

# Wootton St Peter's CE Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

Date Adopted by Governing Body: July 2024

Date to be Reviewed: July 2026

Signed Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M. S. Varnom'. The signature is written on a light-colored background and is underlined.

*Mike Varnom*

Signed Headteacher

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Charles Pitt'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

*Charles Pitt*

Our Christian Vision:

***“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18 New Revised Standard Version)***

The global community faces many challenges that our children will have to overcome. The world is God’s great creation and it is our responsibility to contribute to leaving the world a better place than we found it. At Wootton St Peter’s we empower the children in our care with the skills and attributes they need to flourish in the world and face the challenges they are confronted with.

St Peter was not perfect. He did not start out life as the rock of the church. He made mistakes and he learnt from them. At Wootton St Peter’s we recognise that we are on a learning journey. How we Learn at Wootton in our school celebrates the healthiness of learning from our mistakes. Our children develop the skills and confidence to become caring reflective citizens and become motivated and inspired to take their own learning forward with independence, excitement and enthusiasm to meet their full potential.

St Peter learnt that Jesus was for everyone. As a school we participate in and celebrate the diversity in our school and the wider global community.

***Our children become the rocks upon which a better world can be built. We explore the values of perseverance, compassion and courage to open up horizons of hope and aspiration.***

Pupils, staff and parents of all faiths (or none) are welcome to worship which is an expression of our distinctive Christian vision. Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other and that collective worship is an educational entitlement for all. In worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live. This worship occurs at various times of day and with a mixture of grouping of pupils. Through regular acts of worship our school has the opportunity of offering thanksgiving and praise to God through a range of liturgical patterns.

Our worship has 3 underlying principles:

1. It is inclusive and contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils
2. It is invitational and respects the dignity of all participants
3. It is inspiring and combines a range of experiences alongside

#### **It is invitational**

Acts of collective worship will:

- ✦ nurture and maintain the dignity of the image of God in everyone through working for social justice and encouraging pupils to consider the needs of others through charitable service and courageous advocacy;
- ✦ nurture reflection, stillness, meditation and prayer;
- ✦ provide pupils with (age appropriate) opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives through music, images and words.

- ✦ provide a sense of occasion that is separate from the rest of the school day;
- ✦ foster an appreciation of the natural world and our shared responsibilities for maintaining it;
- ✦ develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community

#### **It is inclusive**

Our understanding of Christianity is that it is an inclusive faith which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels. Thus, we welcome children and staff of all faiths to our worship. Through their Christian character our acts of collective worship will:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, life styles and faiths which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe;
- be appropriate for every student to attend
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils;
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community – in preparation, participation and leadership

#### **It is inspiring**

Our acts of collective worship provide wider opportunities to:

- promote wide ownership of our Christian vision;
- assist learners to have increased awareness and to reflect upon fundamental issues about life;
- enhance, complement and extend curricular work;
- develop learners' understanding of the Christian faith and Church practice through appropriate Biblical and liturgical content;
- encounter and explore Jesus' teachings and the trinitarian nature of Christian faith
- identify opportunities for Christian celebration which can be associated with other school events;
- include appropriate references to and elements of other faiths and secular worldviews
- include opportunities to celebrate the academic, social, personal and wider achievements of pupils.
- a range of people are involved in leading worship, including learners;
- timetabling of acts of worship, includes the use of the local church and various groupings of pupils;
- worship is planned in relationship to our distinctive Christian vision and our associated values;
- worship is regularly evaluated by a range of members of the school community
- opportunities for worship/prayer throughout the day

This list is not exhaustive and other aspects may be included at the discretion of the school.

Our acts of worship are of a clearly Christian character, recognising the diversity of our community. It provides occasions when the school community pupils gather together in a variety of settings where a positive tone and focus for the day can be established. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on relevant Christian, moral and spiritual issues, drawn from a variety of sources, thereby enriching their experience of life.

Worship is an expression of our Christian vision and is a means of recognising and celebrating our associated values and achievements in their broadest sense. In worship all participants are recognised for their personal achievement, both within school and in the community. Pupils are awarded, in worship, with a range of rewards, thus placing achievement, effort and *How We Lean at Wootton* in the Christian context of the school.

Collective worship will:

- be acceptable to the whole community, staff and children
- include a variety of elements at different times
- involve the students
- have a dedicated focus which signifies what is being reflected upon.
- provide a dedicated opportunity for students to reflect/respond to the input

Acts of worship often include ritual aspects, these are a means of enabling worship and include:

- stories and readings
- songs, hymns and music
- dance and drama
- prayer, meditations
- creative silence
- sacred/secular readings
- artefacts and natural materials
- children's contributions

We want pupils to leave school with a rich experience and understanding of Christianity, and we are committed to offering them an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in a way that enhances their lives.

### **A legal note<sup>1</sup>**

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance, parents who may wish to exercise this right should make an appointment to speak with the headteacher.