

# ASHURST CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL



## **Collective Worship Policy**

**Responsibility of the Headteacher**

**from August 2020**

This Policy was reviewed in September 2021

by Fr Mark Heather and Mrs. S Smith

This policy was last reviewed in March 2026

by Mrs. S Smith and Mrs. H Garnett Governor for Christian Distinctiveness



# Ashurst CE (Aided) Primary School Policy for Acts of Collective Worship.

## Introduction:

We believe that worship and prayer should be central to life and learning at Ashurst CE Primary School. We value the regular opportunities we have to come together as a community of pupils and staff to worship God, share beliefs and reflect on the Christian values which underpin our school and our school vision.

## Our Vision for Ashurst:

Through our core values of Love, Hope and Joy we nurture and support our children to become well rounded, confident and responsible; children who aspire to achieve their full potential and are connected to and concerned about a world that needs them.

Our vision is rooted in the biblical text found in 1 John 3:18

“ Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

As a Church of England primary School our acts of worship policy follows the statutory requirements common to all schools as prescribed in the 1996 Education Act. This states that all pupils shall take part in a daily act of 'worship' unless the parent/ carer requests that they be wholly or partly excused from attending religious worship in the school. Our collective worship is centred on the beliefs and practices of the Church of England. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from daily acts of collective worship and should inform the head teacher if this is their wish so that alternative arrangements can be made.

## Background:

Our school community is made up of children and families who attend St James' Church Ashurst and other churches, as well as some of other faiths and denominations, and some with no experience of faith at all. The majority of collective worship takes place within school but we also worship together at St. James' Ashurst on the second Sunday of the month and for significant events in the church and school year such as our New beginnings Service, Harvest, Advent, Christingle, Mothering Sunday, Easter and our Leavers Service. Ashurst Primary School values St. James' as a sacred and special place and enjoys visiting it for prayers and to enrich our learning about the Christian faith at other times.

## What does Collective Worship look like at Ashurst CE Aided primary School?

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to honour God. Through this time of worship, we can become aware of God's presence in our community, share our hopes and concerns for ourselves and others, reflect and give thanks and praise.

In keeping with the vision and the aims of our school, Collective Worship at Ashurst aims to:

- place God at the centre of our school life
- help us to understand that God is with us through all we do and say
- provide daily opportunities for reflection,
- provide opportunities to develop our understanding of ourselves
- focus on, and promote core Christian values through Bible stories, moral stories, prayer, music, singing and drama
- allow for personal beliefs
- provide opportunities for spiritual and moral development
- develop a sense of stewardship and responsibility for our world
- be inclusive and age appropriate, so that all can participate at their own level
- introduce children to the Christian beliefs, both within and beyond the Church of England.
- encourage a sense of awe and wonder and celebrate what we value.
- be stimulating, engaging and genuine

We believe that collective Worship strengthens our school community it enables us to further embed our chosen values of love, hope and joy in our daily lives. When we gather together to express, celebrate and participate in these values we are building a loving, caring, rejoicing community which has the confidence to reach out and act on these values for the benefit of others.

### Organisation and planning:

In a typical week collective worship may include:

Whole school collective worship, usually led by the head teacher.

Picture News Worship, led by the Worship Warriors.

A celebration and achievement assembly.

Whole school collective worship led by a member of the clergy or other church members.

Class collective worship led by class teachers- linked to the whole school assemblies.

Assemblies led by 'Open the Book' (a group comprising members of our local community) and SPLASH! (a group from Findon Valley Free Church) take place half termly.

Ashurst has a group of KS2 children who named themselves the 'Worship Warriors'. The Worship Warriors play an integral role in supporting and shaping Collective Worship across the school. In addition to contributing ideas and participating regularly, they lead and contribute to weekly Picture Assemblies, where they use topical news items as a stimulus for reflection, discussion and prayer. Through carefully prepared questions, information sharing and interactive elements such as quizzes, they encourage the whole school to engage thoughtfully with current events in light of the school's Christian values.

The group takes ownership of membership, suggesting new representatives when Year 6 pupils leave, ensuring continuity and sustainability of pupil leadership. Worship Warriors model respectful engagement and reverence, supporting younger pupils to participate confidently. They lead and contribute to whole-school and special services, including the Easter service, and help evaluate worship to ensure it remains engaging, inclusive and reflective of the school's Christian vision.

Through this leadership role, pupils develop confidence, responsibility and a deeper understanding of the purpose and impact of Collective Worship within the life of the school.

Our ' Growing Partnerships' group was established to grow and develop the relationship between our school and the church communities that we are part of. Members of this group regularly meet to discuss and plan key aspects of worship and celebration throughout the year. These include our shared services in St James' Church and more recently Eucharist celebrations in school.

Collective Worship is designed to reflect and reinforce the Christian vision and values of the school and covers the main seasons, feasts and festivals of the Christian year, as well as important school events.

There is an emphasis on supporting pupils to understand and reflect on the messages of the Bible.

Candles and music play an important role in Collective Worship. The coloured candles representing our four house teams of St Wilfred, St Cuthman, St

Lewenna and St Dunstan are brought in to represent our community coming together and favourite hymns of praise are selected by adults and children. These include our Ashurst song of praise "Ring the Bell", written by the school in Autumn 2020 to reflect our chosen values of love, hope and joy, and to make explicit our belief that we all play an important role in our wider community.

### Prayer and Reflection:

Prayer is central to the life of our school. The Lord's Prayer is used throughout the school. The school is currently developing its own school prayer.

A dedicated indoor prayer area is looked after by a group of Y6 children, who update it creatively with resources to record our thoughts and prayers. Prayers and displays in each class provide an opportunity for children to learn to reflect and pray in a personal way. Children join in with a thanksgiving prayer before lunch each day and prayers are shared in classes at appropriate times of the day such as gathering or sending out time. Some of our favourites include

"Lord keep us safe this night,  
Secure from all our fears,  
May angels guard us while we sleep,  
Until morning light appears."

And this prayer, written by Y3&y4 in Spring 2020 to reflect our school values:

"Our Father,  
Thank you for this day and what it brings.  
Help us to have love in our hearts  
Let us have hope in our friends  
And spread joy in your kingdom  
Amen"

### Content:

Acts of Worship follow the traditional liturgical structure of the Church of England and includes:

Gathering: A call to worship and traditional greeting such as 'The Lord Be with You'

### Engaging:

This is the part of the worship where we are asked to join in with something. This might include; listening to a story or a prayer or a song, looking at different pictures or artefacts, watching a play or joining in with an activity or thinking about something.

### Responding:

This is the part of the worship where we have time to reflect personally on the idea or theme we have explored or a reading we have listened to. This often includes a quiet time for reflection, prayer or song.

Sending out:

We are reminded of the theme and given encouragement to take forward these ideas into the life of the school, living out the Christian Values of Love, Hope and Joy.

Creative engagement and response:

Our creative and visual approach to worship aims to inspire engagement and response. Follow up activities and invitations for reflection are provided in class assemblies and children record their thoughts and observations in their 'collective Worship' book. Displays around the school, including crosses, our values and our house teams, act as visual reminders for children that God is with us in all we do, wherever they are and wherever they are on their journey.

Evaluation and Monitoring:

Information to evaluate the impact of Collective Worship is gathered in various ways, including feedback from pupils, parents, staff, governors, visitors and the diocese. Children may meet in their house teams to share their views and discuss areas to enhance. Staff and governors talk with pupils about their experiences of worship and seek to understand its impact over time. The impact of collective worship is also monitored through regular feedback from children and staff. Reviews are carried out by the headteacher and the governors for Christian Distinctiveness.

Collective Worship

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Important Events	New Beginnings Service at St. James' Church Harvest	Remembrance Christingle Nativity Advent Service at St. James' Church	Epiphany Lent	Easter Easter Service at St. James' Church	Pentecost SATs	Leavers Leavers Service at St. James' Church
	Open the Book & SPLASH!		Open the Book & SPLASH!		Open the Book & SPLASH!	