

# SPEEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

**Issued: September 2023**

**Next Review: September 2025**

THEN CHRIST WILL MAKE HIS HOME IN YOUR HEARTS  
AS YOU TRUST IN HIM. YOUR ROOTS WILL GROW  
DOWN INTO GOD'S LOVE AND KEEP YOU STRONG.

- EPHESIANS 3:17 (NLT)

## INTRODUCTION

The school's vision statement underpins all aspects of school life. As a voluntary aided school, Speen deems it critical to value, uphold and project the spiritual dimension of life in all that it does. As a Church of England School, Collective Worship is an important and integral part of our school life. The school reflects Anglican traditions with its close link with the Parish Church but recognises that the children in the school come from a variety of Christian, other faiths and non religious backgrounds. The school actively welcomes other Christian links, eg with Speen Baptist Church and other Christian organisations who can contribute towards the school's distinctive Christian character.

At Speen C of E Infant School, we wish to share with the children the importance of coming together each day to meet with God, to invite Him to be with us through the day, to praise Him, to intercede through prayer for others and to thank Him for the many blessings we receive. Collective Worship at Speen is an affirmation and celebration of the values and the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Parents are welcomed to acts of worship, and are particularly invited to school church services.

All assemblies at Speen CofE School are Christian with a firm basis in Biblical teaching and focus on the Trinity. In so doing, they develop a sense of **family**, by uniting the membership of the school, under a common ethos and **shared values**. Indeed our emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is guided by the example and teaching of Jesus Christ. It is recognised that worship is not just 15 minutes of the school day, but pervades the daily life of the school.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Collective worship at Speen School complies with the legal requirements as set out in the 1998 Education Reform act:

"Collective worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character which means that it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief."

Speen is a voluntary aided school and the legal basis for the provision of worship must reflect the purpose for which Church schools were established.

"The daily act of collective worship required by law in the school shall be consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England and the basic curriculum required by law in the school shall include religious education consistent with the faith of the Church of England."

"Use should be made, within the provisions of the Education Acts for the time being in force, of the parish Church or other Church of England place of worship, both for occasional acts of collective worship and for religious education."

("Terms of Union" as stated by The National Society (Church of England) for promoting Religious Education)

Speen School expects that all pupils will be present during acts of worship. As a Church school, the act of worship is central to the life of the school, however the school respects each individual's faith stance and recognises that parents/carers may use their legal right to withdraw a child from an act of worship.

## DEFINITION AND OVERALL AIM

Collective Worship is the daily gathering together of the school **family** to draw near to God, to learn more about God and His son Jesus Christ, and to offer worship to Him.

## OBJECTIVES

Collective worship at Speen School will enable the whole school **family** to:

- Recognise that God is actively involved in all aspects of life.
- Acquire and develop knowledge and awareness of the love of God and the key aspects of the Trinity
- Develop an awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experience and teach a Biblical response to these.
- Not only take part but develop pupils' leadership skills in activities such as worship, singing, prayer, bible readings and teachings to develop their sense of ownership and understanding (see Pupil Ownership paragraph below).
- Seek opportunities to share the school's distinctive Christian character with others eg singing worship songs at the local café or toddler group.

## CONTENT

An assembly at Speen School will always be Christian in nature and is likely to consist of opportunities;

- for prayer and communication with God
- to sing praises to God
- to teach and learn more about God's love, His character, His Word, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, developing a sense of awe and wonder
- for reflection of spiritual or moral issues, teaching pupils a Biblical response by using a Bible verse or passage where possible
- to consider personal beliefs, values and responses
- to encourage commitment to one another, the school and its shared values

Teaching on the school's Christian values (**respect, honesty, courage, compassion responsibility and family**) is a key component of collective worship at Speen School. The process of worship takes place through a variety of media including song, story, video, drama, music, prayer, meditation and poetry. Opportunities are also taken to link times of focus to

- any issues or matters that concern the assembled children
- key festivals within the Church's Year
- aspects arising within the school, local, national or global communities
- celebrate corporate or individual successes, achievements, also taking time to praise pupils for demonstrating the school's values
- the current RE area of learning when appropriate

When an act of worship focuses on an extended time of singing, time will be given to reflect on the meanings of song lyrics and how they apply to those listening.

## SCHOOL ORGANISATION

Collective worship is timetabled each day for at least 15 minutes. Where events for classes make this difficult on any given day, a time for reflection is given utilising the Content elements listed above.

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for collective worship and leads acts of worship as do the teachers.

Local ministers between them also lead a weekly act of worship. Visitors may be invited to host or be involved with school assemblies and on these occasions opportunity is taken to still maintain a spiritual focus.

## PUPIL OWNERSHIP

In addition, in order to facilitate pupil ownership and progression in development, children are expected to play an increasing role in collective worship in the following ways:

- When they first start school, to be part of the school **family**, listening and joining in where appropriate
- As they gain confidence, to actively participate in songs, stories, role play and drama, prayer and reflection, sharing readings or writings
- To take an increasing responsibility in the planning, leading or evaluating of acts of worship.

These are some examples of increasing opportunities for pupils to participate, contribute and lead as they progress through the school.

**Age 4-5:** saying own spontaneous prayers, join in with call and response phrases, say known collective prayers, begin to learn the Lord's Prayer. Take roles in assembly directed by a teacher.

Taking on an acting role, having short sentence readings in church, singing to or with a congregation.

**Age 6-7:** more confidence in saying their own spontaneous prayer, giving reasons for prayer requests, being able to form more detailed prayers like Teaspoon Prayers (TSP – Thank you, Sorry, Please).

Leading Harvest Festival service with readings, prayers, role play, drama or telling a story, singing solos, playing musical instruments or percussion

## PRAYER TIMES IN CLASSROOMS

Teachers can invite pupils to pray whenever it is appropriate within their class situation e.g. before a meal time, at the end of the day, in response to class news and sharing etc. Children may offer or be encouraged to lead times of thanksgiving or praying for issues that are of concern to pupils in their class. Different topic areas in the curriculum may also give opportunities for prayer e.g., Forest School session finding amazing tiny creatures or a Geography topic on earthquakes which may coincide with a recent news incident in the world. Older pupils contribute their own prayers in a prayer bowl to contribute to a weekly act of worship led by a local minister.

## CHURCH WORSHIP, Parents and Governors

The children and the vicar play an active role in special services at St John's Lacey Green. Parents are encouraged to be part of the church services, open assemblies and the Nativity play that is performed at the end of the Autumn term. Church Governors visit the school regularly, observing acts of worship and talking to the Headteacher or staff to ensure the Christian distinctiveness of the school remains vibrant.

## RESOURCES

Collective worship draws on resources within the school community incorporating the staff, pupils and friends of the school. Practical resources to support whole school and classroom worship are stored centrally, with the Headteacher, RE teacher and church governors always being available for further support.

## RECORD KEEPING AND ASSESSMENT

A record and evaluation of daily acts of worship is kept. The Headteacher assesses the quality and content of collective worship within the school, reporting to governors via the termly Headteacher's report on provision, actions taken and recommended next steps.

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Evaluation strategies currently used by pupils and staff for assessing the outcomes of collective worship are:

- Observation of different age groups and abilities level of attentiveness, engagement, interest and participation shown during acts of worship.
- Feedback from pupils / the School Council.
- Parents' comments after acts of collective worship, either at the school, in the Church or following the Nativity performance.
- Staff's individual evaluations after they have led acts of worship.
- Pupil or Parent Surveys to identify the impact of collective worship on the school community.
- Observation of the children's general behaviour in and around school and whether this is impacted by the school's distinctive Christian values.

Feedback is collated and informs the planning and development of future provision.

