



Verwood First School and Nursery Collective Worship Policy

1. Rationale

The School Collective Worship Policy reflects and reinforces the school's aims and ethos: "At Verwood First and Nursery, we are inspired to be the hope and light. It aims to demonstrate the partnership between the conduct and content of school worship and the ethos of the whole school based on Christian values of readiness, respectful relationships and engagement. These are derived from core Biblical texts:

Readiness:

Peter 3:15: Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have.

Matthew 11:29: the yoke is a symbol of allowing Jesus to direct one's life and efforts and be a good learner (disciple).

To be ready is to be attuned to your immediate surroundings and aware of next steps. We know how important it is to 'leave the door open' to new experiences and feelings. At VFSN we pride ourselves on showing we are ready to learn and take on new challenges with the expectation (hope) that we will be successful if we are fully prepared.

Respectful relationships:

Peter 2:17: above all else, love each other deeply.

Colossians 3:13: make allowances for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you.

A simple outlook is to work hard, play hard and care deeply in all that we do. Meaningful connections within the school community is the bedrock of our daily mission. To achieve this we must show tolerance and empathy to all that support strong relationships. We have to reach beyond our school boundaries to find greater diversity in culture and belief.

Engagement:

Proverbs 19:8 learn all you can, remember what you learn, and you will prosper.

Proverbs 16:3: commit your work to the Lord, and plans will be established.

To be engaged means many things at VFSN. We want to engage in the world around us, notice things and allow our spirit to flourish. In the classroom we look for strong commitment to the knowledge, skills and understanding we are taught. We work with the expectation (hope) we will be the best versions of ourselves every day.

Trust Agreed Spiritual Statement

The development of Collective Worship at Verwood First and Nursery sits within the overall MAT commitment to nurture every individual including spiritual development: 'Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions and inspiration. It is being aware of something 'bigger' outside ourselves and our connectedness with others, the world and beyond.'

2. Collective Worship at Verwood First and Nursery

At Verwood First and Nursery we consider Collective worship to be a significant educational activity that both reflects and explores the school's distinctive Christian character and contributes to the academic achievement, personal development and wellbeing of all learners. Worship at Verwood First and Nursery is a celebration intended to promote awe and wonder and a love of God. We aim to develop spiritual insights and beliefs, encourage concern for others locally and in the wider world, and to assist children in their own search for meaning and purpose in life. Collective Worship involves members of the school coming together and we encourage everyone to take an active part. Worship at Verwood First and Nursery is broadly Christian in nature, in accordance with the trust deed of the school and in line with the 1988 Education Reform Act. We usually base our Worship on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church including the elements of Christian worship such as prayers, hymns, Bible stories and readings. We conduct our acts of worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

Collective Worship at Verwood First and Nursery 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 choice

3. Legal Requirements

The law requires the headteacher and Local School Committee of every school to provide a daily act of Collective Worship which is in line with the schools Trust Deed and foundation. It is a statutory requirement that a daily act of Collective Worship is offered to all children. Every child at Verwood First and Nursery has the opportunity to participate in such an act every day and we expect all children to attend assemblies. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be withdrawn from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship. Staff retain the right to withdraw from worship should they so desire.



4. Planning/Evaluation of Collective Worship

Specific time is set aside for this activity and we recognise the importance of marking out the act of Collective Worship from other assembly activities. We seek to mark out this special time by lighting a candle and using a liturgical greeting. This also offers specific opportunities for reverence or veneration according to children's own beliefs and traditions.

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. We encourage a 4 stage structure of planning including 'gathering' 'engaging' 'responding' 'sending'. Collective worship themes are planned termly, drawing from a wide range of resource material gathered from diocesan resources and wider church and taking into account the major festivals of the Church's year.

A worship-planning group meets once a term led by the worship coordinator. These meetings are an opportunity to review and evaluate the last terms Acts of Collective Worship and to plan themes for the next term. The views of pupils about collective worship are sought through the School Council/Collective Worship team. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in the planning, leading and monitoring of Collective worship.

Collective Worship is coordinated by Rob Christopher and Sarah Putt. Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of the Collective Worship leader and Local School Committee. The Collective Worship leader, Sarah Putt, receives feedback from the school community and collects records from each member of staff at the end of every term.

5. Our Pattern of Collective Worship

Whole School Celebration/ Act of Worship

The school gathers for the whole school act of worship every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, where the weekly theme is introduced, explored and reflections for the week are introduced. Staff and pupils may contribute music, drama and dance. This worship will normally provide opportunities for spiritual development.

Praise Worship: Friday

Each Friday the school will gather for 'Praise' worship in which achievements of pupils at the school are celebrated.

Base Worship is held weekly

These are taken by teachers from across the school.. The acts of worship generally follow themes that are aligned to the school's weekly theme and values but include a recognition of the church's year and make space for other national events. The content of these acts of worship can be varied but still include a significant Christian input.



Visitors:

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. In general the Headteacher is consulted before a visiting speaker is confirmed. Visitors should not speak about raising money for any particular cause(s) without the prior permission of the Headteacher.

7. Staff and Community Involvement in Collective Worship

Certain named individuals Deborah Matthews, Michael Eaton, Nick Wood and Grant Spratley are involved on a regular basis in collective worship. Other staff and pupils are given the opportunity of being involved in this programme every term.

Summary of Verwood First and Nursery pattern of worship

Monday 2:35pm – SLT or Visitor in hall for Whole School Worship

Tuesday 2:35pm – Core Values focus - rotated throughout the teaching teams

Thursday 2:35pm – Picture News - Bases

Friday 2:35pm – Head and Deputy Headteacher Praise Whole School Worship