



Collective Worship Policy
February 2023

FRAMEWORK FOR WORSHIP AT FIRLE CHURCH of ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

At Firle Church of England Primary School we recognise our responsibility to provide the opportunity for collective worship for all pupils and to promote their spiritual, moral and cultural development. As a Church School, our worship is Christian in character.

The arrangements for collective worship are shared with the Governing body after consultation with the Executive Headteacher, this ensures that the act of worship is consistent with the purpose of the school.

The Foundation Governors must as far as possible, ensure that the school is conducting daily acts of worship in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deed relating to the school. The Foundation Governors have an important role in agreeing the arrangements for collective worship.

The Education Act 1996

"All pupils in attendance at a maintained school shall on each day take part in an act of collective worship' unless 'the parent.....requests that he may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship in the school".

The act or worship will take place daily. It may take place with the whole school, in class groups or other groupings of pupils. In accordance with the 1998 Education Act the act of worship may in special occasions take place elsewhere in the school.

The Trust Deed

"The daily act of worship required by law in the school shall be consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England".

Commitment to Worship

1. *Worship is central to school life: good worship focuses on God and the vision and values of the school.*
2. *Worship is educational: good worship develops children's idea about God.*
3. *Worship is often cross- curricular: good worship shows an appropriate line with the curriculum, RE policy and class work.*
4. *Worship is planned to be stimulating and reflective: good worship increases children's awareness of God through varied experiences.*
5. *Worship is inclusive: good worship engages everyone present in his/her own way.*

School Worship: Perspectives and Principles

Spiritual and Moral Development NSS 1993

'Collective worship should offer opportunities to explore and share beliefs; consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence; consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to the children's own lives; think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community; and appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them. Collective worship also offers an opportunity to re-affirm, interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides a time to celebrate the various achievements of members of the community.

Worship and Spiritual Development

At Firle, worship contributes to the spiritual development of pupils through:

- Celebrating all that is good and expressing thankfulness for what we have and the joy of being alive.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them in their own personal development
- Ensuring that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of our pupils.
- Giving time when appropriate for silent reflection and exploration of inner space.
- Illustrating forms of worship that others have found helpful in their spiritual development e.g. silent contemplation, dance, and singing. Provide a rich variety of forms of expression e.g. art, drama, story and give pupils the opportunity to experience these at their 'own level' rather than teachers simply providing their own interpretations.
- Taking place in an environment that is conducive to worship, which is professionally coordinated, and properly resourced.
- Inviting and never coercing, remembering that children will be at different stages of spiritual development and that they should feel able to respond and participate at their own level.

Features of School Worship

Sense of awe, wonder and mystery

Sense of transience and constant change

Awareness of personal worth, uniqueness and identity.

Awareness of others as feeling, thinking persons - relationships.

Awareness of community, its demands, values, rituals and celebrations.

Awareness of achievement, celebrations and joy.

Awareness of loss, sadness and suffering.

Awareness that life involves choices: selfish, right, wrong, good and evil.

Setting the Scene

We endeavour to set an atmosphere for school worship that will:

- be warm and welcoming;
- be peaceful and calm, yet vibrant and alive;
- enable all to express and share thoughts and feelings - or choose not to;

- Allow for a secure and comfortable knowledge that each person will be valued and respected.

The presence of adults supports a positive message about the importance of worship and underlines the importance of the life of the school. It also enables teachers to ensure that the content is sensitively followed up. The school welcomes visitors to school assemblies and parents are invited to take part in school assemblies and at the special events held at Firle Church.

A Space for Worship

The school uses various focuses such as – a cross, the Bible, a candle, or other artefacts and these are positioned so that all can see. We try very hard to ensure that the OHP does not become the focus. It can be used for displaying relevant OHP pictures linked to the theme.

Stillness and Quiet

Music is played as the children enter the hall. The children are expected to enter in silence and this time is regarded as a time of thought and reflection. A period of silence during worship enables those present to make their own conversation with God.

The Anglican Tradition

These areas are expected to be explored in worship during a child's time at Firle:

- using the Bible as a source of inspiration and learning;
- taking part in the regularity and set order of Anglican worship which recognises the central significance of the Eucharist but also allows for a variety of other forms of special services;
- reflecting on Christian symbols and their use in worship (e.g. bread and wine, chalice, cross and crucifix);
- observing the cycle of the Church's year and the holy days;
- using the parish church and its priest as a resource;
- using collections of artefacts as a focus for short acts of worship in groups;
- making a collection of prayers, hymns and psalms thus creating a framework for worship in the school;
- learning traditional responses and prayers which express the essential beliefs of Christians throughout the ages (the Our Father, Glory to the Father);
- providing opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence within worship;
- recognising our strong commitment to ecumenism (e.g. inviting members of other Christian denominations to lead worship);
- welcoming pupils of whatever faith and celebrating shared values and beliefs.

The Bible in School Worship

For Christians the use of the Bible is central to worship.

The Bible can be used in various ways:

- individual verses chosen and carefully explained to the children;
- particular Bible characters and stories selected to exemplify a specific focus;
- verses committed to memory;
- selected readings to the Church Calendar or to a theme.

The inclusion of a Bible passage can:

- enrich worship;
- enhance a theme;
- give context to a theme;
- develop an awareness of how Christians use the Bible.

The Bible passage can be used at different points in the school worship:

- at the beginning to set the context and give meaning and/or focus to the worship;
- in the middle to expand the focus of the worship or change the pace or the atmosphere and refocus the children's minds;
- at the end to encapsulate and draw together the threads of the worship.

Prayers

It is hoped that through prayer children develop a sense of trust and recognition that Christians put their lives, and those for whom they intercede, in the hands of God.

At Firle the children are encouraged and helped to make links between everyday life and prayer. Children are encouraged to use different methods of prayer:

- prayer and silence; prayer of listening alone and the use of a time of quiet;
- posture for prayer - hands together or hands on laps;
- ways in which pupils can make prayer requests - prayer board, net or box.

A collection of prayers is available and taught, including the Lord's Prayer, as well as those written by children, set prayers, graces before lunch, and prayers used by classes at the end of the day.

Prayers will be said daily in the school. During the act of worship, before lunch, at the end of the school day and sometimes when appropriate in other areas of the school day/life.

Hymns and Music

Various areas should be considered when selecting the hymn and songs:

- singing during worship allows children to become involved rather than passive observers of the worship;
- the repertoire of hymns/songs is carefully considered to include a variety from all traditions of Christian worship and times of year;
- music is selected to match the age range of the children and their vocal abilities;
- regular practice and learning of songs/hymns is built into the school timetable in order to prepare for quality worship;

Music is carefully considered from a variety of all traditions. It helps enhance the atmosphere of worship.

Hymn practice takes place weekly. Time during the practice is set aside to include a reflection and a prayer to complement the hymns being practised.

Dance and Drama

Dance and drama is sometimes used to retell and interpret passages from the Bible and other stories. It is also a powerful way of conveying feelings, attitudes, information and symbols. Preparation will vary depending on the situation. Church services usually have an element of performance, particularly at Christmas time.

The following points need to be considered if used in the act of worship:

- The dance or drama is suitable for the place of worship.
- Words and actions are clear and visible so that those watching can follow the message. At times microphones may be needed.

Worship Themes

The themes act as an imaginative trigger to a range of ideas and approaches that can enhance a child's spiritual development. The themes are not restrictive and allows the leader to respond to local and national situations and deviate if they believe the situation warrants it.

The following need to be considered when selecting the themes.

The invitation to reflect

All children are invited to join in with the prayer and/ or reflection recognising respect for one another. Our reflections and prayers connect with our school, the church and when appropriates local or national calendar and events. They are worded to be understood by children and engage them in their thoughts.

A whole school approach

All members of our school take an active part in making it a successful place for all children. Reflection areas in the classroom and playground are key to sharing our vision. 'I come that they may have life and have it in abundance' John 10:10.

Planning for School Worship

The nature and forms of worship must be closely related to the needs, experiences and development of the children if is to convey any meaning. We plan our worship round themes with the children's participation. Within such planning, there is a place for children to be introduced to quiet times, prayers of 'thank you', hymns and songs appropriate to their age and to the worship patterns.

This includes a programme of worship themes to ensure a balanced and informed approach based around the Christian Values, our School Values and our Life Skills (PSHE programme). We are also responsive to local and national circumstances. We draw upon the expertise and interest of visiting speakers. We take into account special occasions and/or services we at Firle wish to mark and use the church calendar to plan.

Our worship celebrates the Christian and our school values. These are given specific times to help embed children's understanding of them.

Firle CE Primary School Collective Worship Cycle

Christian Values planner alongside schools values

2022-23 (cycle A)

Christian value	School Value
Term 1 - Wisdom	Kindness
Term 2 - Thankfulness	Aspiration
Term 3 - Hope	Respect
Term 4 - Compassion	Perseverance
Term 5 - Endurance	Forgiveness
Term 6 - Forgiveness and Reverence	Respect

2023-24 (cycle B)

Term 1 - Trust	Kindness
Term 2 - Creation	Aspiration
Term 3 - Service and Koinonia	Respect
Term 4 - Friendship and Humility	Perseverance
Term 5 - Justice	Forgiveness
Term 6 - Peace	Respect

Evaluation and Monitoring

We have worship monitors who help prepare and support during worship. They also reflect on their experience of worship and record this in our reflective journal. There is also a prayer diary for children to write their own prayers to be read during a specific day in the school calendar.

The Foundation Governors play an important part in monitoring and supporting the act of worship they are encouraged to visit and share in the act of worship and take part in the special celebrations of the school.

Organisation

We have daily acts of worship that take place each morning. These take the form of whole school or at times Key Stage groupings.

Timetable	Act of Worship	Leader
Monday	Whole school Christian Value	Executive Head/ Head of Schools
Tuesday	Whole School Life skills theme	Class Teachers
Wednesday	Whole School School Values & events	Head of Schools
Thursday	Celebration Assembly	Executive Head
Friday	Whole School- Hymn Practice	Music teacher and parent musician

Worship

Worship has to do with worth and worthiness. It is the recognition, affirmation and celebration of the worthiness of certain realities and values held to be of central value to a particular community. In our school, worship will express and affirm values, which are significant within our whole school community. These values are expressed in our vision statement and our Teaching and Learning Policy.

The children can experience and respond to a sense of mystery, wonder, beauty, rightness, truth, joy and peace by sharing, imagining and reflecting on their experiences.

These, together with encouragement to make their own responses, can enable assembly to bring children to the threshold of worship. Indeed, collective worship implies the scope for a variety of responses e.g. when prayers are said, some may participate, others may listen in order to better understand what prayer means to those participating.

The nature and form of worship must closely relate to, but go beyond the needs, experiences and capacities of the children.

Appendix 1
Services in St Peter's Church

Harvest Festival
Coming of the Light
Christmas Service
Easter Service
Leavers' Service

Song and Hymns Planner

Term 1

Harvest

Cauliflowers Fluffy
Harvest Samba
Lord of the Harvest
Autumn Days

Term 2

Coming of the light-

This Little Light of Mine, Living Lord
Stir My Heart
Shine Jesus Shine

Christmas

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy
Mary's Boys Child
Little Donkey
O come all ye faithful
Away in a Manger
Feliz Navidad
We Wish you a Merry Christmas
Silent Night
Midnight
While Shepherd Watched their flocks by night
Oh come all ye faithful
Calypso carol

Term 3

Firle School Song
All things bright and beautiful
Don't build your house on the sandy land
Rise and shine

Term 4

Lord of the dance
Morning has broken
10 000 reasons

Term 5

Be still
Give me joy in my heart
If I were a butterfly
This is the day

Term 6

Lighthouse
You shall go out with joy
One more step

Previously learnt hymns and songs can be sung for worship in other terms