



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

### FARNWORTH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Current version approval date	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023
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Legal Status	Statutory

Farnworth Church of England Primary School believes that all children, regardless of ability and behaviour are valued equally. Groups of pupils (eg. SEND pupils, children in care, EAL pupils etc) are not viewed as separate but are part of the whole school approach. Different children's needs are recognised and met through varied and flexible provision and the use of different styles of teaching & learning throughout the curriculum. This policy therefore applies to all our children, regardless of their gender, faith, race, culture, family circumstances or sexuality.

Farnworth Church of England Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of all children and expects all staff to share in this commitment.

## Our Vision...

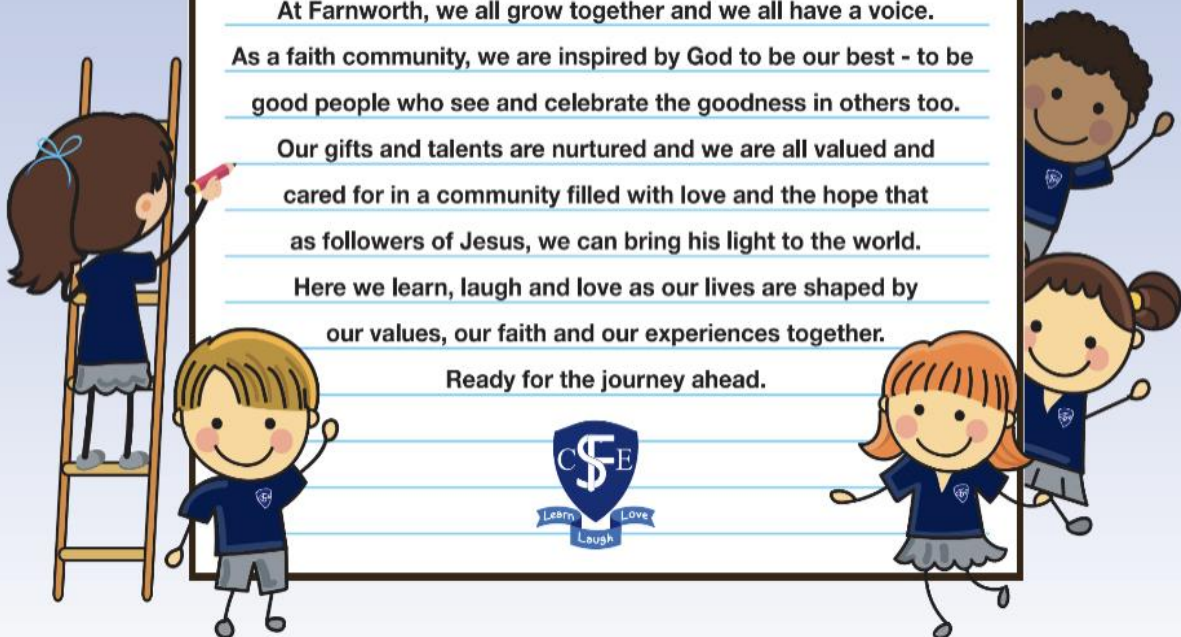
At Farnworth, we all grow together and we all have a voice.

As a faith community, we are inspired by God to be our best - to be good people who see and celebrate the goodness in others too.

Our gifts and talents are nurtured and we are all valued and cared for in a community filled with love and the hope that as followers of Jesus, we can bring his light to the world.

Here we learn, laugh and love as our lives are shaped by our values, our faith and our experiences together.

Ready for the journey ahead.



**“If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.”** (1 John 1:7)



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## 1. Rationale

At Farnworth CE Primary School, the daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life; it is the heartbeat of our school. It is a special time where we come together to share our love of God, learn about Jesus' teachings and explore and grow in faith together. We also celebrate our achievements and sometimes reflect on our failures together. Our worship promotes our chosen Christian values, which permeate the ethos of the school and helps us to develop them within ourselves and across our whole community. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly. As a school, it is our responsibility to provide meaningful opportunities for children to think deeply about themselves, others, the world in which they live and the place that faith has in our society.

## 2. Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of collective worship are to:

- Support us in realising our theologically-rooted Christian Vision.
- Strengthen our spiritual selves together, as a school community.
- Invite children to learn about God and develop their relationship with Him, providing opportunities for them to praise, pray, learn, reflect and grow.
- Enable pupils to explore and respond to a variety of forms of worship, thus enabling those pupils with a religious commitment to deepen their experience of worship and strengthen their faith, and to allow those without a religious commitment to begin to appreciate what worship means for others.
- Instill the Christian values in our children and across our school community.
- Foster an attitude characterised by feelings such as humility, awe, wonder, appreciation, thankfulness, respect, reverence and elation.
- Enable pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues and the many questions about life, and to allow them to ask questions of their own.
- Acknowledge the things which have meaning, value and purpose for the pupils as individuals, as well as for the school and the wider community.
- Develop a sense of community within and beyond the school.
- Celebrate achievements, special occasions and special events in relation to individual pupils within school, to the school as a whole, or to the wider community.
- Acknowledge and respect difference and diversity.

### 3. Christian Values

**Our Values...**

**Hope**  
We have hope and believe in a great future, because God is in our hearts.  
"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13)

**Peace**  
We strive to live happily and harmoniously. We are accepting and forgiving and we care about others.  
"Live in harmony with one another" (Romans 12:16)

**Courage**  
We are brave, we face our fears and we take responsible risks.  
"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or troubled. The Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9)

**Friendship**  
We are kind, caring, loving and sharing.  
"Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34)

**Perseverance**  
We strive to be our best and never give up.  
"At just the right time, we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up" (Galatians 6:9)

**Respect**  
We respect everyone's feelings, wishes and rights because we all matter.  
"Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good." (Romans 12:9)

These values are important for our school life together and help us to develop our distinctiveness as a Church school. We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection.

Our Christian values have been chosen following a consultation, which started with the children, then moved outwards to staff and church representatives, parents and governors. We shared our views on which values our school community feels are most relevant to us, and the six values we now have were chosen based on the outcomes of this consultation. Each half term, we focus on one of the values and all of our worship is based around that chosen value, to enable children to engage with the value personally and gain a deeper spiritual understanding of its meaning, its importance and its relevance to them as individuals, and to our school community as a whole. The children also worked with an artist to create symbols for each value that all ages can relate to. They designed the symbols and the artist helped them to bring them to life.

Each value has a description and a piece of scripture attached. This makes that connection between the word of God and our school vision explicit and ties everything together clearly for all members of the community.



#### 4. Values Education

We blend Christian teaching and values education in order to create opportunities for children to develop spiritually, physically, emotionally, personally, socially, mentally and intelligently so that their self-esteem and well-being is sound and supported by ever growing emotional intelligence; leading to an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as young citizens. The systematic introduction of a common values vocabulary allows children to access moral and ethical thought. We also explore British values, human rights, and key societal issues such as discrimination, bullying and mental health and well-being within our worship, as well as exploring a variety of cultures, religions, movements and global events through our values focus. We do not shy away from the difficult discussions, but ensure that they are done sensitively and appropriately within a caring and safe environment and we believe this contributes greatly to the mature, moral attitudes our children display.

#### 5. Vision Ambassadors

Our Vision Team comprises of a number of our older pupils in UKS2, who have a range of duties:

- Vision and Values - developing and strengthening the vision of our school, promoting the values across school and developing children's understanding of what the values look like. They also monitor the values in action and deliver half-termly worship.
- Worship – evaluating worship across school through monitoring the blog and having discussions around this, conducting learning walks, monitoring the use of worship areas and helping to plan any worship that they are delivering.
- Prayer - leading prayer drop in sessions and developing ways to introduce prayer in different forms across school. They also write and share prayers for specific events/purposes and for the school community and use prayer baskets to invite children to pray in different ways.
- Introducing people to Jesus - using crafts, colouring and other interactive activities to share Jesus' key messages within school. Projects include creating and delivering prayer cards and messages to help children to pray, making friendship bracelets and explaining to other children that Jesus is our friend and involving children in making crafts relating to key events in the church calendar, whilst talking to them about those events and about Jesus.

The overall lead of the Vision Team is the Collective Worship Lead, although other members of staff also take an active role in supporting the team with their projects and tasks. Being a Vision Ambassador is to take an active role in developing, sharing and bringing to life the Christian Vision of our school, by sharing the love and lessons of Jesus with the school community in ways that everyone can access and engage with.



## 6. Legal Requirements

Collective worship has been a statutory requirement since the 1944 Education Act. The 1988 Education Reform Act subsequently relaxed some of the prescription with regard to time and grouping but affirmed the statutory position. The requirement for a daily act of collective worship was confirmed in the 1996 Education Act and there has been no subsequent change to primary legislation. As a school, we acknowledge the legal requirement which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group.

At Farnworth CE Primary School, we seek to be an inclusive community however we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Head teacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

## 7. Organisation

We conduct worship respectfully and enthusiastically, encouraging responses from the children and adults. We share in praise through singing, with joy and enthusiasm. We instil in children that collective worship is a period of calm reflection but is also a time to celebrate and give thanks for God's presence in our community. We regard it as a special time, and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be respectful and thoughtful, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and worship songs.

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children including the children taking on the role of worship leaders. Our current schedule is as follows:

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Headteacher in KS2 and Deputy Headteacher in EYFS/ KS1  Once a term – Rev. Greg Sharples from Transform Widnes
Tuesday	Song and Prayer/Sue Smither KS1 (Reader from St Luke's)/Staff Rota  Once a month – Pastor Ray Tate
Wednesday	Class Worship led by children in their classrooms
Thursday	Song and Prayer/Sue Smither KS2 (Reader from St Luke's)/Staff Rota
Friday	Whole school Celebration led by the Headteacher

Throughout the school year there is an annual programme of additional events such as Foundation Stage Welcome Service; leavers' services, Harvest, Christmas Services and Experience Easter. In addition to this, visiting groups and individuals are welcomed into the school regularly to lead worship, including Rev. Greg Sharples, Pastor Ray Tate



and leaders/followers of Judaism and Islam.

## 8. Planning, Content and Detail

Collective worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation. The content and methodology of collective worship is varied and evidenced in planning which is kept by the Collective Worship Lead. Worship is planned each half term with a value focus. It is planned by the Collective Worship Lead, then discussed with worship leaders from the church and in school, before being sent to staff to give them an opportunity to discuss, add or change anything. The plan is then added to the worship files and is followed by all. Sometimes resources are provided and other times there is more room for staff to develop their own worship based on the theme/focus. The theme for each week's collective worship is introduced on a Monday and revisited throughout the week. Time is also given during the year for reflections on the Church calendar; other faiths, global citizenship and current events.

The worship begins with the children entering the hall accompanied by a piece of music.

The candles on the altar table are lit and the worship begins with the children singing a worship song. The children are involved in the worship throughout and this finishes with a prayer. The candles are then blown out before any messages are given. This allows for us to make a clear distinction between worship and assembly. The children then lead out as the music is played.

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

- Lighting a candle
- Greetings and Dismissals
- Prayer
- Meditations
- Moments of silence
- Reflection
- Stories and readings from the Bible
- Sharing of personal experiences
- Worship songs, hymns and music
- Drama
- Artefacts, images, artwork and natural materials
- Children's contributions - internal, verbal or written



## 9. Child - led Worship



At Farnworth CE Primary School, we strive to empower and inspire every child to lead acts of worship, as well as participating in them. Every year, each child has the opportunity to lead class worship for a half term, as part of a worship team. The children lay the worship table, explaining the symbolism of the items and lay the liturgical ribbon. They plan and deliver acts of worship including scripture, prayers and reflection tasks that encourage their classmates to discuss key themes and share their thoughts and feelings intimately and openly in a safe, familiar and loving environment. The children enjoy this responsibility immensely and it is a highlight of our week in our classrooms! We feel this experience also helps the children to grow in confidence and to consider their own faith journey as they share in worship with one another more actively and personally.

### Resources

Every class has their own Worship Box and Worship File. The box consists of a Bible, a cross, a candle, ribbons of the liturgical colours and the Worship File. Items that support the theme/focus such as photographs and special objects are sometimes added by staff and/or children. Fabric for the table is included as well as wipe clean planning sheets for the children to use to plan their worship session.

## 10. Greetings and Dismissals

We have a selection of greetings and dismissals which vary throughout the week. During child - led worship, children select which ones they will use for their act of worship.

## 11. Church Partnership

We have a very close relationship with our church, St Luke's. This relationship is sustained through regular meetings between the Collective Worship Lead and Mrs Smither - one of the church leaders. Mrs Smither is a retired teacher who lives in Farnworth and also used to teach at our school. She has a real affinity with our school and the community and knows many of the children and families well which adds such strength to our relationship with the church and the ability to provide support and deliver meaningful worship. Mrs Smither delivers worship weekly, which the children very much enjoy and benefit from. At Harvest, Easter and Christmas, we lead worship at Church in various groups (year groups, Vision Ambassadors etc.), supported by Mrs Smither. These services are always well attended by parents and carers. Children in UKS2 are invited to attend confirmation sessions and then have the opportunity to be confirmed.



## 12. Parental Involvement

We are very proud of our school community and value greatly the excellent relationships we have with children and their families. Parents are always extremely supportive of our Christian Vision and many parents responded to our Vision and Values Consultation which was very helpful and informative for us as we worked towards developing a new vision that met the needs of everyone in our community. Half termly values, and a home exploration sheet are shared with parents to support them in exploring the value further, as a family. The value for each half term is also shared weekly on our newsletter and displayed in the playground on notice boards to encourage families to engage with that value at home too.

## 13. Prayer and Reflection

Prayer is a central part of our school life and is very important to us. Our Vision Team lead on the development of prayer across the school, though all children are involved in this. The Vision Ambassadors are available in the Quiet Garden to pray for and with anyone who wishes to visit at break times. Prayer cards are handed around the school by the children and we have been working on developing spontaneous prayer and 'prayer from the heart' in classes too.

We have an adult prayer group, comprised of staff and Mrs Smither, who meet to pray for the school, church, families and community at key times and whenever we can.

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including worship songs. A range of prayers is used including the Lord's Prayer, extempore prayers, prayers written by the children and others. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. At the beginning of whole school worship, a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of candles. At the beginning of the lunch hour, grace / age appropriate lunchtime prayer is said by either an adult or child in each class.

Teachers give the children in their class the opportunity for prayer and / or a time of reflection at the end of the day.

Teachers and children can choose to say their own class prayers, share prayers that individual children have written or to pray from the heart. We encourage spontaneous prayer in prayerful moments to support children in developing their personal relationships with God, their relationships with one another and to help them to understand that He is always listening.

Last year, our Vision Team created our school prayer, with support from Sue Smither and Miss O'Grady:

Dear God,

Make our school a place of joy where we learn, laugh and love as one big family.

Help us to be kind, caring, loving and sharing friends.

Be our guiding light and help us to always try our very best and reach for the stars.

Help us to respect all those around us, and to be peacemakers.

Help us to be brave enough to try new things and to always have hope, because you love us and will always be by our side.

Fill us with Your light, that we may go out into the world and share it with everyone we meet.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen



#### **14. Eucharist**

Eucharist celebrations form a very important part of our Collective Worship. Opportunities for children to participate are provided termly for all children within our worship programme.

#### **15. Other Faiths**

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding. Acts of worship sometimes portray other cultures and beliefs and reflect the explorations of other faiths in our RE curriculum and the respect we have as a school community for all faiths. We also invite leaders and followers of Islam and Judaism in to share their faith with us and annual trips to church, cathedrals, synagogues and mosques are arranged for children to develop their understanding of faith, and broaden their experiences.

#### **16. Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring**

We regularly review the impact of our worship and the questions raised as a result in order to develop our worship and to continually adapt in order to meet the needs and interests of the children and adults. We seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on collective worship and to be a part of the evaluation process. Staff reflections and pupil reflections are submitted via a blog and then reviewed by the Vision Team and the Collective Worship Lead, to feed opportunities to explore ideas and thoughts raised into future plans.

Regular worship-planning meetings involving the Collective Worship Lead and a representative from St Luke's Church are held each term. These meetings are an opportunity to review and evaluate the last term's acts of collective worship and to plan themes for the next term.

#### **17. Visits and visitors**

Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge – their role is to educate, not to evangelise. St Luke's Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the whole school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Services and regular input from Church Leaders in our Worship programme and school life. Pastor Ray Tate also leads worship on a monthly basis, Rev. Greg on a termly basis and representatives of other faiths are welcomed in to share their faith with us and help us to develop our understanding.

#### **18. Policy review and development**

Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of a named school governor, who is also responsible for Religious Education. The governor concerned liaises with the RE and Collective Worship leads before reporting to the governors on an annual basis at the summer term full Governing Body meeting.

Monitoring and evaluation informs the ongoing development of collective worship through consultation on impact and quality. Pupil voice forms an integral part of this process.

This policy will be reviewed biannually.