

YAPTON C. of E. PRIMARY SCHOOL



An Open Door to Learning

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Approved by the Governing Body: Spring Term 2024

To be reviewed: Autumn Term 2026

*“Worship the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs”*

Psalm 100

At Yapton Church of England Primary School our Core Christian Values are **Community, Dignity, Wisdom and Hope.**

Community Through Christ, we all share fellowship with one another as One Big Family. We believe that everyone within our school community should be valued and treated with love and respect and that each of us has a right to grow and become the best we can be. Likewise, we believe that we each have a responsibility to show respect and tolerance towards each other.



The views of our community are that:

- everyone in our community are kind to each other;
- all members of the community respect and consider each other;
- people who visit our community are made to feel welcome to our home;
- our community is a safe place for everyone.

Dignity Human Dignity is an individual or group's sense of self-respect and self-worth, physical and psychological integrity and empowerment. Human dignity is inherent to every human being regardless of who they are or where they come from. Dignity means that people are allowed to be true to themselves, be different but accepted and not to be humiliated or embarrassed. We must remember that the value and dignity of human life is grounded in the fact that God is the giver of life. Not one person is no less the image of God than anyone else. Dignity means that everybody should be treated decently, be treated fairly and be able to be different and still be accepted.



Wisdom Wisdom is the understanding of the consequences of our thoughts, words and actions, and an awareness of the true values of things. Wisdom is different to knowledge. Wisdom is what you do with knowledge. Often wise people have lots of experience and can give good advice to help us make difficult



decisions. Some people pray because they believe God can help them to live their lives wisely.

The Bible talks of wisdom as a gift from God. Wisdom is about being prepared to listen to the advice of others, thinking before you speak and sometimes choosing silence over words. Wisdom may be best described as discernment gained through life experience and distilled into guiding principles.

In school we will explore together:

- Making wise choices;
- The consequences of our words and actions;
- Learning wisdom from others – including children from home grown-ups and home grown-ups from children;
- Learning from our mistakes and becoming wiser through them.



Hope At a deep level, hope is a universal human phenomenon. Hope generates energy and sustains people through difficult times. True hope is much more than a general idea that things will get better. It is more than a belief in progress, which sees the world and people as getting better all the time. Christian hope is grounded in the character of God. Often, in the Psalms, the writer says to God: *'My hope is in you.'* It is a hope rooted in the love and faithfulness of God. Hope is not wishful

thinking but a firm assurance that God can be relied upon. It does not remove the need for 'waiting upon the Lord' but there is underlying confidence that God is a 'strong rock' and one whose promises can be trusted. Hope is not always spontaneous or easy. There is work to be done. As well as trusting God, we have to develop qualities of steadfastness in our own character.

Worship and Collective Worship

Christian worship is an honouring of God. Worship stems from personal experience; it is a central characteristic of our Christian faith community, as well as of other communities. Collective Worship is at the heart of Yapton Church of England Primary School. Our school is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds and who happen to be together primarily for the purpose of education, not for worship. The family backgrounds of pupils may be very different in terms of beliefs and adherence to religion, from the atheist, secular humanist to a devout background of a faith, either Christian or another world religion. This means that in Collective Worship in a school "all" we can do is lead people to the threshold of worship by providing a setting where they may worship God if they so wish.

Collective Worship is the daily gathering together of the school community. It is not a lesson; it is an opportunity to reflect on what is of ultimate worth in people's lives, based on broadly Christian values. It will draw on a variety of sources including stories, readings, hymns or songs, drama and imagery. It requires a time of reflection to allow children to respond personally, perhaps through a time of silence. However, to be 'worship', it must also acknowledge and enable children to make a personal choice of reverence, prayer or response to God.

Aims of Collective Worship

At its simplest, Collective Worship at our school is the creation of a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us. The aims of collective worship are:

- to enable everyone present to appreciate their worth and value to God and to their community, and to respect the integrity of all individuals as a child of God;
- to give memorable and enjoyable experiences;

- to provide an opportunity to celebrate Christian beliefs, celebrations, traditions and religious festivals in the Church's year;
- to enable children and staff to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation and prayer;
- to establish, explore, and reinforce the common Christian values;
- to provide everyone present with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery.

How we achieve these aims

During Collective Worship, we will apply the following 'central attributes' of worship:

Gathering - Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony such as lighting the candle and saying our monthly school prayer;

Engaging - Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content;

Exploring – Using the Christian faith to explore the theme of the worship. This could be through bible stories, quotes, the stories of significant people's lives or key events;

Responding - Ensuring there is time and opportunity for individual and/or group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways;

Sending - Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas covered and to conclude the worship.

Sentences and responses are shared at the beginning and end of Collective Worship which uphold the Anglican tradition.

We expect Collective Worship to involve all members of the school community and invite members of the wider community to support and lead our worship. The themes of collective worship are planned on a yearly cycle and cover Christian values, Christian seasons, Bible stories, significant people, key dates during the year and wider learning values as well as responding to significant current affairs (local, national or global) in an appropriate way.

Promoting Spirituality

Spiritual development is concerned with developing the non-material aspects of life, focusing on personal insight, values, meaning and purpose. It is about awe and wonder, asking question, self-reflection, inspiration and being aware of 'something greater' than ourselves. Beliefs that help provide perspective on life may be rooted in a religion, but equally may not.

Collective Worship is one of the opportunities we use to develop children's understanding of spirituality. To support this, we use the reflective model and structure of '**Head, Hearts, Feet**'. Using the symbols of the head, heart and feet, the children are given the opportunity to:

- Think about the theme and the key message;
- Consider their feelings and personal reflections;
- Plan how to walk forward following the message of the worship and hearing God's word.



Organisation of Collective Worship

In our school, the majority of the daily acts of Collective Worship are held towards the end of the school day so that the children are able to go home with the word of God. The weekly timetable for Collective Worship is:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Whole school Collective Worship (led by head teacher)	Whole school Collective Worship (led by the parish rector)	Class Collective Worship/Key stage Worship (alternate weeks) using the Picture News materials	Whole School Collective Worship Praise and Prayer (led by the Music Lead)	Whole school celebration Collective Worship (led by a member of SLT)

Representatives from other local churches and organisations also lead occasional acts of worship during different times of the term and year. We also have a regular programme of services, led by the children, at St. Mary's Church in the village typically at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Parents and carers are invited to attend. The Year 6 plan and lead a Leavers' Service in the church at the end of the summer term. All children participate and parents and carers of the Year 6 children are invited to attend to this as well.

Singing

The act of singing provides a positive opportunity for celebration or reflection, as well as enhancing worship. At Yapton Church of England Primary School, we encourage children to sing from their hearts and reflect on the words that are sung. A wide range of songs and hymns, the vast majority of which have an element of praising and thanking God, are used.

Reflection and Prayer

Children are invited to share their reflections and thoughts about the themes in our whole school Collective Worship. Each classroom, also, has its own unique reflection space where children can 'be still' and calmly focus their mind in thought or prayer as well as to explore their spirituality and to ponder 'big' questions and express feelings such as gratitude and forgiveness.



Children are invited to contribute their ideas towards our school monthly prayer, which is said every day in Collective Worship. The Lord's Prayer is also shared during our times of Collective Worship led by our parish rector. A prayer of gratitude is shared at lunchtimes and a blessing is then shared at the end of each school day.

Right of withdrawal

We expect all children to participate in times of Collective Worship. However, 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. This complies with the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts. The head teacher keeps a record of all children who are withdrawn from worship by their parents.

Monitoring and review

It is the role of the Headteacher to monitor the policy and practice of Collective Worship with the school. Governors are encouraged to attend any act of collective worship as part of the programme of Governor Visits. Pupils are included in review and development of collective worship.