

Collective Worship Policy

Ridgeway Farm CE Academy



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| Approved by: | Headteacher | Date: November 2022 |
| Last reviewed on: | September 2025 | |
| Next review due by: | September 2027 | |

1. Vision and Christian Distinctiveness

At Ridgeway Farm CE Academy, collective worship is central to the life of the school and the outworking of our theologically rooted Christian vision to *Believe, Learn and Grow together as part of God's family*. Our vision is rooted in the parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13) and the belief that every child is uniquely created and deeply valued by God. Collective worship enables pupils and adults to flourish spiritually, emotionally, and socially by creating regular, protected space for reflection, connection, meaning making and encounter with the Christian story.

Worship at Ridgeway Farm is shaped by the Church of England's understanding that worship in school should be:

- **Inclusive** – welcoming and respecting those of all faiths and none.
- **Invitational** – offering, not imposing, opportunities to engage with faith.
- **Inspirational** – nurturing curiosity, hope, and aspiration
- **Reflective** – creating space for stillness, prayer, and personal response.

Collective worship supports our commitment to living life in all its fullness (John 10:10) and underpins the values and culture of the school.

2. Legal Framework

Collective worship is provided in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. A daily act of collective worship is offered for all pupils.

Parents/carers have the legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship. We respectfully ask that this is discussed with the Headteacher in advance and confirmed in writing. Alternative provision will be made for withdrawn pupils.

3. Aims of Collective Worship

Collective worship at Ridgeway Farm aims to:

- Strengthen the school community as part of God's family.
- Enable pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.
- Bring the Christian vision and values to life in practical, meaningful ways.
- Create space for stillness, reflection, and prayer.
- Encourage pupils to ask big questions about life, meaning, and belief.
- Develop understanding of Christian faith, including the Trinity.
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.
- Foster compassion, justice, forgiveness, and service
- Celebrate achievement, growth, and community life.
- Develop pupil leadership, voice, and responsibility within worship.

4. Spirituality and Worship

Collective worship is a key driver of spiritual development at Ridgeway Farm and is aligned with the school's shared definition of spirituality:

Spirituality is the way we help children to wonder, reflect, and ask big questions about life; to understand themselves and others; to experience joy, hope and belonging; and to recognise that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

Worship intentionally nurtures spirituality through four relational dimensions:

- **Relationship with self** – reflection, emotions, resilience
- **Relationship with others** – compassion, forgiveness, service
- **Relationship with the world** – awe, wonder, responsibility for creation
- **Relationship with God** – prayer, Bible stories, Christian belief

The **Windows, Mirrors, Doors** approach is used to support pupils to:

- Look out at the world (windows)
- Reflect on themselves (mirrors)
- Be inspired to take action (doors)

5. Theological Content

Collective worship reflects the core beliefs of the Christian faith, including:

- God as Creator and source of life
- Jesus as the expression of God's love through his life, death, and resurrection
- The Holy Spirit as God's presence in the world today
- Understanding of the Trinity

Worship draws from the Bible, the Christian liturgical year and Anglican tradition, while remaining accessible and meaningful for pupils of all backgrounds.

6. Structure and Organisation

Collective worship takes place daily and follows a consistent, meaningful structure:

- **Monday** – Whole school worship led by the Headteacher (core theme/value)
- **Tuesday** – Key Stage worship led by staff.
- **Wednesday** – Singing worship.
- **Thursday** – Worship led by local clergy/church partners.
- **Friday** – Celebration and reflective worship

Worship is shaped by the Christian calendar (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost) and a rolling programme of the school's twelve Christian values.

The worship space includes a worship table with:

- Bible
- Cross
- Candle

- Ubuntu stones
- Liturgical cloth

These symbols support theological understanding, reverence, and reflection.

7. Pupil Leadership and Participation

Pupils are active participants in collective worship. The Collective Worship Team:

- Helps plan worship.
- Leads prayers, readings, and responses.
- Evaluates worship.
- Supports the development of the school prayer.

This builds confidence, responsibility, and a sense of belonging within God's family.

8. Inclusion and Invitation

Collective worship is invitational. Pupils are encouraged to engage at a level appropriate to their beliefs. Prayer is always offered, never imposed. Reflection may take the form of silence, thought, listening or personal prayer.

Language is chosen carefully to ensure worship is accessible to all pupils while remaining authentically Christian.

9. Partnerships

Collective worship is enriched through strong partnerships with:

- Local parish churches at Lydiard Millicent All Saints and St Mary's Purton
- Clergy and church volunteers
- The Diocese of Bristol

These partnerships strengthen Christian distinctiveness and deepen pupils' understanding of belonging to a wider Christian community.

10. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact

Collective worship is monitored and evaluated through:

- Pupil voice and worship leader feedback
- Staff reflection
- Foundation governor monitoring
- Leadership observation
- SIAMS self-evaluation

Evaluation focuses on:

- Impact on pupils' spiritual development

- Understanding of Christian vision and values
- Levels of engagement and reflection
- Opportunities for pupil leadership

Findings are used to strengthen provision and ensure worship continues to support flourishing for all.

11.Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by school leaders and foundation governors to ensure it remains effective, theologically rooted and aligned with the school's Christian vision.

Appendix 1 - Guidance for Visitors

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS

Representatives of religious communities can make a vital contribution to learning when visiting schools or acting as guides to their place of worship or community activity.

Like other organisations that work with children, churches, other places of worship and faith-based organisations need to have appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

In particular, these arrangements should include:

- procedures for staff and others to report concerns that they may have about the children they meet that are in line with “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused.” (Visitors will need to be referred to the School’s safeguarding policy).
- appropriate codes of practice for staff, particularly those working directly with children, such as those issued by the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)
- recruitment procedures in accordance with safer recruitment guidance and NSSCB procedures, alongside training and supervision of staff (paid or voluntary).

Spiritual and moral development and religious learning can be stimulated through encounters between people of faith and school pupils of all ages.⁵

AWARENESS

When working with school pupils, representatives of religious communities should be aware that:

- schools are *diverse* communities: they usually include members of different faith groups, children from secular families and (within Christianity or other faiths) different denominational allegiances, and that it is important to show sensitivity to this plurality. Each child’s beliefs and experiences must be respected.

PREPARATION

In order to make their presentations to school pupils effective, representatives of religious communities should:

- comply with the “Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People” ethos of the school.
- be familiar with the school’s aims, ethos, and policies, and plan their involvement in the light of the aims and curriculum of the school.
- plan their presentation carefully. Religious visitors to schools need to be in good communication with the link person in the school. They should be aware of the Value or the theme for the term, clear about the purpose of the visit and how the visitors’ contribution links to the overall purpose for Collective Worship.

Visitors should :

1. discuss their input with teachers in advance and be open to teachers’ suggestions.
2. take account of the differing abilities of the pupils.
3. where appropriate, use a variety of teaching methods and styles, including those which elicit a response from all the pupils.
4. select the content of their presentation carefully, avoiding the temptation to try and get the whole of their faith across (for example, teaching six-year-olds all there is to know about Jesus in a 20-minute session!).

TALKING WITH PUPILS

When talking with pupils, representatives of religious communities should:

- make clear to pupils who they are, who they represent, and what they are offering to the pupils.
- be willing to have an openness and humility to learn from pupils' and staff' insights.
- be willing to share their own experiences, beliefs, and insights, but avoid criticising the experiences and insights of others.
- seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods which involve the pupils actively, and to communicate at appropriate levels for the age group(s) concerned.
- develop ways of speaking to pupils which communicate an open approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to convert them.

This question will help representatives of religious communities to reflect on their approach: *If a member of another religion visited my child's school and contributed in the same way that I have done, would I, as a parent, be happy with the education given?*

Communications between children and adults, by whatever method must take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web cams, and blogs. The School's Social Media Policy which specifies acceptable and permissible modes of communication must be adhered to and "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People" adopted.

It should be noted, therefore, that these professional boundaries extend beyond a visitor's contact with pupils within the school premises and include any further contact that may be made with pupils in the wider community.

Appendix 2 Visitors leaflet

Ridgeway Farm CE Academy

Guidelines for those leading Collective Worship

We are delighted that you will be visiting our school to lead our Collective Worship.

At Ridgeway Farm CofE Academy we value our daily acts of collective worship extremely highly. Through it we identify, affirm, and celebrate those ideals and values that we hold to be of central importance to us as a community.

It is important, for visitors to be aware that children in our school come from a range of faith backgrounds, and none; we therefore ask that those who lead Collective Worship take account of this in the preparation and delivery of their material.

At Ridgeway Farm CofE Academy we prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and to that end would like you to have enhanced DBS clearance. If you already have DBS clearance, please bring your certificate with you so that the details can be recorded on our school system. If you do not have DBS clearance, please let us know so we can support your visit appropriately.

Each child at Ridgeway Farm CE Academy participates in an act of worship every day. These take place in a variety of different groupings:

Monday - Whole School Worship 9.00am

Tuesday - Key Stage Worship 9.00am

Wednesday – Singing Worship 9.00am

Thursday - Church lead Worship 9.00am

Friday - Whole School (Celebration) Worship 9.00 am.

There is a small team including the Headteacher and Vicar, which meets half termly to plan the school worship. A planning sheet is then produced and made available to all those who contribute to our school worship.

If you have not already been given a copy of this sheet, please ask at the school office.

We hope you will find the following guidelines helpful.

We ask that visitors arrive at 8.45am ready to begin promptly at 9.00am.

On arrival at school please report to the office where you will be asked to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor identification badge. On your first visit to the school, you may be met by one of our older pupils who will be pleased to help in any way they can.

If you require any special resources or equipment please let us know in advance and we will endeavour to have them ready when you arrive.

The children enter the hall class by class with their class teacher and when everyone is ready to begin the worship a member of staff will signal for the Collective Worship leaders to light a candle and introduce you to the children. Whilst the children enter, music is played. If you have a preference for a piece of music or an object that could function as a focus for your time of worship,

you are most welcome to bring it along. If you have a song or hymn which is especially appropriate that you would like to be sung, please let us know in good time.

Some of our visitors like to include a short time of prayer in the worship and it may be helpful to know that we use the modern language version of The Lord's Prayer.

We ask that your act of worship should last no longer than 20 minutes and that it includes a short opportunity for quiet reflection on one aspect of your theme. This could be time of silence, or you may wish to play music or read a relevant poem. When the worship is complete, please blow out the candle. A child or member of staff will want to thank you for your visit. There may be some announcements that need to be made at this point. Do feel free to leave if you wish, remembering to sign out and return your badge to the office.

Once again may we thank you for your visit.