



## **Collective Worship – Policy Statement**

Collective Worship at Riverview is securely founded on Christian principles and draws upon elements of the Anglican heritage. "Assembly" refers to the meeting together of members of the school community within which collective worship takes place.

Collective Worship is central to the fulfilment of the Riverview's mission statement to 'cherish, challenge and inspire children and adults within a Christian community'. Worship in the school community **is** the church for most of our pupils, and may be all that most ever experience of Christian worship. Whatever their faith background, each child will be given a sense of their own individual worth, of their value and unique gifts, of their place in the world and of their part in making the world a better place. They will encounter the love of God, who is creator, helper, guide and so much more. In worship, each child is given the freedom to think, to reflect on their lives, who they are, on the world and those around them, and on the big questions of life. Collective worship is a safe place to think, and to consider God on a growing personal level.

Riverview Church of England VA Primary & Nursery School promotes a distinctive caring ethos built on its Christian values. As a Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school, collective worship reflects the traditions and practices of the Anglican Church while acknowledging and respecting other Christian traditions and faith communities.

### **Statutory Requirements**

The school fulfils the legal requirement for a daily act of collective worship of a broadly Christian character for all pupils

Parents are reminded of their legal entitlement to withdraw their children from the daily act of collective worship.

The responsibility for all collective worship lies with the Governing Body in consultation with the headteacher.

### **Aims of Collective Worship**

Collective worship provides an opportunity for the whole school community:-

- To develop spiritual understanding and awareness
- To worship God together
- To reflect on the Bible and the life and teachings of Jesus
- To learn about and respect the teaching and practice of other faiths
- To develop an awareness of the pattern, order and purpose in the world, and respond to its beauty with a growing sense of awe and wonder
- To nurture the school's Christian ethos by promoting behaviour rooted in Christian values
- To increase pupils' understanding of being part of a caring community by developing awareness of the unique place of each individual within it



**Collective worship develops spiritual awareness:**

- By providing a time of quiet for reflection on the thoughts and themes presented
- By focusing on aspects of life that identify and grow a sense of awe and wonder
- By providing opportunities for pupils to engage in a variety of spiritual activities e.g. singing, dance, drama, readings and prayer
- By creating a distinctive atmosphere conducive to increasing faith through personal involvement
- By providing opportunities to celebrate achievements and shared joys

**Collective worship promotes inclusivity:**

- By engaging with all present, whatever their age or experience
- By involving pupils actively
- By focusing on the needs of all members of the school's community
- By promoting a sense of belonging through shared values, identity and purpose
- By enabling all present, regardless of personal faith, to appreciate and value opportunities for prayer and reflection.

**Collective worship also becomes learning experience:**

- By having a clearly defined objective and relating to pupils' present learning
- By using the Bible as a source of inspiration and learning
- By observing the cycle of the Christian year
- By learning traditional responses and prayers of the Christian faith
- By providing opportunities to learn about positive behaviour
- By responding to significant current issues or events
- By celebrating educational achievements and special occasions
- By involving members of the wider community

**Organisation and planning of collective worship**

The daily act of collective worship at Riverview takes place in a variety of pupil groupings, following the timetable and planning drawn up by the headteacher at the beginning of each term, as detailed below.

All pupils participate in collective worship unless parents have given prior notice in writing that they are to be withdrawn. Children withdrawn from worship sit in the entrance hall under the supervision of support staff for a time of reflection. Their parents are allowed to sit with them and guide them in this.

Teachers are bound by contract to attend assembly but have the right to withdraw from collective worship. It is intended that the inclusive nature of our collective worship will allow all staff to feel able to participate.



Half-termly themes for collective worship will be identified at the start of each school year, with details of the weekly themes made available at the start of each half term.

The school's spiritual links with Ruxley Church will be promoted by worshipping together in church at Christmas and Easter, and on other key occasions.

The weekly schedule of Collective Worship is as follows:

Monday	Whole school led by Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team
Tuesday	Class Assemblies through Circle Time with an act of worship at the end of the session
Wednesday	Whole school led by Generation Church 'Open the Book'
Thursday	Worship through song – lead by deputy headteacher
Friday	Whole school celebration assembly led by Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team

From time to time visitors may lead Collective Worship, either making a specific contribution or representing other Christian groups within the community.

For collective worship in the school hall, a reflective atmosphere will be created:

- By playing music at the beginning and end of collective worship
- By the children entering and leaving the hall quietly
- By placing a cross and lit candle lit in front of pupils
- By the leader conveying a sense of calm and thoughtfulness
- By incorporating a time for quiet reflection and personal prayer

During the year each class will take a turn at leading collective worship. Parents are specifically invited to share in this.

The school seeks to create a positive learning environment in which all pupils will flourish and gain the self-confidence needed to fulfil their full potential. Collective worship plays a vital part in enabling this to happen. The conscious effort made to promote Christian values helps create a secure community with a positive learning environment and gives pupils growing spiritual insight.

**Planning for collective worship**

- Planning for worship draws on appropriate themes, events and stories, reflecting the expertise of staff and clergy;
- Planning ensures that content is age appropriate and inclusive of all, regardless of ability, religion or culture;
- Visiting speakers are welcomed, and where possible linked into the planned themes; they are chosen for their capacity to deliver good quality school worship;
- Planning incorporates the celebration of special occasions and seasons in the Church's year, and the life of the nation and community;



- Reference is made to the major festivals of other faiths, relating important concepts where appropriate to the Christian faith e.g. fasting, prayer and service.
- Worship is planned which appeals to the senses, using a strong simple visual focus and drawing on pupils' imagination.

### **Evaluating the impact of collective worship**

In order to improve practice acts of worship will be reviewed termly following each unit of planning.

Views on worship will be sought from:

- Teachers and other staff      Feedback from leading and taking part in worship
- Governors      Governor visits to include feedback on worship
- Clergy      Clergy to lead worship and to provide feedback on planning and impact
- Parents      Parental feedback will be sought during parent forum meetings, after special acts of worship, and at the end of year report review
- Visitors      Visitors to collective worship will be encouraged to offer their perspectives on what they have experienced and observed
- Pupils      Feedback from children during informal discussions and School Council.