



# **Snodland Church of England Primary School**

## **Worship Policy**

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| Chair of Governors | Mrs S Harewood |
| Headteacher        | Mrs H Hunt     |
| Date approved      | September 2025 |
| Review Date        | September 2026 |

## Policy Statement for Worship

Worship is central to the life of our school, providing our children with a strong foundation on which to build their lives, world views and values. Our school vision and values provide the framework for worship, with each term planned to cover key Christian values, principles, festivals and traditions. 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.

### Aims of Collective Worship

Collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive, providing:

- A window into the world beyond our school and local community, looking at inspirational people, places, stories, artwork, scripture and the natural world.
- Encouragement to 'dream big and have high aspirations', believing that they can achieve their goals and make a difference in the world.
- Opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning, participating in, leading and evaluating worship.
- A safe space where all pupils, regardless of ability, background, religious belief or worldview, feel comfortable in participating as they choose, through invitations to join in with reflection, sharing their thoughts, joining in with prayer and hymns.
- Spiritual growth through the Windows, Mirrors, Doors approach, as described in our Spirituality policy, with pupils learning about and reflecting on the 'wows and ows' of the world and considering how they can protect what is good in the world and change what is not.
- A developing understanding of the Christian story, the Christian faith, Christian worship and the concept of Trinity - through use of Christian liturgy, language, scripture, prayer and song - and its relevance to their lives.
- A place and time in which to celebrate pupils' achievements, with a focus on pupils living the school values and keys, and 'shining their light' both within and outside of school.

## **Church of England Guidance**

Our collective worship policy draws on guidance from the Church of England ([www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship](http://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/collective-worship)). 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 those in a nursery class or a nursery school. 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. In other words, the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, “that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, is not relevant.

The governing body of the school 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.

## **The right of withdrawal**

As a Christian school, we welcome families of all faiths and world views. As Christian collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the school, this is 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 and 1988 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. 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.

## **Planning of Collective Worship**

Each week, worship is based around a theme. These themes are planned to reflect:

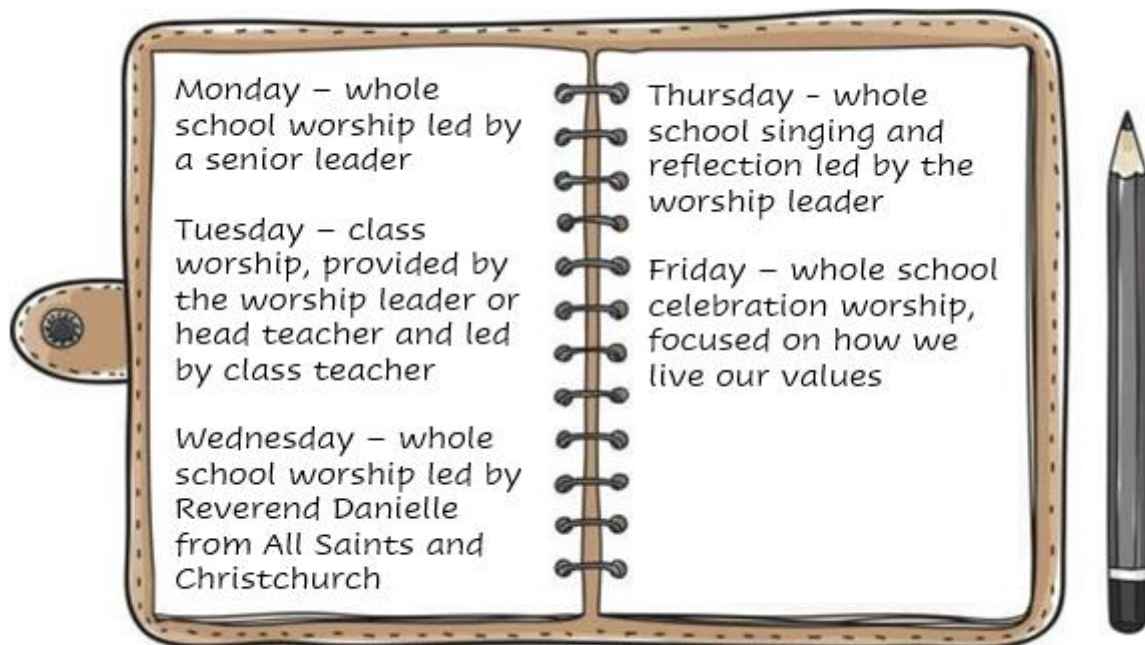
- The school's Christian vision and the values which stem from it
- The Christian calendar and traditions
- A wider range of Christian values and principles
- A Christian view of British values and SMSC

These themes are planned by the Worship leader in advance, and shared with the staff and clergy who lead worship before the start of each term; this allows plenty of time to prepare high quality worship experiences. Our Year 6 pupils, at their own request, help to choose suitable hymns to accompany the themes and festivals which take place in each term.

## **Daily Worship Schedule**

Every day, we join together for Collective Worship. Daily Worships are distinctly Christian and follow Christian liturgy, including a greeting, a reading, a hymn, a prayer and a sending. We choose themes which reflect our values, ethos and vision, and draw on planning from the Rochester Diocese and the Roots and Fruits program.

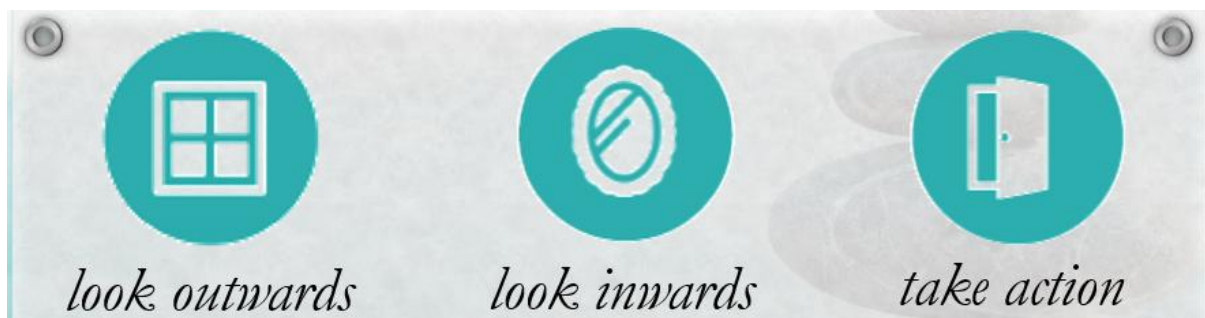
A weekly timetable of Worship usually looks like this, although may change due to other events:



When other events are scheduled, worship takes place in class to ensure that every day still includes a Christian act of collective worship, even when a secular assembly is also taking place.

## **Spirituality in Worship**

All Collective Worship is rooted in spiritual development, aiming to help children develop their own worldview and their concept of who they are and how they fit into the world. We mainly talk about this in terms of Windows, Mirrors and Doors: Worship is built around looking outwards at the 'ows and wows' of the world and using the lens of Christian scripture to build understanding of these; looking inwards to develop empathy and reflective skills; and taking action, especially in our class worships. These often involve an activity which builds on whole school worship and enables pupils to 'do' rather than just passively observe and reflect.



## **What Daily Worship Looks Like**

As a Christian school, we follow a Christian liturgy for worship; if you attend daily worship you should expect to see:

- The lighting of three candles, accompanied by our welcome greeting: We light these candles in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus the Light of the World is here. *Lord Jesus, shine upon us.*
- Opportunities to 'look outwards', with a focus on the week's theme.
- Opportunities to consider the theme through the lens of Christian scripture, by sharing a Bible verse or story.
- Opportunities to reflect by 'looking inwards' – what do you think about this theme, what do you feel, what might others feel?
- Opportunities to consider how you could 'take action' in relation to this theme.
- Opportunities to actively participate in worship.
- Opportunities to worship through singing hymns
- Opportunities to pray
- A closing to accompany the blowing out of the candles: May the peace of the Lord be always with you. *And also with you.*

Although worship follows a Christian pattern, we aim to make it:

- Inclusive – we want all pupils and adults, regardless of personal worldview or faith, to feel that they can be part of collective worship and gain from it.

- Invitational – we want all pupils or adults to feel that they can choose to participate in those parts of worship that they wish to, without feeling forced.
- Inspirational – we want all pupils and adults to leave worship changed in some small way, so that each worship helps every person present to grow spiritually.

## **Church Services**

In addition to Daily Worship, we also have three church services to celebrate key Christian festivals: Harvest, Christmas and Easter. At the end of the year, we also have a special service to say goodbye to our Year 6s. These services are planned, written and led by the children, with our Leading Lights team establishing the theme, overall plan and script, and a team of children from each year group planning and leading a section of the service.

## **Leading Lights**

Leading Lights are a team of Key Stage 2 children who are involved in all things Christian. A few of the ways in which they lead our Christian school are:

- Opening and closing daily worship
- Choosing hymns
- Suggesting themes
- Planning and leading church services
- Planning and leading worship
- Setting up prayer and reflection stations
- Planning and setting up reflection experience days
- Evaluating worship
- Communicating with parents through the 'This Week in Worship' section of the newsletter
- Collecting pupil voice
- Introducing the concept of courageous advocacy (although this has now been handed over to our School Council team)
- Leading involvement with the local church, for example through the Christmas tree festival.



## **Inclusion**

All pupils have a right to access daily worship unless their parents have withdrawn them. This begins with short class and year group workshops at the start of Foundation Stage, with pupils gradually joining whole school workshops as the year progresses. Measures designed to support pupils with additional needs in class also apply in worship; for example, some pupils wear bring defenders because they find everyone singing too overwhelming; others may bring a 'fidget' toy to keep their fingers busy, or sit with a familiar adult. School adults know that they must never take groups or individuals for additional learning during worship time, as only a parent has the right to withdraw them.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Worship will reflect the diversity of Christianity as a world faith and promote our belief that everyone is unique, special and loved. It will seek to reflect the different experiences of people across the world without creating stereotypes, and encourage our children to empathise and see things from different points of view. All questions, views and opinions will be treated with sensitivity and respect.

## **Role of the Worship leader**

The Worship leader will:

- Provide a clear structure for collective worship to ensure it reflects the nature of Christian church worship.
- Provide termly plans for worship, based on our school vision, pupil voice and guidance from the Church of England, to include:
  - Bible readings to match each theme
  - Hymns to match the theme or Church calendar
  - Outline of who will lead worship when
- Ensure that a planned worship (in the form of a short powerpoint presentation) is provided for class worship, to support staff.
- Organise a team of pupils (Leading Lights) to plan, lead and evaluate worship.
- Use pupil and staff evaluation of worship to inform future planning.
- Support pupils to plan church services to celebrate key Christians festivals (Harvest, Christmas, Easter).
- Plan additional experiences designed to develop pupils spiritually, such as reflection experience days.