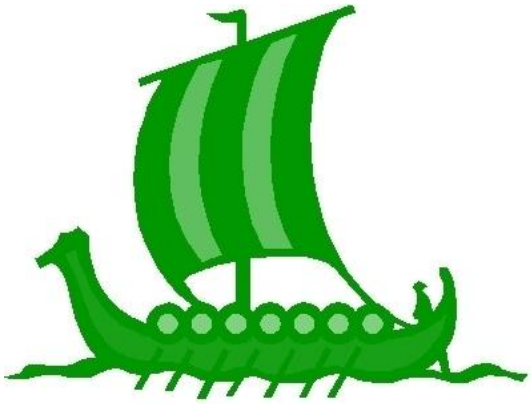


Wittersham Collective Worship Policy 2025

We strive to cooperate and work alongside all members of our community to feel valued, nurtured, and empowered as they embark upon their journey to become the very best that God intended. Throughout their voyage of discovery with us, we ensure all children are provided with a rich curriculum and experiences that promote courage and a strong moral purpose underpinned by our Christian values, preparing them to become compassionate citizens within our rural community and the wider world.

Version	Date	By	Description
V03	December 2024	L. Scott	Updated
V04	December 2025	Stella Coulson	Updated

On a voyage of discovery; flourishing together in God's love.

'On a voyage of discovery; learning and growing together in the light of God.

At Wittersham Church of England Primary School, we are dedicated to fostering a community where courage, compassion, and cooperation are at the forefront of our values. We believe that these principles are essential for the betterment of us all, mirroring the teachings and experiences of Jesus.

Our commitment to creating a nurturing and empowering environment remains unwavering. Our inclusive learning setting allows every individual to thrive, embodying the essence of courage, compassion, and cooperation—the new pillars that guide our community.

As we embrace these values, we recognize the pivotal role of collective worship as the beating heart of our school life. It breathes life into all that we do, providing a sacred and significant time each school day when we come together as a school family.

Collective worship is not only a cherished tradition but also a vital means of sharing and spreading the teachings and experiences of Jesus. It strengthens and supports our Christian identity, underlining our commitment to courage, compassion, and cooperation as the foundation of our collective vision. We celebrate the central role that each pupil and adult plays in fostering a community built on these principles.

Our acts of collective worship now reflect the enduring traditions found in the Church of England, specifically highlighting courage, compassion, and cooperation. Aligned with the Christian liturgical year, daily worship is central to our ethos, endorsed by all staff and governors. It serves as a significant contributor to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of the entire school community.

In this spirit, each child will experience worship that is not only welcoming and inclusive but also exemplifies the principles of Christian hospitality, embodying the courage, compassion, and cooperation that define our collective journey at Wittersham Church of England Primary School.

Collective worship therefore will be:

- Inclusive – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching.

- Invitational – In our acts of worship, there is no compulsion to 'do anything'. Rather, worship will 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. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray and sing if they wish to do so.

- Inspiring – By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action. There will be opportunities to think, reflect and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions.

Aims of collective worship

Collective Worship offers pupils, staff and the wider school community the opportunity to:

- Gather together to share sacred moments of joy, challenge, grief and love.
- Explore the school's distinctive Christian vision and values in action
- Reflect on the nature of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still, pray and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Explore Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate significant and special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

a) Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection whether they are engaged in learning in school or at home.
b) Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
c) Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
d) Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.

e) Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

The Anglican Christian Tradition

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship through invitational and inclusive language:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days
- Saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the blessings in common use
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses – Taizé style

We may also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using prayers from Common Worship
- Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship
- Celebrating Eucharist

Implementation

Collective worship may be planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class. Our school plans systematically and cohesively use Canterbury Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity. Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies: https://www.wittersham.kent.sch.uk/about-us/policies/

This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including for example: music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of technology.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

· Gather – we welcome the community, for example, (with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle)

· Engage – we share, for example, (a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message)

· Respond – pupils, for example, (discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing)

· Send – we share, for example, (the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle.

Expectations of pupils

In Wittersham Church of England Primary School, there is an expectation that all pupils will be involved within worship on a regular basis. This may be opportunities planned ahead of time, such as through the involvement of our Spiritual Council, or when classes are supported to lead worship across the year. Alternatively, this may also appear unplanned through questioning, asking for volunteers or simply responding to moments of spontaneity.

Pupils are invited to evaluate and reflect on the impact of acts of worship they have joined with. Their voice is integral to improving the structure, content and in shaping future plans for worship.

Pupil worship leaders are supported, encouraged and resourced to contribute meaningful acts of worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the collective worship leader during the school day to develop their own understanding of worship and to design an act of worship to support the spiritual development of their peers. Each class has a designated Spiritual Council Leader. They are responsible for promoting and sharing moments of spirituality throughout their classes, whilst also representing their class during moments of collective worship.

Developing worship

Parents, pupils and adults in Wittersham Church of England Primary School are entitled

to be led in worship by those who have a secure understanding of the nature of collective worship in a Church School context.

Therefore, all those leading worship, including clergy, should have access to regular Diocesan led training.

The leader for collective worship will:

- Ensure that all pupils have access to a daily act of collective worship, therefore meeting statutory requirements.
- Ensure that collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.
- Attend regular training and network meetings with Canterbury Diocese
- Produce and regularly review the collective worship policy to ensure that it remains reflects current practice and thinking.
- Liaise with the Headteacher and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of collective worship across the school.
- Ensure all stakeholders know what the expectations of worship are when leading, planning and joining worship.
- Join those who are leading worship to provide supportive feedback on how worship could be developed.
- Evaluate the impact of collective worship on the whole school community by gathering pupil and adult voice.
- Signpost staff to a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and resources, to help develop their confidence in leading acts of worship.
- Ensure there is a school protocol that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited to lead collective worship.
- Meet with and encourage pupil leaders of worship to enable them to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.

Visitors leading worship

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

It is the responsibility of the collective worship leader and senior leaders to ensure that

all visitors, who are leading worship in school, will be trained and properly briefed about the school, its pupil context and our school's vision. They will be supported and monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation process of worship.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils. Ideas are shared and play and integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury (SIAMS).

Parental Withdrawal

Worship is regarded as special time in our school day where we gather as a school family. Reflecting our ethos as a Church of England school, collective worship is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity. We respect the legal right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship, so would welcome the opportunity to discuss this decision with them. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.