



'Knowing each child, growing each child, in God's love'

Tonwell St Mary's CE Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

1 John 4:16

*And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.
God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.*

Reviewed: September 2021
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Aims, Vision and Values

The aim of Collective Worship at Tonwell St Mary's CE School is to introduce pupils to worship in a manner appropriate to their age, aptitude and family background and drawing upon the riches of the Anglican and other Christian traditions.

Our School Christian Vision And Values are Knowing Each Child, Growing Each Child, In God's Love with aims to help each child to:

- Develop a love, independence and resilience for learning
- Live life to its fullness and try new experiences respecting Christian and British values
- Be friendly and inclusive to all
- Contribute to our school and wider community
- Choose a lifestyle with healthy bodies and minds

Our vision and values are promoted through collective worship times.

Collective worship plays a vital role in the life of Tonwell St Mary's School giving everyone in the school community a chance to gather, stop and reflect. Prayer and worship underpins the school's distinctive Christian character supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Our aim is that all pupils will have a positive experience of belonging to a Christian community at Tonwell St Mary's School and have opportunities to reflect upon their own beliefs and values. It is something we do together but embraces a variety of faith commitment.

We believe Collective Worship should:

- Be daily for all children
- Underpin the values and ethos of Tonwell St Mary's School
- Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christian prayer and Anglican traditions
- Provide opportunities for children to respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Be led by the children on occasion and engage everyone
- Share times of joy and times of sadness with each other
- Be suitable for all abilities
- Be age appropriate
- Allow time for reflection
- Be monitored and evaluated by pupils, staff and governors

The Style and Structure of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is an opportunity for children to explore the spiritual dimension of their world. At Tonwell St Mary's, we use the GERS model for the structure of worship times (gather, engage, respond, send see Appendix 1)

The style of acts of worship will vary according to the age of the children and theme. Over a period of time we expect to provide opportunities for:

- stillness and a time to reflect
- use of candle, cross or other object to act as a focal point
- use of words, stories, pictures and symbols as stimuli
- prayer (own silent, led by adult, led by child, well known prayers including the Lord's prayer)
- hymns, songs and music (listening and participation)
- drama
- questions and answers – and sometimes the admission that there are no answers
- expressions of thankfulness, praise and joy.

- feelings of sadness and loss will be included when appropriate
- visitors from other denominations and charities
- Exploring God's word

The Content of Collective Worship

- Collective Worship is Christian in nature. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Collective Worship takes place each day and is led by staff, pupils and volunteers from the church community on a rota basis.
- Collective Worship involves the whole school meeting together. Occasionally individual classes hold their own acts of worship. Children are encouraged to be active by participating in appropriate ways, and lead the prayers on occasion.
- Themes for worship time are chosen to reflect the school's values curriculum which addresses a different Christian value each half term, e.g. love, respect, forgiveness (on a rotational cycle). The RE and PSHE schemes of work is also used to supplement the content of worship times together with the Diocesan Collective Worship Planner, which highlights the major Christian festivals.
- Where appropriate, Collective Worship links with any event, local, national or world, of which the children may be aware and offer appropriate worship in response. There is always room for spontaneity.
- Most acts of Collective Worship are held on school premises in the school hall or classrooms. Very occasionally worship is held in other places, for example the school playground or Holy Trinity Church.
- At the end of term, a collective worship time is held at Holy Trinity Church where parents are invited to join in. The major services are normally:

September/October	Harvest Festival
December	Christmas service (usually at Holy Trinity Church)
March/April	Holy Week and Easter service (Y5/6 usually take part in the Easter Experience at All Saints, Hertford)
July	End of leavers' service

End of term services involve the children in active participation (drama, readings, singing, leading prayer). The local minister or representative regularly lead worship times at school as well as at the church. As a school we also encourage links to participate in activities run and led by the clergy and members of Tonwell St Mary's Church, for example Open the Book.

- From time to time ministers from other Christian denominations, other faiths or visitors representing charities, organisations or projects may be invited to lead or contribute to Collective Worship.
- We regard Collective Worship as non-curriculum time, but also recognise the opportunities that arise for links to be made with some areas of the curriculum, particularly PSHE and RE. The school regularly participates in Anti-Bullying Week,

Feeling Good Week and Safer Internet Day. We also regard opportunities for speaking and listening in worship time as important for all pupils.

Evaluation and Monitoring of Collective Worship

Worship at Tonwell St Mary's is regularly monitored. Outcomes of monitoring are shared, discussed and responded to through discussions with SLT, staff and pupils. The governors also review the provision of collective worship.

Right of Withdrawal

At Tonwell St Mary's all children attend collective worship. However, we recognise the right of any parent to do so under the 1988 Education Reform Act. In these circumstances the Headteacher would discuss the matter with parents and, if necessary, would make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the periods concerned. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from collective worship (1944 Education Act).

Appendix 1

The principles of the GERS model are applicable to whole school, key stage and class worship. These are questions to support thinking around planning collective worship using the GERS model.

Gathering We gather together and greet each other. We all come to play a part in this community. We are preparing to meet God. How is the room set up? How is seating arranged? Does everyone know what they should be doing? What will the greeting be like?

Engaging: We engage with the big things and the little things in life. We encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible. We are listening for God's message for us. How will you share God's message? How will you share your own experiences or contemporary events? What strategies will you use?

Responding: We respond to what we have heard and seen. We respond together as individuals. We are given the opportunity to worship God. Will you use singing or prayer or reflection time? Will there be a practical response and how will this be encouraged? Do you give enough time to responding?

Sending: We are sent out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world. We are all dismissed with God's blessing. How will people leave worship – singing? silently? Will there be special words of blessing or dismissal?