

Thurnham C E Infant School



Collective Worship Policy

Members of Staff Responsible	Mrs M Shaw
Position	Worship Coordinator/Class teacher
Dated	September 2016
Date of next review	September 2017

THURNHAM CE INFANT SCHOOL

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

The Legal Position

The Education Reform Act (1988) on Collective Worship in County Schools restates the requirement found in Section 25 of the 1944 Act that all pupils attending a maintained school should take part in a daily Collective act of Worship. In a Church of England school, the act of Worship must be consistent with the terms of the trust deed of the school, and reflect Anglican beliefs, practices and values. The Act permits flexibility in timing and organisation, and allows for a single act of Worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups.

Parents, as stated in the school prospectus, have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, after a request in writing. (Though there is a legal right for children not to attend if their parents so wish, they are encouraged to do so). Parents who are considering this are asked to discuss this with the Headteacher. Collective Worship is an integral part of our school life at Thurnham and ideally all children should feel part of our school family at worship time. Every child has equal access to Worship regardless of faith.

Staff have the legal right not to attend Collective Worship. Staff members are requested to discuss this with the Head teacher as all staff are encouraged to attend.

Aims

- To provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God
- To ensure every child is made to feel special and is valued as a unique child of God.
- To consider spiritual and moral issues and reflect on life and living so children develop their own spirituality.
- To explore their own beliefs through worship and reflection.
- To encourage participation in and response to and leadership of worship
- To develop community spirit and cohesion
- To promote a common Christian ethos and shared Christian values
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To celebrate differences and share common values

The daily act of Worship is an important part of the ethos and values of Thurnham School and is linked to the Mission Statement which states:

Children's Version:

At Thurnham School we learn to love and love to learn.

Adult Version:

At Thurnham School we aim to provide an environment in which everyone recognises they have a valuable role to play, and in which learning will be an enjoyable, satisfying experience encompassing all aspects of development. We expect children to work hard and reach high standards of achievement, relevant to their levels of ability.

Through the strong Christian ethos of the school we strive to provide a sense of tolerance and consideration for others in both the immediate and wider community.

The daily act of Worship provides a daily focal point in school life for promoting all that our school stands for. It is a time of affirmation and celebration, encompassing awe and wonder, stillness and silence, whilst introducing children to formal and informal worship. We aim to be sensitive to the needs and experiences of all pupils taking into account their age, ability, race, ethnicity and family background including religious observances. Through our Christian beliefs, values and practices we aim to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the pupils. During our Worship time we introduce children to various broad aspects of Christian beliefs, practices and customs in accordance with the Diocese guidelines.

Organisation

Worship is held every day for a period of 10 - 15 minutes with the exception of the regular Year group Celebration time which may last longer than this. Class Worship occurs when another Year group is having their Celebration time.

Some themes for Worship are taken from the Diocesan website guidance and are suitably adapted for our younger pupils. Also themes are used from a variety of sources and can also be influenced by the time of year.

There is a two year plan for Worship themes which is then broken down into suggestions with guidance for staff concerning the selection of stories and resources. This Worship time rota is displayed in the staff room. It is also sent to the Church staff, who lead our worship once a week.

Celebration time is also held regularly for each year group and parents of the children selected for certificates are invited to attend. Children's

names are recorded in a Celebration time file. A candle is lit and a familiar liturgy is said at the start. It includes a prayer and a song also. It is a lovely time for the celebrated children to share their success and the school Worship practises with their parents.

Collective Worship is organised using a variety of groupings, allowing greater flexibility to meet the needs of all pupils as well as the needs of the school. Whole school Worship is a lovely occasion, celebrating belonging to our school, whilst class-based Worship is more intimate and informal, reinforcing the closeness of the class group through Christian teaching. A candle is the focus of all these Worship times.

Foundation Stage children have Class Worship initially, in their own familiar classroom with their teachers and TAs. After a while they have their own Celebration time in the hall with invited parents on a regular basis. They also have a year group Worship time altogether in the music room as appropriate. When appropriate they attend church led Worship on a Wednesday morning after they have fully settled into school life.

Christian Values

All staff aim to communicate and exemplify our six Christian values and beliefs that are focused upon in each of the six terms a year. These values are:

- **Kindness**
- **Trust**
- **Sharing**
- **Respect**
- **Love**
- **Friendship**

A member of staff/ Worship Coordinator leads a termly Act of Worship to introduce each term's Christian value to the children. They will be encouraged to uphold these values in school and in their daily lives. A display in the Hall highlights that term's value, as a reminder to the children. The value is reinforced in many Worships during that term and also in the class room during conversations with the children.

Acts Of Worship Times	Content	Led By
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Monday, 9.10am	Y1,Y2 Belonging To God's Community (including Birthdays, Awards, Behaviour and Safety)	Head teacher C.James
1:10pm - 1:30pm	Year R Class Worship	Reception Teachers
Tuesday 9:10pm	Y1,Y2 Celebration Time (Parents invited) /Spring & Summer Terms Rec Celebration Time am	Head teacher C.James/L. Pateman
1:10pm - 1:30pm	Year R Class Worship	EYFS leader S. Chastney Reception Teachers
Wed 9.10am	Y1,Y2 Church Visitors Act Of Worship on chosen theme (Rec join in April)	Church leaders
1:10pm - 1:30pm	Year R Year Group Act Of Worship led by Class teachers	Reception Teachers
Thursday, 9.10am	Y1,Y2 Act of Worship on chosen theme/Family Trust	Family Trust/Worship Coordinator/Class Teachers on rota
1:10pm - 1:30pm	Year R Class Worship led by teacher	Reception Teachers
Friday 1:30pm - 3pm	Worship In Song (Rec, Y1 and Y2 half hour each)	Singing teacher (Mrs L Holland) and TAs on a rota

Special Worship Times

There are also special Worship times held throughout the year when parents and governors come to join us. The children write prayers for these acts of Worship. We have a harvest service for Years 1&2 and their parents. Each year group does something special for Christmas, with Year 2 having a Carol Service at Holy Cross Church. The highlight is the special candlelit Worship time in the hall where the whole school attends, many candles are lit, songs are sung and a theme is explored. It is a magical time. Also Easter is celebrated with a special act of Worship to which parents are invited. We have a Leavers' Service with singing,

prayers (written by the children), acting and computer input, contributed to by Year 2 children, to mark their transition to the next stage of education. The service celebrates and gives thanks for their three years at Thurnham where they have all been a special part of the school. We have an annual whole school service at Holy Cross Church, when we walk the whole school to the church for Worship. This has become an annual feature of our Worship programme in the Summer term.

Collective Worship

Children come into the hall to music to encourage quiet, calm, reflective behaviour. Candles, visual aids, artefacts, flowers etc are used as appropriate.

Worship times start/end (sometimes both) with a hymn and always end with a prayer and the candle being blown out by a Year 2 child. Led by an adult, children will be encouraged to participate through sharing their thoughts, drama, questioning/answering, thinking, talk partners to discuss things and reflection time. In addition to details under 'Organisation', visitors and speakers are invited into school when appropriate.

Links with spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and the wider curriculum

The themes for Worship and the observance of times for reflection are also included in curriculum plans and in the personal and social development activities at Thurnham. We try to provide opportunities for spiritual experiences, building on our infant children's natural delight and wonder in the world around them.

Through circle time, and using SEAL resources, we encourage children to reflect on social, personal and moral issues, and develop an understanding of themselves and their peers. *SEAL promotes social and emotional literacy in children and equips them with the skills they need to lead a healthy, happy life. We foster their growing confidence and self-esteem.*

In all areas of school life we endeavour to provide a caring, supportive ethos, where children are prepared to take risks and explore their potential and new areas of learning.

Opportunities for Prayer

There are always prayer times in Worship, and children are introduced to the Lord's Prayer, school prayers, response prayers, and special prayers relating to the theme of the Worship. Children say a prayer at the end of

both morning (grace) and afternoon sessions (a home time prayer which is said or sung). Children write their own prayers for some Worship times and sometimes as part of RE. At certain times, for example Remembrance Day, children are invited to contribute to a special prayer book, which they do thoughtfully. At times a prayer request box is put out for children and they can ask for prayers to be said for specific people. This is collected by the church and forms part of the church prayer list.

Equality and inclusion

Every child has equal access to our worship, regardless of gender, faith, culture, ethnicity, and ability. Because of this it is rare for any parent to exercise their right to remove their child from this important part of the school day. However, parents have the right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship, and are asked to discuss this with the Head teacher. (Though there is a legal right for children not to attend if their parents so wish, they are encouraged to do so). Pupils with significant special educational needs are supported by their individual assistant to allow them full access, using signing or any support strategies necessary. Gender and cultural differences are represented positively and sensitively, and resources for Worship are selected with these considerations in mind. An effort is made to explain issues simply, whilst challenging children to think deeply about complex concepts to encourage them to think carefully about their own ideas and those of others. We have a broad and inclusive approach which supports the development of the ethos and values of the school community and which enhances community cohesion.

Everything we do in school promotes the well-being and development of the 'whole child', and Worship provides a time of peace and reflection in a busy school day. We also have a reflection seating area in the corner of the playground. Our daily Worship forms an important part of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Health, Safety and Well-being

In Collective Worship, we follow the school's health, safety and well-being policy. For example, appropriate care is taken when using lighted candles and electrical equipment. In line with our 'net-safety' policy any internet resources used must be checked by the leader prior to their use in act of Collective Worship. In the event of fire all pupils are familiar with exit routes from the halls and other areas of the school where Collective Worship takes place. Visitors are not left unaccompanied with children.

Special Collective Worship with particular risks, e.g. the Christmas Candlelight Worship, has a risk assessment to ensure safety of children and staff.

Reviewed September 2016

Next Review: September 2017

Monitoring

Foundation Governors monitor provision for Worship on a regular termly programme of involvement. See programme of monitoring below:

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP - MONITORING/INVOLVEMENT TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS		
AUTUMN TERMS	SPRING TERMS	SUMMER TERMS
Church Steering Group Meeting	Church Steering Group Meeting Including meeting of HT and Foundation Governors (John Wale, Juliet Mee, Sue Jackson) to review provision and the SIAMS documentation.	Church Steering Group Meeting
Governor's awareness visit to an RE lesson in each year group, and discuss afterwards with pupils (Juliet Mee) Report back to governing body Informal contact of RE link governor (Juliet Mee) and RE Coordinator	Report back to governing body Informal contact of RE link governor (Juliet Mee) and RE Coordinator	Governor's awareness visit to three acts of Worship (cross section - Leavers' service, Family Trust, Church etc) and discuss with pupils afterwards (Sue Jackson). Report back to governing body Informal contact of RE link governor (Juliet Mee) and RE Coordinator

Coordinator for Collective Worship: Mrs M Shaw

This policy has been updated after discussion with the Governors' School Evaluation Committee for this school (accepted at FGB meeting in March 2016), and using the latest guidance from the Diocese of Canterbury. It will be reviewed on a three year cycle, as recommended in the above document. Next review due in March 2019 (or sooner if new guidance received which requires earlier review).