Guilden Morden CofE Primary Academy

Together we work to succeed and flourish, to live life in all its fullness. John 10:10

Collective Worship Policy

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Together we work to succeed and flourish, to live life in all its fullness. John 10:10

Collective Worship in a Church school enables every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It helps to educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Policy Statement

At Guilden Morden worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At Guilden Morden collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.
Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian and other faiths calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

Church of England Guidance

Collective worship policy at Guilden Morden draws on guidance from the Church of England. This guidance document has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish.

Legal Requirements

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils (other than in preschool) and this can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. Worship at Guilden Morden is distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions and takes place daily.

The trustees/governing body have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher and RE lead.

The right of withdrawal

As part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools, collective worship at Guilden Morden is hospitable and inclusive to all in the community we serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this is be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

The 1944 and1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The other aspects of school life that are impacted by the Christian foundation of the school such as prayer and reflective areas
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.
(*This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)*

Guiding Principles
Collective worship at Guilden Morden aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well know Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation
This policy was developed through consultation with key stakeholders including staff, parent representatives and governors.
We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

Planning and Organisation
We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school either as a whole school or in classes. The structure of collective worship follows a specific order that includes a welcome, lead and response, lighting of a candle, times of silence to reflect or pray, and singing a hymn or inspiration piece of music.

Collective Worship follows our school vision and values in looks at opportunities and teachings for living life in all its fullness through:

- The half termly value and linked Bible Story
- Religious events and special days
- Special events in the life of the school and wider community

Timetable

Day	Time	Focus	Lead
Monday	1.15 - 1.35 pm	Christian Values Worship	RE Lead Father Sam
Tuesday	1.15 - 1.35 pm	In class Values Worship	Teachers/TAs
Wednesday	1.15 - 1.35 pm	Choral Worship	Music Lead
Thursday	1.15 - 1.35 pm	Faith/Festivals Worship	Teachers - rota
Friday	2.45 - 3.05 pm	Celebration Worship	Headteacher

Each person leading worship is expected to plan his or her act of worship with the same degree of thoroughness as any other aspect of their teaching. Collective worship is led by different staff within the school, including the headteacher and other teachers. It is also led by clergy and visitors for the local church and Storytellers. Storytellers or 'Open the Book' and 'GENR8' is a programme for schools organised by the Bible Society. Stories are presented in dramatic form with many of the storytellers dressed-up in costume, acting out the stories as they are narrated.

Children are encouraged to be involved in leading collective worship as our Worship Leaders. They are given the opportunity to share prayers they have written and also lead on parts of collective worship. Children are also given an opportunity to lead collective worship on an issue that they are passionate about and would like to raise awareness of.

Reflective spaces in the hall and classrooms provide a focus for collective worship. Children are encouraged to write prayers, reflections or responses.

Visitors

Visitors are invited to lead and enhance collective worship. Examples of visitors include clergy, volunteers from local churches, Storytellers, leaders from other religions and charity representatives. Visitors should understand the educational aims of collective worship at the school and the need to avoid any proselytising. Attempts to persuade pupils to adopt a particular religious or non-religious belief are not appropriate. The Headteacher is consulted before a visiting speaker is confirmed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of each member of the school community to uphold the principles and actions of this policy:

- The governing body
- The headteacher and the senior leadership team
- Clergy and church partners
- Teaching and support staff
- Pupils
- Parents and carers
- Visitors

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. High quality training is provided through our trust CPD and Diocese of Ely.

Monitoring and evaluation

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 parents' contributions through questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis.

All leaders of collective worship are asked to evaluate continuously, reflect after every worship, to develop and improve their practice. Children, staff and governors are encouraged to fill in an evaluation of collective worship, to share their responses and the impact of the session.

School leaders also meet with our Worship Leaders to evaluate collective worship and suggest ways it can be strengthened and developed over time.

Disseminating the policy

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

Date of last review:

Headteacher signed: Sonia Singh Date: November 2024

Chair of Governors signed: Sarah Fryer Date: November 2024

Reviewed: Date: September 2026