



Collective Worship Policy 2025

Our School Vision

Woodborough Woods is a school with a Christian foundation, which seeks to express its Christian character by serving families in the local community and by providing a Christian ethos where children and their families can feel valued. There is an opportunity to experience the meaning of the Christian faith in the welcome that is offered to all and in the relationships of love and respect that characterise the shared life of the school. Designed to be sequential, this curriculum enables pupils to build knowledge and skills by making links with previous learning; this is shown in our progression documents. By fostering an enjoyment of learning, our children are given the opportunity to develop as independent, resilient pupils who are equipped with the ability to use their knowledge and skills to make wise choices as they take their place in the world.

The school's direction stems from its Vision Statement: 'Grow Together' following Jesus' example to 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39) because through love for one another, we can build a strong learning community ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to flourish. It recognises the importance of the community it serves, and seeks to build relationships based on kindness and respect. It will strive to be a place where Christian priorities and values inform every subject in the curriculum and are reflected in the day to day life of the school.

We believe that the children are the centre of all our work here and we strive to ensure our school is one with a happy and caring environment. We take pride in promoting the highest standards of conduct and achievement allowing children the security and confidence to reach their full potential.

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, our aim is to provide this secure environment, firmly rooted in Christian values. We believe that the education of children is a partnership, one between parents, teachers and governors all working together to provide the best interests for the children in our care.

Our mission

Jesus taught his followers to grow together in faith, supporting each other along this path. Our mission is to ensure all pupils are able to let their light shine in ways that support their individuality. The fruits of the Holy Spirit encapsulate this perfectly, guiding us on our journey towards becoming inspirational members of our community. During their time in school, pupils learn about these fruits and recognise ways in which they can show these qualities in their daily lives.

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

Our core values

Each half term we explore our vision and mission statement by using our school values as chosen by our school community. Each week staff are on the lookout for pupils demonstrating our values. These children are celebrated during our weekly 'Shining Star' worship to recognise the part they have played in sharing our values. With parental permission, their photos are shared with the wider school community via Viva Engage.



Love



Respect



Peace



Kindness



Patience



Perseverance

Our daily act of worship (as a part of our strong and positive partnership with St. Swithun's Church) is a very important part of ensuring we live out our vision, not only in Woods' daily life, atmosphere and development as a whole, but personally in the lives of individual children and families. It is 'wholly or mainly of a Christian character' (outlined in the Church of England collective worship guidance) and helps to communicate and develop our values.

Collective Worship is a time when we can celebrate not only what this means, but how it can affect us all in a positive way. It makes the impact of our Christian heritage, beliefs and practices meaningful. It is a power for good in our school, helping pupils to learn and grow in an environment which is safe and caring. Worship allows and encourages them to think for themselves and take responsibility for their own life and the lives of those around them. In this way, worship genuinely and positively helps shape individual lives and the 'spirit' of the school as a whole. It is a significant contributor to who we are.

In this way Collective Worship at Woods aims to:

- underpin and explore our Christian values of love, respect, peace, kindness, patience and perseverance;
- provide the opportunity for pupils to experience worship and consider God and their belief
- be relevant and provide an enjoyable, lively, positive and meaningful time together
- lead children to a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and how it relates to the life of Jesus
- encourage respect for belief, other religions and those who genuinely have 'no faith'
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- encourage participation and response
- provide opportunity for personal reflection and prayer
- encourage children to think, including about themselves and their response to issues raised together with deeper questions about faith and God

- encourage personal development by encouraging children to consider who they are and the kind of person they might become
- encourage positive action (ie not be a passive experience) to make our world (on small personal or grander level eg helping a friend to raise money to help starving children) a better place
- contribute to individuals and the school's spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.
- relate current issues to our own lives, increasing our understanding of people and the world
- bring the whole school together helping create a sense of belonging and school spirit, promoting a common ethos and shared values, recognising who we are
- celebrate achievement and the life of the school as a whole
- provide performance opportunities to help build confidence and encourage the development of talent

Legal Framework

At Woods, we recognise the requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, appropriate to their age and aptitude, in line with the Education Reform Act (1988). Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship. Should they wish to do so, parents may inform the school in writing or by speaking with a member of staff, and suitable alternative arrangements will be made for their child. As a church school, collective worship remains central to our life, ethos, and educational provision, and is considered an important part of every child's experience at Woods.

S.E.N. PROVISION and EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The arrangements made for children with special needs include alternate seating and support for those who find the 'large group' experience of assembly. This is in line with the positive commitment outlined in our Disability Access Plan. Not only do assemblies take place in accordance with our equal opportunities framework, but they are also a time when positive attitudes to such important areas as race equality and gender can be emphasised, explored and developed.

IMPACT and review

When deemed appropriate pupils are asked their views of worship. This is both to ensure we are keeping worship fresh and relevant and to gain an insight into the impact of worship from the children's viewpoint. Occasionally, we are allowed an unexpected insight either through the action or comment of a child or through a letter written by a parent as to the positive effect of a particular act of worship on their child that week. We encourage worship 'takeaways' using 'missions' from some of the acts of worship; an example might be during Advent when we are invited to suggest ways in which we can 'follow' Jesus and help others in our local community. We

invite children to share their thoughts and document these into the class RE books as well as our whole school book 'Bringing the World to Woods'.

Partnership and governance

The real and effective partnership with St Swithun's is crucial to the life and success of Woods, but within this it is also important to recognise the contribution of Annie Hill, the children's family support worker who is not only our Link Governor for Collective Worship, R.E. and Vision, but is also our main Church contact and influence.

Moreover, whilst our Governing Body as a whole, through its understanding of and commitment to the delivery of our Mission Statement, helps drive our Christian vision, of greatest significance in the area of worship and our Church School Partnership are our Foundation Governors. Along with the Head Teacher, they are the guardians and shapers of not just the Christian foundation of St Swithun's, but what we would like to see as the school's spirit.

IMPLEMENTATION

The R.E. Curriculum and Worship are both led by the same team, they make sure assemblies take place every day at the designated times. The RE coordinator draws up a worship timetable which:

- Always contains reference to the main Christian Festivals
- Contains themes which can also be picked up in R.E. teaching

The Daily Act of Worship

Worship is held at 10:15am every day and lasts 15 minutes.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday we hold whole school acts of worship, emphasising the unity of the school. EYFS hold their own class based worship on Tuesday and Thursday, with the rest of the school meeting in the hall at this time.

We use various resources to support the delivery of worship including:

- Primary News
- Roots and Fruits
- SPCK assembly resources

Our RE coordinator leads one of the weekly acts of worship and others are led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of staff. Children are also encouraged to lead all or part of the worship or may contribute with readings or prayers.

Worship is held in the hall, where there is a wooden cross as a focal point and a candle is lit to represent the Trinity at the start of each worship. We have runners on the worship table in liturgical colours mirroring the church year and there are banners made by children with biblical verses. Music is played as children enter and

leave the hall to encourage an atmosphere of reflection. The Lord's Prayer is recited regularly, along with our school prayer. A wide range of approaches are used in worship, including drama, discussion, reflection, reading, singing and prayer.

The children also attend at least three services in Church each year: Easter, Harvest Festival and Christingle. These services are led by the pupils, staff and supported by Annie Hill (the family support worker at St Swithun's)

Liturgical colours

In Christian churches one of four colours - purple, green, gold (or white) and red - referred to as 'liturgical colours', are used for altar linen, clergy robes and various hangings. At Woods, our worship table covering follows these colours.

The colour reflects the season, so that for instance in Advent purple is used, a colour of royalty because we are preparing to welcome the coming of a king. Purple is used again in Lent because it also symbolises suffering and pain.

At Christmas and Easter the colour changes to white or gold, both bright optimistic colours for festivals, times for joy and celebration.

Between the festivals green cloths symbolise all living things, renewal and promise of new life.

And finally, red is the colour of fire, used in churches to celebrate Pentecost and saints' days.

Prayer

Each class has its own prayer area; children are invited to record any circumstance/person/pet that they feel they would like to be prayed for. The aim is to make prayer as relevant and understandable as possible. We also hope it encourages pupils to reflect during prayer times. It allows a sensitive airing and recognition of subjects such as death and illness, it may allow staff to learn that some children may be upset because of a circumstance they might otherwise be unaware of, thus allowing us to provide appropriate support and sensitivity. Children may write their own prayers for use in worship. This may also link to 'prayer writing' in class.

Pupil Participation in Worship.

At Woods we are developing the role of Faith Champions - these pupils will help with planning and leading collective worship. They will play a vital role in our school, helping us create a peaceful and inclusive environment where we can all come together to share our beliefs and values. These pupils apply for this role and are appointed to carry out important tasks and roles within the spiritual life of the school. They bring us together in prayer; they help to plan collective worship assemblies; and support adults and other children in their class collective worship.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Role models for our school values
- Support Whole school, class and key stage worship
- Undertake regular training in children's prayer and support

- Assist in whole school improvement and developments of our Christian distinctiveness in school.
- Monitor the usage of prayer areas across school.
- Support classes in how to use prayer areas.

Qualities of a Faith Champion

- Kind
- Considerate
- Helpful
- Patient

How will our Faith Champions be supported in school?

We will support them in their role as they learn how to lead worship. They will learn about the importance of the key elements of a worship - gather, listen, respond, go forth.

Each half term they will meet with the RE Co-ordinator to discuss and plan upcoming worships.

We are aware that for many of our children worship at school may be their only such experience and therefore it is crucial that those of us that provide this make sure it is not only relevant, but also enjoyable.

Children's lives can be further enriched to the benefit of individuals and society as a whole.

'Together may we give our children roots to grow and the wings to fly.'

Jonas Salk