



Witchampton First School

Collective Worship Policy

September 2025

‘Live a life of love, just as Jesus loved us’ (Ephesians 5:2)

Policy Statement

At Witchampton First School, the daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life as we promote our school values of **love, courage and inspiration**.

It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian, British and school values which permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly.

Values Education

We blend Christian teaching and Values Education in order to create opportunities for children to develop physically, emotionally, personally, socially, mentally and intellectually so that their self-esteem and well-being is sound and supported by ever-growing emotional intelligence, leading to an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as young citizens. The systematic introduction of a common values vocabulary allows children to access moral and ethical thought.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship, either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Headteacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Collective Worship at Witchampton First School is expected to:

- be inspirational and inclusive. It should engage all learners, and they should be able to talk about the impact it makes on their relationships and on life in the school.
- regularly provide opportunities for pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world through the teachings of Jesus and the Bible, and develop understanding of the Trinity and relate these to the school's core Christian values.
- provide an opportunity for children to worship God and celebrate each unique individual made in the image of God.
- enable children to explore their own beliefs, allow reflection and response to fundamental questions of life and those things that are of concern and value to all.

- encourage participation and response with opportunities to celebrate and give thanks for different achievements and special occasions, including festivals.
- provide members of the school community with the opportunity to praise and reach out to God, experience stillness and quiet, respond to Christian language and symbolism and experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation, to experience and understand the cycle of the church year.
- develop in children a sense of community spirit, promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes.
- contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and foster a concern for the needs of others.
- help children begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship, providing a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future.
- help learners learn to think beyond themselves, by developing an awareness of issues in the wider world, and encourage them to be active and engaged in advocating concerns of justice, peace, care of creation and concern for the poor.
- provide foundations for making wise decisions in the conduct of relationships and life choices

Organisation

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children.

Our current worship schedule is as follows:

- ☐ **Monday** - whole school worship led by the Headteacher.
- ☐ **Tuesday** – whole school worship, which is led by one of the class teachers; usually with a focus on the environment or HeartSmart (PSHE) in their own classroom. Time is given for reflection.
- ☐ **Wednesday** – worship is led by the local clergy or the ‘Open the book’ group.
- ☐ **Thursday** - whole school hymn and singing practice, with prayer/reflection time, led by Mrs Martin-Papp.
- ☐ **Friday** - Celebration worship led by the Headteacher.

Worships are approximately 20 minutes in length.

Planning, Content and Detail

The themes for **Monday’s** collective worship reflect our values focus for that half term, the Church calendar, our school ethos and current events.

This is followed by relating whatever the content of the worship is to our visual vision display. The children are regularly involved in the worship, which often includes a song and finishes with a prayer.

Tuesday’s HeartSmart assemblies follow their own pattern of themes which matches the learning in the classroom for PSHE. The format is similar to Monday’s whole school worship. When there is an environmental theme on this day, it is often based around a current initiative or something that our eco leads have been working on. It is important that there is an element of pupil voice in these sessions.

Wednesday’s worship takes many forms. It is sometimes led by the local clergy.

Thursday’s hymn and singing practice includes the lighting of candles to focus the children’s attention and aims to develop the children’s understanding of new hymns as well as learning them. The session ends with a time for reflection or a prayer before the candles are turned off. The children leave in the same way as before.

The celebration worship on **Friday** celebrates the children's achievements both in and outside school. Teachers choose one member of each year group to receive a 'star of the week' each week which is linked back to the learning behaviours encouraged as part of our vision.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection. A range of prayers is used including the Lord's Prayer, prayers written by the children and others: they are often linked to the content of the worship. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. At the beginning of the whole school worship led by the Headteacher, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged alongside an image of a candle that is displayed with the prayer in the hall (where it has been written beforehand).

The worship leaders prepare prayers for use in upcoming collective worships.

Other Faiths

At Witchampton First School our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values and we are also committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs. Worships will regularly portray other cultures and beliefs as they reflect the faith studied as part of the R.E. curriculum requirements.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, Witchampton First School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship.

Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge – their role is to educate, not to evangelise.

Equal Opportunities and Special Needs

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, age, gender and ethnic origin, have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of R.E. At each Key Stage, the teacher will draw from other religions as appropriate to acknowledge and celebrate the religious beliefs of the children within the class.

Reviewed: September 2025

To be reviewed : September 2026