or at our Parish Church.

These include the Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Easter and Harvest services. We also celebrate the start and end of the school year with a celebration in our Parish Church. On days when we attend worship in our Parish Church this worship is deemed to fulfil our collective worship requirement for the day.

## **Withdrawal from Collective Worship**

While our school is a Church of England school, we are committed to respecting individual beliefs. Upon entrance to the school, parents/ carers are made aware of the Christian basis of our teaching. It is therefore unlikely that parents/ carers would wish to exercise their legal right of withdrawal. However, should such a case arise, the parents/ carers concerned should consult the Head teacher.

We celebrate the cultural diversity of all the members of our school and have a cohesive community. Whilst collective worship will always reflect the Christian ethos of our school, we respect and acknowledge the variety of religious observances which are represented in our school and within the wider community. We acknowledge too that there are those of no faith who chose to be part of our school community.

## **The Key Elements of An Act of Worship**

Year 6 monitors help to lead worship on a daily basis by setting up the hall: moving the table, getting songs and music ready and helping children to light the candle at the start of our act of worship. Children are very keen to be selected for this role each year and value the leadership opportunities that it brings.

**Gathering:** The act of worship is seen as providing a period of calm and reflection within the school day, for the whole school (and its wider community when appropriate). Music is played as the children enter the hall to set this aside as a sacred time. A table is always on display in the hall with appropriate coloured cloths to reflect the seasons of the church year. This table is a focus for worship and a cross, candles and a Bible are used. Children are greeted liturgically according to the season and the candles are lit to signify that God is with us and that this is a time for reflection and calmness. A liturgical greeting is used. When an adult leads the worship, there is a Trinitarian blessing.

**Word, engagement and encouragement:** Children are engaged through a Christian story told from the Bible, a visitor, or use of high-quality visual images. These reflect the current worship theme. Children are encouraged to offer their ideas and reflections.

**Response:** A range of responses are used including reflection and prayer.

**Mission:** The children reflect on and share how they will apply what they've learned in their lives now after the reflection. We ask the children to reflect on how they will use this reflection to 'Go shine in the world and live as Jesus lived.'

**Conclusion:** Worship ends with an appropriate prayer. The children learn and say the Lord's Prayer.

## **Prayer**

We believe that prayer should encompass the following:

**P** Praise

**S** Sorry – for the things done wrong by us and others

**A** Asking for things – for others and ourselves

**L** Listening – to God

**M** Meditating on the mystery of God and the wonder of Creation

We believe that prayer should come from the heart, but we also know that it has to be taught by example. It is corporate or individual and at its heart it is communication between a believer and God. Children are encouraged to write prayers and lead prayers in school and in our church acts of worship. When a class leads an act of worship the children lead the school in prayer. Each class has a prayer book and takes turns in bringing this to collective worship.

The children have also developed a whole school prayer which reflects our vision.

***Dear God,  
Help us to learn to follow you,***

***Help us to listen to you,***

***Help us to love you,  
And all those around us.***

***In Jesus name we pray.  
Amen.***

## **Spiritual and Moral Development**

Spiritual and Moral Development is a life-long process and in the life of the children, is shared between parents/ carers, the school and the wider community. We acknowledge the wide variety of beliefs that make up our community; however, our Policy reflects the Christian focus of our school. Therefore, we seek to foster values and morals based on Christian teaching, which are also shared by the major world faiths. Key ideas and words that have been identified as being particularly appropriate when exploring spiritual and moral concepts include the following:

- Life, birth, creation, death
- Sleep, refreshment, renewal
- Friendship, fidelity, love, passion, patience
- Imagination, inspiration, enlightenment

- Elation, delight, joy, gladness, laughter
- Sorrow, sadness, grief, reconciliation, forgiveness, self control
- Injustice, pain, suffering, anger, courage, shame, guilt
- Kindness, gratefulness
- Pity, compassion
- Wonder, awe, reverence, adoration
- Splendour, beauty, perfection
- Stillness, calm, peace, silence, tranquillity, harmony
- Light, darkness
- Eternity, mystery, infinity
- Hope, dream, fact, fantasy
- Insight, intuition, belief, faith, trust
- Truth, certainty, uncertainty, proof

Poems, stories, paintings, photographs, natural objects, and music are some of the ways that children can be encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective.

We also have a spirituality policy in place which supports our understanding of spirituality not just in collective worship but across school life.

### **Resources**

Resources for acts of worship are kept centrally. The resources are specifically chosen to deliver the relevant themes from the acts of worship overview. Class teachers may access these at any time to plan and prepare to lead an act of worship. The book 'Roots and Fruits' provides an excellent set of resources linked to many of the school's Christian values.

### **Planning for Worship**

A worship planner informs members of staff of the themes for each week, the associated Christian value, foundation of the vision and suggested readings/resources and is agreed between the Head teacher and a member of the parish clergy.

### **Evaluation of Worship**

Acts of worship are informally evaluated on a day to day basis through dialogue between members of the senior leadership team and the clergy. The Chair of Governors attends at least one act of worship each week and provides feedback on this to the headteacher. The School Council leaders and House Captains also have a responsibility to evaluate and feedback on collective worship. The themes of worship are evaluated annually by members of the clergy and the Headteacher. Parents attend at least one act of collective worship each term.

### **Eucharist and Confirmation**

All children attend the Ash Wednesday service at church as part of the regular congregation when this holy day falls in term time. This involves them participating in a Eucharist.

## **Leavers**

Each year, a special service for Leavers takes place. Leavers are invited to “tell their story” and are also presented with a Bible. They are reminded that the Church (as well as the school) will continue to be there for them in the years that lie ahead.

## **Rationale for Themes of Worship**

The foundations of the school vision and values are mapped out on a matrix. The bible stories which relate to each foundation and value are plotted onto this matrix.

This is then used as a key document for planning collective worship for the year.

We also mark out special events and festivals using the diocesan worship planner.

## **Autumn term**

We think about the communities we belong to from our school to our city, our country and our world. Following the Autumn half term we focus on God’s Kingdom before moving into the season of Advent.

## **Spring term**

We celebrate Epiphany in Church then focus throughout the term on the life and teaching of Jesus: focussing on his compassion for others. Important feasts in the life of Jesus are remembered including Candlemas and the Baptism of the Lord. During Lent we focus on the later part of Jesus’ ministry leading up to the passion and crucifixion of Jesus. Term ends with a whole-school reflective act of worship in or as near to Holy Week as possible.

## **Summer term**

Term begins with an Easter celebration. In the first half of the Summer term we concentrate on the Resurrection appearances of Jesus, culminating in Ascension and Pentecost. The second half of the term has a dual focus. We look closely at responsibility and the ways in which Christians demonstrate responsibility in their lives. We also focus on the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the saints.