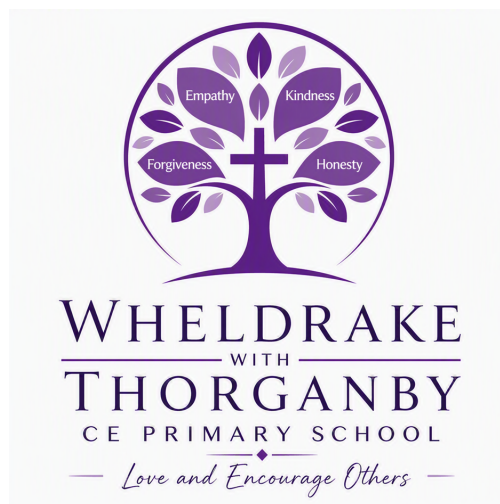


Wheldrake with Thorganby CE Primary School

Collective Worship Policy



Introduction

In Church of England schools, daily Collective Worship is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God and spirituality, both as individuals and together.

Collective Worship is central to the ethos of Wheldrake with Thorganby CE Primary School as it strengthens and supports our Christian distinctiveness and the spiritual development of our school, while reaffirming our vision and core values. It celebrates our place in the community and is an essential component of an education that enables all pupils and adults to thrive.

Our Vision

As with the rest of our curriculum, Collective Worship is shaped around our Christian vision:

Love and encourage each other.

At Wheldrake, our vision is to nurture a community where we love and encourage each other as we would ourselves, leading to a safe and inspiring environment where every person can thrive academically, socially, and spiritually. This is rooted theologically in the teachings of Jesus and first Christian leaders in the New Testament:

‘Love your neighbour as yourselves.’ Matthew 22:39

‘Let us encourage one another.’ Hebrews 10:25

The values which help us to achieve our vision are:

Empathy, which deepens our understanding

Kindness, which guides our relationships

Forgiveness, which helps us grow

Honesty, which builds trust

Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring

Inclusive

Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, responding to others and, for some, to God. At Wheldrake, pupils and their families can expect to encounter worship that is both inclusive and fully accessible to all. We acknowledge that there are some pupils and staff in our school that will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds. Many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. They will be given the opportunity to think about, ask and respond to 'Big Questions'.

It is recognised that pupils will bring their own experience to worship. Inclusion welcomes pupil involvement in planning, leading and the evaluation of worship.

Invitational

Worship at Wheldrake is invitational. Worship will allow the freedom for those of different faiths and those of no religious faith to be present and engage with integrity. Pupils and adults will always only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and they will be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer will always be accompanied by the option to reflect. Music is used to reflect the diverse worship experience of the wider Christian community.

Inspiring

Pupils and adults can expect the worship they encounter in Wheldrake with Thorganby CE Primary 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. It should enable pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Our shared understanding of opportunities to encourage spiritual development draws on the work of Liz Mills, who uses the concept of a ring doughnut to explain spirituality. The doughnut represents the whole child. The outer ring is the tangible (mind and body), the whole represents the intangible (the spirit), but if there was no hole, it wouldn't be a doughnut. For our school, this remains the best definition of spiritual development; it is the exploration and development of the hole in our centre that makes us whole.

Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present and still, often linked to invitations to reflect and pray. The structure of Collective Worship varies across the week but always follows the "Gather, Engage, Respond, Send" pattern.

In our daily acts of collective worship we give pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community.
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God.
- Be still and reflect.
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events.
- Hear different aspects of the Christian story and reflect on Bible verses.
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness.
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ.
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes.
- Share each other's joys and challenges.
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar.

We work with the local vicar, other church members, visitors, such as YOYO, and the pupils involved in our Worship Group to plan and deliver acts of worship that are invitational, reflective and engaging. There is plenty of flexibility in the provision of collective worship to enable all pupils to benefit without compromising their beliefs. Christian values are built into our ethos and teaching, and are reflected in the cycle of themes on which our daily acts of worship are based. The spiritual, social, cultural, and moral welfare of our pupils, whatever their background, is of prime concern to us at school. One of the ways our school expresses its Christian character is by having services led by our Worship Group in our local church each term. We also include Picture News in collective worship, where a topical image is shared with thought provoking questions.

Gather, Engage, Respond and Send

Gather

Purpose: To create a welcoming and focused atmosphere.

As pupils and staff enter the hall they are encouraged to be still. The lights on the tree will be lit and the remainder of the hall lights will be dimmed. The worship table is used as a focal point and is dressed with a liturgical cloth, a Bible, cross and candle to represent the Holy Trinity. A poster showing the Christian Value for the half term will also be displayed.

Engage

Purpose: To share the message and content of the act of worship often through a story, reading, discussion and/or singing.

A lesson about a spiritual or moral theme will be shared with pupils and staff in a way that is engaging to all.

Respond

Purpose: To provide opportunities for reflection, discussion or to creatively respond to the message.

Pupils and adults will be invited to respond to the message in a variety of ways across the week: prayers, singing, writing reflections, drawing or participating in group discussion.

Send

Purpose: To inspire the school community to consider how to integrate the message or moral in their own lives.

Collective Worship will end with a prayer or reflection on the theme of the day/week.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As a school, we regularly evaluate our approach to Collective Worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors. We also welcome the parents' contributions through surveys, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. All leaders of Collective Worship are asked to reflect on their own practice.

Legal Requirements

The law requires the Headteacher and Governing Body of every school to provide a daily act of Collective Worship that will build on the rich, lived diversity of Anglican tradition and identity. Collective Worship is regarded as an essential part of the whole child and allows pupils and adults to step away from the target-driven culture of much of education, creating a space for an encounter with faith in God. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on larger questions of meaning and purpose. We expect all children to attend but any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. If any parents wish to exercise their right, they are asked to discuss this matter with the Headteacher. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from Collective Worship.