



Overton St Helen's CE Primary School

Surrounded by God, we inspire hearts and minds through learning, faith and love.

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Collective Worship Policy

School Vision

We encourage children to be respectful, forgiving and compassionate. We are a nurturing, inclusive and safe community built on Christians Values that inspire positive trusting relationships between school, families and the wider world.

We aim high, engaging children in a dynamic and diverse curriculum with opportunities and experiences that allow them to excel, through discovering their unique talents, relishing challenges with courage and perseverance, knowing that God is with them.

Rationale

At Overton St Helen's Church of England Primary School, we believe that collective worship is at the heart of our school life and an expression of our distinctive Christian vision. The Governors see it as an essential part of the development and education of all of our pupils.

In this Church of England school, our collective worship is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England.

As a school, we aim to serve our community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promote Christian values through the experience we offer to all our pupils.

The worship and prayer life of our school is not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities will be taken to use prayer and encourage reflection in the curriculum generally and at the end of each afternoon session as well as saying a small prayer before lunch.

Key Beliefs

Forms of worship within our denomination differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to our worship. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian church. Whatever the approaches used, we expect that our pupils will be introduced to, and encouraged to explore, the following key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- The nature of human beings as children of God, part of his creation and destined for eternal life
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, restored humanity's relationship with God
- The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance
- The importance of prayer
- The central symbols of Christianity
- The cycle of the Church year

Our Aims

The aims of Collective Worship in our school have been created using the 3 E's (as outlined in the Guidelines for Collective Worship by Blackburn Diocese).

EXPLORE - We encourage our children and our staff to explore:

- A personal relationship with God.
- The teachings, stories and fundamental beliefs of the Bible.
- Personal and corporate prayer.
- The value of truth, love, goodness and respect and empathy for others regardless of gender, social, racial or cultural differences.
- What worship means to them and to others.
- What it means to put God at the heart of our school and our lives.

ENCOUNTER - We trust that our children and our staff will encounter:

- The beauty, awe and wonder of our God and his creation.
- The nature of God as revealed in Jesus – through love, compassion, forgiveness, wisdom, courage and respect.
- Faith and peace through silence and reflection.
- A meaningful relationship with God.
- A faith which is alive in our world today.

EXPERIENCE - It is our aim that our children and staff experience:

- Acts of worship that are enjoyable and that involve everyone, regardless of age, ability or personal level of faith.
- The feeling of belonging – to families, our school, our church the wider Christian community
- The enjoyment of participating in and leading worship
- Church life and Christian practice, both locally and globally
- A sense of pride in our achievements and the joy of sharing with and in the successes of others.
- A sense of shared sadness and loss and the support and care that God offers us and that we can offer to each other.
- A sense of smallness in the face of the greatest of things.
- A sense of grandness in the face of the smallest of things.

Organisation and Delivery

In order to promote our pupil's learning and meet the need of different age groups our worship times vary in size and groupings. Currently this is as follows:

MONDAY Whole school worship led by Mrs Easthope

TUESDAY	Key Stage worship
WEDNESDAY	Whole school worship led by teaching staff
THURSDAY	Key Stage Worship
FRIDAY	Whole school celebration worship led by Mrs Easthope

Pupils and staff visit St. Helen's Church once per half-term to worship. St Helen's Church is currently in Vacancy. With the absence of a local vicar, Rev Sarah Cliffe from St John's Sandylands Church, Heysham is currently leading our worship on a regular basis, once a half-term and the head teacher leads key stage worship at Church.

Special services punctuate the worship calendar of the school year, such as Harvest, Remembrance Day or Ash Wednesday, including specific times of the Christian Calendar, such as Advent or Lent, where worship may follow a special theme to acknowledge the season.

Our regular Friday worship is concerned with the celebration of our curriculum or of the achievements of our pupils both in school and outside of school, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt or achieved.

The final Act of Worship for each half term is a whole-school celebration worship where particular attention is drawn to our Christian Values. Values Awards are presented to pupils who have been exemplary in their thoughts and actions in regard to particular Christian Values that have been the focus of worship for that half-term. Parents and friends are invited to share the children's achievements.

Content and Approach

Our collective worship content is organised over a two year programme. Worship is focused on either a particular theme relating to a Christian Value, a special event or a particular time of the Christian Calendar.

Over the two year cycle (Appendix A), worship covers:

- Core Christian Values linked to the school's Vision: Love, Forgiveness, Respect, Compassion, Truthfulness, Koinonia, Courage and Perseverance
- The life of Jesus, his miracles, parables and teachings.
- Figures from the Old Testament and New Testament, including the patriarchs, prophets and kings, the apostles and women in The Bible
- Events and occasions in the year of the Church.
- Important figures of religious, historical or global significance.
- Reference to other religions and Christianity as a global religion.

A range of approaches are used to encourage the children to explore, encounter and experience, including:

- songs and music from a variety of different cultures
- actively involving the children
- prayer (traditional, contemporary and simultaneous) and times of reflection and contemplation
- readings and stories (from the Bible and other sources)
- visual aids
- discussion, questioning, speech and silence

Children take part in one class worship each week. Class worship take many forms, from a quiet time of reflection and prayer, to a discussion about family, local or global news, using prayer as a way of helping those in need. Children will also take turns to lead class worship. Teachers will respond to the needs of their class in order to decide what form class worship will take each week.

EYFS

Early Years Foundation Stage is a hugely important phase in the development of each child, equipping them with skills and experiences that will prepare them for accessing the National Curriculum from Year One onwards.

At Overton St Helen's we recognise that early years children also need to be equipped with specific knowledge and skills to teach and enable them to take an active part in collective worship, on their journey through Primary School. Therefore, worship in EYFS is planned for separately to the rest of the school (Appendix B).

EYFS children do not immediately join the rest of the school for collective worship; this is a carefully planned, gradual build up over the school year. The class teacher and head teacher will lead daily worship in the classroom, which will focus on introducing key elements to worship; The Bible, Jesus Christ, core Christian Values of Love, Forgiveness, Truthfulness and Courage and the power of prayer.

Our approach to worship in EYFS is carefully planned so that when our pupils move into Year One, collective worship with the rest of the school can be a meaningful, purposeful and valuable experience to them.

Rolls and Responsibilities

Currently, the Collective Worship co-ordinator is Mrs Easthope, who is responsible for organising the themes and resources for the provision of worship.

The school has an active pupil Worship Council. This is a group of children who meet together to discuss the effectiveness of our worship times and to suggest improvements. They contribute towards the planning of worship, ask the other children their opinions of our collective worship and evaluate the worship in school.

The development of worship in school is reported to the Governor's Church School Distinctiveness Committee who meet once a term. A member of the committee attends worship in school on a regular basis.

Legal Requirements

In accordance with The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (section 69(4) and schedule 20, section 5) the Collective Worship provided in our school, in the absence of a Trust Deed, is in accordance with designation of the religious character of the school by the Secretary of State. Overton St Helen's is a Church of England Primary School and therefore the collective worship is required to reflect this.

Daily collective worship has to be provided for every pupil. This worship may take place in various groupings such as the whole school, Key Stage groups, House Groups, classes etc. Worship may take place at any point in the school day.

The provision of collective worship conforms to Diocesan policy.

Although Collective Worship and RE naturally compliment and enrich one another they are managed separately and Collective Worship does not form part of the time allocated for Religious Education.

Right to Withdraw

Parents may withdraw their children from collective worship but should be aware that the Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.

There will be occasions when the school assembles together for other purposes, e.g. important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from Collective Worship and parents' rights to withdraw their children do not apply.

Policy Review

It was last reviewed in: Spring 2025

Next review: Spring 2026



Overton St Helen's CE Primary School – Collective Worship Plan

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Cycle A:

Half-term	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Christian Value/Theme	Love & Koinonia	Patience	Courage & Perseverance	Forgiveness	Matthew 5:16 Christianity around the World	Responsibility Moving On
Special Services	Harvest	Remembrance	Epiphany Ash Wednesday	Mother's Day	Ascension Day Pentecost	Leaver's Service
Specific periods of time to focus on	Black History Month (October)	Advent (Advent Wreath)	Lent	Approach to Easter		

Cycle B:

Half-term	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Christian Value/Theme	Love & Thankfulness Women in the Bible	Peace	Truthfulness & Respect	Compassion	The Bible's Big Picture (using the Frieze) Paul	Wisdom New Beginnings
Special Services	Harvest	Remembrance	Epiphany Ash Wednesday	Mother's Day	Ascension Day Pentecost	Leaver's Service
Specific periods of time to focus on		Advent (Jesse Tree)	Lent	Approach to Easter		



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EYFS:

Half-term	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Christian Value/Theme	Love	Trust and Truthfulness	Forgiveness	Matthew 5:16 Letting Your Light Shine	Courage and Perseverance
Special Days	Remembrance	Epiphany	Ash Wednesday	Ascension Day	
The Bible	The Nativity Story	Jesus Parables	The Easter Story	St Paul	Joseph

Autumn 1:

In the first half of the Autumn Term, worship takes the form of prayer. Children are focussed on settling in, becoming familiar with their classroom environment and building relationships. They are not expected to sit for prolonged periods of worship but will be taught how to pray before lunch and at the end of the day.

Autumn 2:

Mon – Led by CT
 Tues – Prayer focus for family and friends
 Wed – Led by HT
 Thurs – Led by CT
 Fri – Join whole school for Celebration Assembly

Spring and Summer Term:

Mon – Led by CT
 Tues – Keys Stage worship in school hall
 Wed – Led by HT
 Thurs – Prayer focus for family and friends
 Fri – Join whole school for Celebration Assembly